DR. L. W. DE LAURANCE

The Sacred Book of Death
Hindu Spiritism
Soul Transition and Soul Reincarnation

EXCLUSIVE INSTRUCTION for the personal use of Dr. de Laurence's *Chelas* (Disciples) in Hindu Spiritism, Soul Transition, Reincarnation, Clairvoyancy and Occultism

(*Illustrated*)

BY

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"The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and East Indian Occultism," "The Book of Secret Hindu, Ceremonial and Talismanic Magic," "The Holy Bible Defended," (An Occult Interpretation of the Books of Holy Scripture, Raising the Astral Body of Samuel, The Witch of Endor, etc.) "Medical Hypnosis," (Physician's Edition), "Hindu Hypnotism," etc.

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Hindu Sanscrit

SANSKRIT or SANSCRIT (carefully construed, symmetrically formed from sans—together, and the pa. par krita—made. It is thus opposed to the Prakrit,—common, natural, the name given to the vernacular dialect of India.)

¶ The ancient language of the Hindus, and the oldest and most primitive of the Indo-European tongues. It has long since ceased to be a living language but in it most of the literature of the Hindus is written from the oldest portion of the Vedas onwards. (Veda). To the scores of tribes and nations of discordant speech in India, Sanscrit has long been the sacred and literary dialect, and all the cultivated tongues of modern India are as full of Sanscrit words as the European tongues are of Latin: It is a highly inflected language and to philologists is the most valuable of tongues owing to its freedom from the corruptions and disguises of phoentic changes and from obliteration of the original meaning of its vocabies.

¶ The classical Sanscrit is a dialect which, at a later period, after the full possession of Hindustan and the development of Brahmanism out of the simpler and more primitive religion and polity of Vedic times, became established as the literary language of the whole country, and has ever since maintained that character, being still learned for writing and speaking in the Lamasaries and Temples as well as in native schools of the Bramanic priesthood. From the fact that inscriptions in a later form of Indian language are found dating from the third century B. C., it is inferred that the Sanscrit must at least as early as that have ceased to be a vernacular tongue.

Dr. de Laurence.

MANDAMUS

OBEY THIS WARNING!

THIS Famous **"Book of Death, Hindu Spiritism, Soul Transition and Soul Reincarnation"** by Dr. de Laurence, "The Moses of the Hindus," is the personal property of

M_____

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State of_____

¶ The same being a rare and valuable Volume of Ancient Hindu Wisdom and Celestial Fire, written and arranged in the Hindu manner of Self-Instruction and, in consequence of this, every person is *warned* and most earnestly cautioned *never to steal* the same nor distort nor tamper with the Teachings or Formulas given therein, for if you steal this Volume or, by intention cause Perversion of the Formulas, Sacred Hindu Names or Seals contained therein you will attract an Evil Spirit and other Powerful influences *which will most surely do you injury and cause you to regret your damnable actions to the day of your death.*

¶ Should you be so foolish or rash as to steal this Sacred Volume, which is the private property of thy neighbor, before you have read and received this Mandamus, *return it unto him at once* and no harm will befall you, but if thee *dares* to disobey this warning "*woe be unto thee,*" for the Great System and Order of "Hindu Adepts and Master Lamas of India and China" have their Astral and Occult Guards who can witness your every action, see and know every thought that goes through your brain, and they will not hesitate, *for they know too well,* how to avenge thefts or tamperings with their Occult teachings, so beware and obey this Mandamus, otherwise you will never know peace, fortune or contentment afterwards.

(Signed) *Dr. de Laurence.*

"TO the memory of the long line of Noble Adepts and Masters of India and China and those Intelligent Souls of the Astral World above, who have revealed and handed down unimpaired the tenets of the Fraternity of Hindu Spiritism, and, to my living *Chelas* (Disciples) who are emulating their illustrious example and teachings of Magic, Spiritism and Immortality, all of whom Posterity will raise up and call blessed—this "SACRED BOOK OF DEATH" is fraternally and sincerely Dedicated by the Author."

1907

PREFACE

Death and Magic have always been contemporary and always shall be in every age of the world. Death and Soul Transition, Spirit Communication and Magic were contemporaneous with the birth of man in this world, which to all were like unto a vale of tears. Death and immortality to the soul of the western individual is a sad recital throughout, because the human heart has in all ages hungered for true knowledge of the existence and presence of the dear departed. However, they are oftentimes ridiculous owing to the Christian Doctrine and theory of atonement which is founded upon a total misconception and crude interpretation of the true teaching of Spiritism, and are so glaring that little wonder it be that the human soul of man recoils from the horrible picture painted by many, of the future life of man. Oriental teachings and traditions teach man the mysteries of his present and future life. Eastern magic teaches man the art of performing things which surpass the powers of his physical and material nature. These teachings are thought by some to be more than ordinarily bad, in consequence of a compact, expressed or implied, with evil spirits.

This is nonsensical, for by True Magic, which same not being Sorcery or Black Magic, man can find profit and be taught that which is of vital importance to himself and family.

Man will discover Magic at every epoch in history. True, man has made use of Magic to domineer over man. The chroniclers of every age teem to overflowing with narrations of Magical Operations as does the far reaching memories of every human soul which follows these facts. The Sorcerer and his Disciple who pay homage to evil spirits always have had their tables heaped with viands and wine, as the Witch or Sorcerer may become very powerful indeed in suspending the faculties of man and even animals, and alter certain things, also of binding to sickness, love or hatred, but in time, surely self-torment shall consume his soul, neither shall he know any happiness. This is sacred truth, incontrovertible, for remember that that which thee seeks thee will attract to thy soul, and what thee asks for with thy Occult Powers, for these are the terrible instruments of the Sorcerer, thee will surely receive a thousand fold, for he who is in league with familiar spirits will regret it.

INTRODUCTION

The teachings of East Indian Occultism are the True Wisdom, and he *who hath it not* can in no way penetrate the True Secrets of Spirit Magic, and he but buildeth upon a foundation of sand, and his building can in no way last. Many conjurers of Black and Devilish Arts have attempted to persuade me to be wise, while they themselves, with words which I myself well understood, but which is little known, and with extravagant Symbols made bells to sound, and while with execrable conjurations made appear in glasses him who had committed a theft, and they made a liquor causing an old man to appear young (and that only for the space of two hours and no longer). All these things which they indeed taught me, but the whole was but vanity, low curiosity, and a pure deception of the Evil Spirits leading to no useful end imaginable, and tending to the loss of the Soul. I having the true veritable knowledge of the Sacred Hindu Magic, and banished them from mine heart and desires. These impious conjurers, with the aid and assistance of Evil Spirits, performed astounding feats. They used to render themselves invisible, so as to

be able to enter locked-up rooms. They knew our greatest secrets, and once they told me things which only I alone could know. But this art cost them too dearly for the Evil Spirits had made them swear in the Pact that they would use all their secrets to the dishonor of their friends, and to the prejudice of their neighbors. Ultimately their soul and body was dragged through deep misery. This was all the profits they drew from their Diabolical Science and Damnable Magic. In some parts of the Orient I found an infinitude of Black Magicians who only occupied themselves in killing and maiming men, in putting discord among married people, in causing divorces, in tying witch-knots in osier or willow branches to stop the flow of milk in the breasts of nursing women, and similar infamies. But these miserable wretches had also made a Pact with Evil Spirits, and had become their slaves, having sworn unto them that they would work without cessation to destroy the happiness of all living creatures. Some of these had two years (for their Pact) to run, some three, and after that time they underwent the same fate as all who form a Pact with Evil Spirits. At Benares, India, I was introduced to a young Indian woman, who one evening invited me to go with her, assuring me that without any risk she would conduct me to a place where I greatly desired to find myself. I allowed

myself (in order to find her out) to be persuaded by her promises. She then gave unto me an ungent with which I rubbed the principal pulses of my feet and hands; the which she did also; and at first it appeared to me that I was flying in the air in the place which I wished. and which I had in no way mentioned to her.

I pass over in silence out of respect for my Disciples, that which I saw. After I appeared to have remained there a long while, I felt as if I were just awakening from a profound sleep, and I had a decided pain in my head. I turned round and saw that she was seated at my side. She began to ask me what I had seen, and that which I had seen was something I never wish to behold again. I was, however, much astonished, because it appeared to me as if I had been really and corporeally in the place, and there in reality to have seen that which had happened. One day I asked her to go alone to that same place, and to bring me back news of a Hindu friend whom I knew for certain was distant 200 leagues. She promised to do so in the space of an hour. She rubbed herself with the same ungent, and I was very expectant to see her fly away, but she fell to the ground and remained there about three hours as if she were dead, so that I began to think that she really was dead. At last she began to stir like a person who is waking, then she rose

to an upright position, and with much pleasure began to give me the account of her expedition, saying that she had been in the place where my friend was, and told me all that he was doing; which was entirely in keeping with his profession, of which I had told her nothing. Whence I concluded that what she had just told me was not a simple dream, and that this ungent was not a causer of Astral sleep; whereon she confessed to me that this ungent had been given to her by the Evil Spirits.

All the Arts of the Witches and Conjurers are Enchantments and Fascinations, through which wonderful things can be done. But the Evil Spirits hold them enchained in these accursed Arts so that the Foundation of the True Magic may be unknown to them which would render them more powerful than they; and I was the more confirmed in this opinion because their operations were of no practical use whatever, and caused injury unto him who put them into practice, as in fact many of them avowed plainly to me that they were envious because I was an Adept who had the True and Sacred Magic of the Hindus. There are also many operations which they say are handed down from the Ancient Zuroos. There is an Art called White and Black Xoozj; another Angelical, Teatim; in which I avow that I have seen Orations so learned and beautiful, that had I not known the venom therein hidden, I would

have given them herein. I say all this because it is very easy for him who is not constantly upon his guard to err in studying Spirit Magic.

SYMBOLS

One old scribbler of symbols taught me many enchantments which only tended to work evil. He performed other operations by means of Evil Spirits and certain secret fumigations, which were all odd, and of a triple proportion, in no way similar to the other, and for proof of this, he caused by such means in my presence a very fine tree which was near our Temple to fall to the ground, and all the leaves and fruits were consumed in a very short time. And he told me that in numbers there was hidden a very great Mystery, which I already had knowledge of, because that by means of numbers one can perform all the operations for friendships, riches, honors, love and all sorts of things, good and evil; and he assured me that he had tried them, and that some that he knew were very true for they had succeeded with him. With regard to this particular, I found out the reason through an ancient Hindu Priest, who told me that this came and depended from a Divine Mystery, that is to say, from the Qubalah, and that without that, one could not succeed. All these things have I beheld, and many others, and those who possessed these secrets gave them to me

out of friendship. I have never taught these recipes afterwards, they being absolutely things very far removed from the Will of God, and contrary to the charity which we owe unto our neighbor. Every learned and prudent man may fall if he be not defended and guided by the good spirits who advised and aided me, and prevented me from falling into such a state of wretchedness, and who led me undeserving from the mire of darkness unto the Light of the True Magic. I have known and felt the effects of the goodness of a certain Wise Hindu Priest, who, of his own free will, and before I had asked him so to do, accepted me for his Disciple. And before that I had declared my wish unto him he would accomplish and fulfil my desire; and all that I wished to obtain from him he knew before I could open my mouth. Also he recounted to me all that I had seen, done, and suffered from the time of my birth down to that moment; and this in words obscure as it were prophetic, which I did not then fully comprehend, but which I understood later. He told me many things touching my good fortune and that my teachings would become famous in America, as they have, but which was the principal thing, he discovered to me the Source of the Veritable Magic, which according to their custom, I have in turn communicated unto my Disciples, in "The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and East

Indian Occultism," after they have fulfilled the requisite conditions without the accomplishment of which the power and this Sacred Hindu Magic cannot be exercised, and which I have recounted in this volume. After he did manifest unto me the Regimen of the Mystery of that Sacred Hindu Magic which was exercised and put into practice by his forefathers and progenitors, Razizun, Uzujb, Iquzi and Tneby, among whom the last misused it, and he received the punishment thereof during his life.

In the Great Book of Magical Art I have described the whole faithfully and clearly, in order that if the Lord God should wish to dispose of me before these teachings shall have attained great use in this age, thou shalt find this great volume an inestimable treasure and a faithful master and teacher, because there are very many Powerful Secrets in the Symbols of this Book which I have made experiment of with mine own self and they are perfectly true, and which afterwards many of my Disciples which are in every country in the world have performed. I found no one who worked these things truly without this "Great Book of Magical Art," and although many have walked in the same path, nevertheless the Hindu Priest as a just Judge, did not in any way wish to grant unto them the Sacred Magic in its entirety, because they desired "The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and East Indian Occult-

ism" to be published by myself. It matters not whatever religion you believe in you can arrive at the perfection of this work and become a Master, but he who hath abandoned Spiritual Law, and embraced Materialism, which is opposed to Spirit Magic, can never arrive at a state of happiness and condition of mind to be able to climb to the summit of this Sacred Art.

DR. L. W. DE LAURENCE,

Adept in Art Magic and Famous Magician by Alchemy and Fire.

CHAPTER I.

SPIRITISM

From the *Sanscrit* writing of the Hindu new ideas and new words which are needed, in order to secure clearness of language by avoiding the confusion inseparable from the employment of the same term for expressing different meanings, are to be secured. The words *spiritual, spiritualist, spiritualism,* have a definite acceptation; to give them a new one, in order to apply them to the doctrines set forth by spirits, would be to multiply the causes of amphibology, already so numerous. Strictly speaking, *Spiritualism* is the opposite of *Materialism;* every one is a Spiritualist who believes that there is in him something more than matter, but it does not follow that he believes in the existence of spirits, or in their communication with the visible world. Instead, therefore, of the words SPIRITUAL, SPIRITUALISM, employed in these writings to designate this latter belief, the words SPIRITIST, SPIRITISM, which, by their form, indicate their origin and radical meaning, and have thus the advantage of being perfectly intelligible; and we

(Ancient Hindu Priests) reserve the words *spiritualism, spiritualist,* for the expression of the meaning attached to them by common acceptation. We say, then, that the fundamental principle of the *spiritist theory,* or *spiritism,* is the relation of the material world with spirits, or the beings of the invisible world; and we designate the adherents of the theory as *spiritists.*

In a special sense, "The Book of Death, Wisdom and Celestial Fire" contains the doctrine and truth of *spiritism;* in a general sense, it appertains to the *spiritualist* cult, of which it presents one of the phases. It is for this reason that I have inscribed the words Death and Soul Transition on its title-page.

There is another word of which it is equally necessary to define the meaning, because it is the keystone of every system of Occultism, and also because, owing to the lack of a precise definition, it has been made the subject of innumerable controversies; I refer to the word *soul.* The divergence of opinion concerning the nature of the soul is a result of the variety of meanings attached to this word. A perfect language, in which every idea had its own special term, would save a vast deal of discussion; for, in that case, misunderstanding would be impossible.

Some Western writers define the soul as being

the principle of organic life, having no existence of its own, and ceasing with the life of the body. According to this purely Materialistic belief, the soul is an effect, and not a cause.

Others consider the soul as being the principle of intelligence, the universal agent, of which each being absorbs a portion. According to them, there is, in the entire universe, only one soul, which distributes sparks of itself among all intelligent beings during their life; each spark, after the death of the being it has animated, returning to the common source, and blending again with the general whole, as brooks and rivers return to the ocean from which they were produced. This opinion differs from the preceding one, inasmuch as, according to the latter hypothesis, there is in us something more than matter, something that remains in existence after our DEATH; but, practically, it is much as though nothing remained of us, since, no longer possessing individuality, we should retain no consciousness of our identity. According to this hypothesis, the universal soul is God, and each being is a portion of the Divinity. It is a species of Pantheism.

According to others, again, the soul is a moral being, distinct, independent of matter, and preserving its individuality after death. This acceptation of the word *soul* is certainly the one most generally received; because, under one name or another, the

idea of a being that survives the body is found as an instinctive belief, and independently of all teaching, among all nations, whatever their degree of civilization. This doctrine, according to which the soul is a *cause,* and not an *effect,* is that of the Hindus of Sacred Caste.

Without discussing the value of these opinions, and considering the subject merely under its philological aspect, we say that these three applications of the word *soul* constitute three distinct ideas, each of which demands a different term. "Soul" has, therefore, a triple meaning, and is employed by each school according to the special meaning it attributes to that word. In order to avoid the confusion naturally resulting from the use of the same word to express three different ideas, it would be necessary to confine the word to one of these three ideas; it would not matter to which, provided the choice were clearly understood. I think it more natural to take it in its most common acceptation; and for this reason I have employed the word SOUL to indicate the *immaterial and individual being which resides in us, and survives the body.* Even if this being did not really exist, and were only a product of the imagination, a specific term would still be needed to designate it.

For want of such a term for each of the other ideas now loosely understood by the word *soul,* the

Hindûs employ the term *vital principle* to designate the material and organic life which, whatever may be its source, is common to all living creatures, from the plant to man. As life can exist without the thinking faculty, the vital principle is something distinct from and independent of it. The word *vitality* would not express the same idea. According to some, the vital principle is a property of matter; an effect produced wherever matter is found under certain given conditions; while, in the opinion of the greater number of thinkers, it resides in a special fluid, universally diffused, and of which each being absorbs and assimilates a portion during life, as inert bodies absorb light; the *vital principle* being identical with the *vital fluid,* which is generally regarded as being the same as the animalized electric fluid, designated also as the *magnetic fluid,* the *astral fluid,* etc.

However this may be, one fact is certain, for it is proved by observation, viz., that organic beings possess in themselves a force which, so long as it exists, produces the phenomena of life; that physical life is common to all organic beings, and is independent of intelligence and thought; that intelligence and thought are faculties peculiar to certain organic species; and, lastly, that, among the organic species endowed with intelligence and thought, there is one which is endowed with a special moral sense

that gives it an incontestible superiority over the others, viz., the human species.

It is evident that, being employed according to various acceptations, the term *soul* does not exclude either Materialism or Pantheism. Spiritualists themselves understand the term *soul* according to one or other of the first two definitions, without denying the distinct immaterial being, to which, in that case, it would give some other name. This word, therefore, is not the representative of an opinion; it is a Protean term, defined by each after his own fashion, and thus giving rise to interminable disputes.

I might also avoid confusion, even while employing the word *soul* in the three senses defined above, by adding to it some qualifying term that should specify the point of view from which we consider it, or the mode in which we apply it. It would be, in that case, a generic word, representing at once the principles of material life, of intelligence, and of the moral faculty, each of which would be distinguished by an attribute, as is done, for example, with the word *gas,* by adding the words *hydrogen, oxygen,* etc. Thus we might say —and it would, perhaps, be the best plan to adopt— *vital soul* for the principle of material life, *intellectual soul* for the principle of intelligence, and *spiritual soul* for the principle of our individuality

after death; in which case the *vital soul* would be common to all organic beings, plants, animals, and men; the *intellectual soul* would be the peculiar property of animals and men; and the *spiritual soul* would belong to men only.

I have thought it all the more important to be explicit in regard to this point, because the spiritist theory is naturally based on the existence in us of a being independent of matter, and that survives the body. As the word *soul* will frequently recur in the course of these writings, it was necessary to define the meaning we attach to it, in order to avoid all misunderstanding.

We now come to the principal object of this preliminary explanation.

SPIRIT DOCTRINE

Spirit doctrine, like all new theories, has its supporters and its opponents. I shall endeavor to reply to some of the objections of the latter, by examining the worth of the reasons on which they are based, without, however, pretending to be able to convince everybody, but addressing ourselves to those who, without prejudices or preconceived ideas, are sincerely and honestly desirous of arriving at the truth; and we will prove to them that those objections are the result of a too hasty conclusion in regard to facts imperfectly observed.

Of the facts referred to, the one first observed was the receiving of correct communications from Astral Spirits, popularly called "spiritualism." This phenomenon, which many supposed to be first observed in their particular country (was only renewed, for history proves it to have been produced in the most remote ages of antiquity), was attended with various strange accompaniments, such as unusual noises, raps produced without any ostensible cause, etc. From India this phenomenon spread rapidly over Europe and the rest of the world. It was met at first with incredulity; but the spirit messages were received by so many experimenters that it soon became impossible to doubt their reality.

If the phenomenon in question had been limited to the movement of inert objects, it might have been possible to explain it by some purely physical cause. The Western men are far from knowing all the secret agencies of nature, or all the properties of those which are known to us. Astral forces, moreover, are not only multiplying, day by day, the resources they offer to mankind, but appear to be about to irradiate science with a new light. It seemed, therefore, by no means impossible that Astral Forces, modified by certain circumstances, or some other unknown agent, might be the cause of these spirit messages and other phenomena. The

fact that the presence of several persons increased the intensity of the action appeared to strengthen this supposition; for the union of these might not inaptly be regarded as constituting a battery, of which the power was in proportion to the number of its elements.

That the movement of tables should be circular was in no way surprising, for the circular movement is of frequent occurrence in nature. All the stars move in circles; and it, therefore, seemed to be possible that in the movement of the tables we had a reflex on a small scale of the movement of the universe; or that some cause, hitherto unknown, might produce, accidentally, and, in regard to small objects, a current analogous to that which impels the worlds of the universe in their orbits.

But the movement in question was not always circular. It was often irregular, disorderly; the object moved was sometimes violently shaken, overthrown, carried about in various directions, and, in contravention of all known laws of statics, lifted from the ground and held up in the air. Still, in all this, there was nothing that might not be explained by the force of some invisible physical agent. Do we not see electricity overthrow buildings, uproot trees, and hurl to considerable distances the heaviest bodies, attracting or repelling, as the case may be?

The rappings and other unusual noises, supposing them to be due to something else than the dilatation of the wood, or other accidental cause, might very well be produced by an accumulation of the mysterious fluid; for does not electricity produce the loudest sounds?

Up to this point everything might be considered as belonging to the domain of physics and physiology. Without going beyond this circle of ideas, the learned might have found in the phenomenon referred to matter well worthy of serious study. Why was this not done? It is painful to be obliged to make the confession, but the neglect of the scientific world was due to causes that add one more proof to the many already given of the frivolity of the Western mind. In the first place, the commonness of the Hindus who mainly served as the basis of the earliest experimentations had something to do with this disdain. What an influence, in regard to even the most serious matters, is often exerted by a mere word! Without reflecting that the messages referred to might be communicated to any person, the idea of the Hindus became associated with it in the general mind, doubtless because the Hindu, being the best developed mentally, and also because these people can place themselves in a receptive state more conveniently than any other race of people, who interest themselves in the experiments

referred to. But men who pride themselves on their mental superiority are sometimes so puerile as to warrant the suspicion that a good many keen and cultivated minds may have considered it beneath them to take any notice of what was commonly known as "Hindu Occultism." If the phenomenon observed by Ijuna had been made known by some Hindu adept, and dubbed with some absurd nickname, it would probably have been consigned to the lumber-room, along with the divining-rod; for where is the scientist who would not in that case have regarded it as derogatory to occupy himself with spiritism?

A few men of superior intellect, however, being modest enough to admit that nature might not have revealed to them all her Occult secrets, conscientiously endeavored to see into the matter for themselves; but the phenomenon not having always responded to their attempts, and not being always produced at their pleasure, and according to their methods of experimenting, they arrived at an adverse conclusion in regard to them. The masters of India, however, despite that conclusion, continued to develop psychic powers; and we may say of them, with Galileo, "Nevertheless, they move!" We may assert, still further, that the facts alluded to have been multiplied to such an extent that they have become naturalized among Western people, so

that opinions are now only divided as to their nature.

And here let me ask whether the fact that these phenomena are not always produced in exactly the same way, and according to the wishes and requirements of each individual observer, can be reasonably regarded as constituting an argument against their reality? Are not the phenomena of electricity and chemistry subordinated to certain conditions, and should we be right in denying their reality because they do not occur when those conditions are not present? Is it strange, then, that certain conditions should be necessary to the production of the phenomena of spirit communication by the Astral Spirits, or that it should not occur when the observer, placing himself at his own individual point of view, insists on producing it at his own pleasure, or in subjecting it to the laws of phenomena already known, without considering that a new order of facts may, and, indeed, must, result from the action of laws equally new to us? Now, in order to arrive at a knowledge of such laws, it is necessary to study the circumstances under which those facts are produced; and such a study can only be made through long-sustained and attentive observation.

"But," it is often objected, "there is evident trickery in some of the occurrences referred to." To

this objection I reply, in the first place, by asking whether the objectors are quite sure that what they have taken for trickery may not be simply an order of facts which they are not yet able to account for, as was the case with the peasant who mistook the experiments of a learned professor of physics for the tricks of a clever conjuror? But even admitting that there has been trickery in some cases, is that a reason for denying the reality of facts? Must we deny the reality of physics because certain conjurors give themselves the title of physicists? Moreover, the character of the persons concerned in these manifestations should be taken into account, and the interest they may have in deceiving. Would they do so by way of a joke? A joke may amuse for a moment, but a mystification, if kept up too long, would become as wearisome to the mystifier as to the mystified. Besides, a mystification carried on from one end of the earth to the other, and among the most serious, honorable, and enlightened people, would be at least as extraordinary as the phenomena in question.

If the phenomena we are considering had been limited to the movement of objects, they would have remained as we have already remarked, within the domain of physical science; but so far was this from being the case, that they speedily proved to be only the forerunners of facts of a character still

more extraordinary. For it was soon found that the impulsion communicated to inert objects was not the mere product of a blind mechanical force, but that it revealed the action of an intelligent cause, a discovery that opened up a new field of observation, and promised a solution of many mysterious problems. Are these communications and movements due to an intelligent power? Such was the question first to be answered. If such a power exists, what is it? What is its nature? What its origin? Is it superhuman? Such were the secondary questions which naturally grew out of that first one.

EARLIEST MANIFESTATIONS

The earliest manifestations of intelligence were made by writings of *Sanscrit* through Hindu mediums. Even here, it must be confessed, there was nothing very convincing for the incredulous, as these apparent writings might be an effect of chance. But fuller communications were soon obtained, so that words and sentences began to be produced in reply to the questions propounded. The correctness of these replies, their correlation with the questions asked, excited astonishment. The mysterious being who gave these replies, when questioned as to its nature, declared itself to be a "spirit" or "soul," gave itself a name, and stated various particulars about itself. This is a circumstance of

noteworthy importance, for it proves that no one suggested the idea of spirits as an explanation of the phenomenon, but that *the phenomenon gave this explanation of itself*. Hypotheses are often framed, in the positive sciences, to serve as a basis of argument; but such was not the case in this instance.

The mode of communication furnished by these spirits formed entire discourses, filling many pages, treating of the deepest questions of philosophy, morality, metaphysics, psychology, spiritism, occultism, etc., and as rapidly as though written by the hand of a philosopher instead of a common Hindu medium.

This presented itself simultaneously all over India and in various other countries.

Do these intelligences reside in the human race, or are they beyond the pale of humanity? Such is the next point to be cleared up, and of which the complete explanation will be found in the present work, such as it has been given by the spirits themselves, to be written in *Sanscrit*.

Spirit manifestations in India do not occur mysteriously, but in broad daylight, so that every one can see them and ascertain their reality; they are not the privilege of a single individual, but are obtained by tens of thousands of persons every day at pleasure. These effects have necessarily a cause; and as they reveal the action of an intelligence and

a will, they are evidently beyond the domain of merely physical effects.

Many theories have been broached in relation to this subject; these we shall presently examine, and shall then be able to decide whether they can account for all the facts now occurring. Let us, meanwhile, assume the existence of beings distinct from the Earth Plane, since such is the explanation given of themselves by the intelligences thus revealed to us, and let us see what they say to us.

The beings who thus enter into communication with us designate themselves, as I have said, by the name of *spirits* or *souls*, and as having belonged, in many cases at least, to men who have lived upon the earth. They say that they constitute the spiritual world, as we, during our earthly life, constitute the corporeal world.

I will now briefly sum up the most important points of Hindu Magic doctrine which they have transmitted to me, in order to reply more easily to the objections of the incredulous.

"God is eternal, immutable, immaterial, unique, all-powerful, sovereignly just and good.

"He has created the universe, which comprehends all beings, animate and inanimate, material and immaterial.

"The material beings constitute the visible or corporeal world, and the immaterial beings consti-

tute the invisible or spiritual world, that is to say, the spirit-world, or world of spirits.

"The spirit-world is the normal, primitive, eternal world, pre-existent to, and surviving, everything else.

"The corporeal world is only secondary; it might cease to exist, or never have existed, without changing the essentiality of the spiritual world.

"Spirits temporarily assume a perishable material envelope, the destruction of which, by death, restores them to liberty.

"Among the different species of corporeal beings, God has chosen the human species for the incarnation of spirits arrived at a certain degree of development; it is this which gives it a moral and intellectual superiority to all the others.

"The soul is an incarnated spirit, whose body is only its envelope.

"There are in man three things: (1) The body, or material being, analogous to the animals, and animated by the same vital principle; (2) the soul, or immaterial being, a spirit incarnated in the body; (3) the link which unites the soul and the body, a principle intermediary between matter and spirit.

"Man has thus two natures: by his body he participates in the nature of the animals, of which it has the instincts; by his soul, he participates in the nature of spirits.

CHAPTER II.

THE LINK OR PERISPIRIT

"The link, or *perispirit,* which unites the body and the spirit, is a sort of semi-material envelope. Death is the destruction of the material body, which is the grossest of man's two envelopes; but the spirit preserves his other envelope, viz., the perispirit, which constitutes for him an ethereal body, invisible to us in its normal state, but which he can render occasionally visible, and even tangible, as is the case in apparitions.

"A spirit, therefore, is not an abstract, undefined being, only to be conceived of by our thought; it is a real, circumscribed being, which, in certain cases, is appreciable by the senses of *sight, hearing* and *touch.*

"Spirits belong to different classes, and are not equal to one another either in power, in intelligence, in knowledge, or in morality. Those of the highest orders are distinguished from those below them by their superior purity and knowledge, their nearness to God, and their love of goodness; they are "angels" or "pure spirits." The other classes are

more and more distant from this perfection; those of the lower ranks are inclined to most of our passions, hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, etc.; they take pleasure in evil. Among them are some who are neither very good nor very bad, but are teazing and troublesome rather than malicious, are often mischievous and unreasonable, and may be classed as giddy and foolish spirits.

"Spirits do not belong perpetually to the same order. All are destined to attain perfection by passing through the different degrees of the spirit-hierarchy. This amelioration is effected by incarnation, which is imposed on some of them as an expiation, and on others as a mission. Material life is a trial which they have to undergo many times until they have attained to absolute perfection; it is a sort of filter, or alembic, from which they issue more or less purified after each new incarnation.

"On quitting the body, the soul re-enters the world of spirits from which it came, and from which it will enter upon a new material existence, after a longer or shorter lapse of time, during which its state is that of an *errant* or *wandering spirit.**

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*There is, between this doctrine of reincarnation and that of metempsychosis, as held by certain sects in India, a characteristic difference, which is explained in the course of the present work.

"Spirits having to pass through many incarnations, it follows that we have all had many existences, and that we shall have others, more or less perfect, either upon this earth or in other worlds.

"The incarnation of spirits always takes place in the human race; it would be an error to suppose that the soul or spirit could be incarnated in the body of an animal.

"A spirit's successive corporeal existences are always progressive, and never retrograde; but the rapidity of our progress depends on the efforts we make to arrive at perfection.

"The qualities of the soul are those of the spirit incarnated in us; thus, a good man is the incarnation of a good spirit, and a bad man is that of an unpurified spirit.

"The soul possessed its own individuality before its incarnation; it preserves that individuality after its separation from the body.

"On its re-entrance into the spirit world, the soul again finds all those whom it has known upon the earth, and all its former existences eventually come back to its memory, with the remembrance of all the good and of all the evil which it has done in them.

"The incarnated spirit is under the influence of matter; the man who surmounts this influence, through the elevation and purification of his soul,

raises himself nearer to the superior spirits, among whom he will one day be classed. He who allows himself to be ruled by bad passions, and places all his delight in the satisfaction of his gross animal appetites, brings himself nearer to the impure spirits, by giving preponderance to his animal nature.

"Incarnated spirits inhabit the different globes of the universe.

"Spirits who are not incarnated, who are errant, do not occupy any fixed and circumscribed region; they are everywhere, in space, and around us, seeing us, and mixing with us incessantly; they constitute an invisible population, constantly moving and busy about us, on every side.

"Spirits exert an incessant action upon the moral world, and even upon the physical world; they act both upon matter and upon thought, and constitute one of the powers of nature, the efficient cause of many classes of phenomena hitherto unexplained or misinterpreted, and of which only the spiritist theory can give a rational explanation.

"Spirits are incessantly in relation with men. The good spirits try to lead us into the right road, sustain us under the trials of life, and aid us to bear them with courage and resignation; the bad ones tempt us to evil; it is a pleasure for them to see us fall, and to make us like themselves.

"The communications of spirits with men are either occult or ostensible. Their occult communications are made through the good or bad influence they exert on us without our being aware of it; it is our duty to distinguish, by the exercise of our judgment, between the good and the bad inspirations that are thus brought to bear upon us. Their ostensible communications take place by means of writing, of speech, or of other physical manifestations, and usually through the intermediary of the mediums who serve as their instruments.

"Spirits manifest themselves spontaneously, or in response to evocation. All spirits may be evoked: those who have animated the most obscure of mortals, as well as those of the most illustrious personages, and whatever the epoch at which they lived; those of our relatives, our friends, or our enemies; and we may obtain from them, by written or by verbal communications, counsels, information in regard to their situation beyond the grave, their thoughts in regard to us, and whatever revelations they are permitted to make to us.

"Spirits are attracted by their sympathy with the moral quality of the parties by whom they are evoked. Spirits of superior elevation take pleasure in meetings of a serious character, animated by the love of goodness and the sincere desire of instruction and improvement. Their presence repels the

spirits of inferior degree, who find, on the contrary, free access and freedom of action among persons of frivolous disposition, or brought together by mere curiosity, and wherever evil instincts are to be met with. So far from obtaining from spirits, under such circumstances, either good advice or useful information, nothing is to be expected from them but trifling, lies, ill-natured tricks, or humbugging; for they often borrow the most venerated names, in order the better to impose upon those with whom they are in communication.

THE LANGUAGE OF SPIRITS

"It is easy to distinguish between good and bad spirits. The language of spirits of superior elevation is constantly dignified, noble, characterized by the highest morality, free from every trace of earthly passion; their counsels breathe the purest wisdom, and always have our improvement and the good of mankind for their aim. The communications of spirits of lower degree, on the contrary, are full of discrepancies, and their language is often commonplace, and even coarse. If they sometimes say things that are good and true, they more often make false and absurd statements, prompted by ignorance or malice. They play upon the credulity of those who interrogate them, amusing themselves by flattering their vanity, and fooling them with

false hopes. In a word, instructive communications worthy of the name are only to be obtained in centers of a serious character, whose members are united, by an intimate communion of thought and desire, in the pursuit of truth and goodness.

"The moral teaching of the higher spirits may be summed up, like that of Christ, in the gospel maxim, 'Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you;' that is to say, do good to all, and wrong to none. This principle of action furnishes mankind with a rule of conduct of universal application, from the smallest matters to the greatest.

"They teach us that selfishness, pride, sensuality, are passions which bring us back towards the animal nature, by attaching us to matter; that he who, in this lower life, detaches himself from matter through contempt of worldly trifles, and through love of the neighbor, brings himself back towards the spiritual nature; that we should all make ourselves useful, according to the means which God has placed in our hands for our trial; that the strong and the powerful owe aid and protection to the weak; and that he who misuses strength and power to oppress his fellow creature violates the law of God. They teach us that in the spirit world nothing can be hidden, and that the hypocrite will there be unmasked, and all his wickedness unveiled; that the presence, unavoidable and perpetual, of those whom

we have wronged in the earthly life is one of the punishments that await us in the spirit world; and that the lower or higher state of spirits gives rise in that other life to sufferings or to enjoyments unknown to us upon the earth.

"But they also teach us that there are no unpardonable sins, none that cannot be effaced by expiation. Man finds the means of accomplishing this in the different existences which permit him to advance progressively, and according to his desire and his efforts, towards the perfection that constitutes his ultimate aim."

Such is the sum of spiritist doctrine, as contained in the teachings given by spirits of high degree. Let us now consider the objections that are urged against it.

Many persons regard the opposition of the learned world as constituting, if not a proof, at least a very strong presumption, of the falsity of spiritism. The Hindu Priests are not of those who affect indifference in regard to the judgment of scientific men; on the contrary, we hold them in great esteem, and should think it an honor to be of their number, but we cannot consider their opinion as being, under all circumstances, necessarily and absolutely conclusive.

When the votaries of science go beyond the bare observation of facts, when they attempt to appraise and to explain those facts, they enter upon the field

of conjecture; each advances a system of his own, which he does his utmost to bring into favor, and defends with might and main. Do we not see every day the most divergent systems brought forward and rejected, one after the other; now cried down as absurd errors, and now cried up as incontestable truths? Facts are the sole criterion of reality, the sole argument that admits of no reply: in the absence of facts, the wise man suspends his judgment.

In regard to all matters that have already been fully examined, the verdict of the learned is justly held to be authoritative, because their knowledge of them is fuller and more enlightened than that of ordinary men; but in regard to occult facts or principles, to matters imperfectly known, their opinion can only be hypothetic, because they are no more exempt from prejudice than other people. It may even be said that scientific men are more apt to be prejudiced than the rest of the world, because each of them is naturally inclined to look at everything from the special point of view that has been adopted by him; the mathematician admitting no other order of proof than that of an algebraic demonstration, the chemist referring everything to the action of the elements, etc. When a man has made for himself a specialty, he usually devotes his whole mind to it; beyond the scope of this specialty he often reasons falsely, because, owing to the weakness of

human reason, he insists on treating every subject in the same way; and, therefore, while we should willingly and confidently consult a chemist in regard to a question of analysis, a physicist in regard to electricity, a mechanician in regard to a motive power, we must be allowed, without in any way derogating from the respect due to their special knowledge, to attach no more weight to their unfavorable opinion of spiritism than we should do to the judgment of an architect on a question relating to the theory of music.

MYSTIC INDIA.

Oh Mystic India; with many centuries span
Of wondrous growth, almost Utopian
Pulsating center of Astral Force,
Whose Spirit Art to Man impart
The Treasures this Power alone Provides.
Whose Masters give back enriching tides
Of life and Spiritual progress,
For thy Occult Knowledge,
All ages and Nations come to thee,
The Prophet and Seer of which
The Western Mind has dreamed
Has, in thy Mystic Beauty
Been realized and made to reach
Their culmination.

—Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER III.

HINDU SPIRITISM

The positive sciences are based on the properties of matter, which may be experimented upon and manipulated at pleasure; but spiritist phenomena are an effect of the action of astral spirits who have wills of their own, and who constantly show us that they are not subjected to ours. The observation of facts, therefore, cannot be carried on in the latter case in the same way as in the former one, for they proceed from another source, and require special conditions; and, consequently, to insist upon submitting them to the same methods of investigation is to insist on assuming the existence of analogies that do not exist. Science, properly so called, is, therefore, incompetent, as such, to decide the question of the truth of spiritism: it has nothing to do with it; and its verdict in regard to it, whether favorable or otherwise, is of no weight. Spiritist belief is the result of a personal conviction that scientific men may hold as individuals, and independent of their quality as scientists; but to submit the question to the decision of physical science would be

much the same thing as to set a company of physicists and astronomers to decide the question of immortality. Hindu spiritism deals exclusively with the existence of the soul, and its state after death; and it is supremely unreasonable to assume that a man must be a great psychologist simply because he is a great mathematician or a great anatomist. The anatomist, when dissecting a human body, looks for the soul, and, as he does not find it under his scalpel as he finds a nerve, or see it evaporate as does a gas, he concludes that it does not exist, because he reasons from an exclusively material point of view; but it by no means follows that he is right, and that the opinion of the rest of the world is wrong. We see, therefore, that the task of deciding as to the truth or falsity of spiritism does not fall within the scope of physical science. When spiritist beliefs shall have become generalized, when they shall have been accepted by the masses (and, if I may judge by the rapidity with which they are being propagated, that time can hardly be very distant), it will be with those beliefs as with all new ideas that have encountered opposition; and scientific men will end by yielding to the force of evidence. They will be brought, individually, by the force of things, to admit ideas that they now reject; and, until then, it would be premature to turn them from their special studies in order to occupy them

with a matter which is foreign alike to their habits of thought and to their spheres of investigation. Meanwhile, those who, without a careful preparatory study of the matter, pronounce a negative verdict in regard to it, and throw ridicule upon all who are not of their way of thinking, forget that such has been done in regard to nearly all the great discoveries that honor the human race.

The erroneous judgments of learned men in regard to certain discoveries, though regrettable for the honor of their memory, do not invalidate the title to our esteem acquired by them in regard to other matters. But is common sense only to be found associated with an official diploma, and are there only fools and simpletons outside the walls of scientific institutions? Let our opponents condescend to glance over the ranks of the partisans of spiritism in the temples of India and see whether they contain only persons of inferior understandings, or whether, on the contrary, considering the immense number of men of worth by whom it has been embraced, it can be regarded as belonging to the category of old wives' fables; whether, in fact, the character and scientific knowledge of its adherents do not rather deserve that it should be said: "When such men affirm a matter, there must at least be something in it?"

I repeat that, if the facts we are about to consider

had been limited to the mechanical movement of inert bodies, physical science would have been competent to seek out the physical cause of the phenomena; but the manifestations in question being professedly beyond the action of laws or forces yet known to men, they are necessarily beyond the competence of human science. When the facts to be observed are novel, and do not fall within the scope of any known science, the scientist, in order to study them, should throw his science temporarily aside, remembering that a new study cannot be fruitfully prosecuted under the influence of preconceived ideas.

He who believes his reason to be infallible is very near to error. Even those whose ideas are of the falsest profess to base them on reason; and it is in the name of reason that they reject whatever seems to them to be impossible. They who formerly rejected the admirable discoveries that are the glory of the human mind did so in the name of reason; for what men call reason is often only pride disguised, and whoever regards himself as infallible virtually claims to be God's equal. I, therefore, address myself to those who are reasonable enough to suspend their judgment in regard to what they have not yet seen, and who, judging of the future by the past, do not believe that man has reached his apogee,

or that nature has turned over for him the last leaf of her book.

Let me add that the study of such a theory as that of spiritism and magic, which introduces me at once to an order of phenomena so novel and so grand, can only be fruitfully pursued by persons of a serious turn of mind, persevering, free from prejudice, and animated by a firm and sincere determination to arrive at the truth. We could not give this qualification to those who decide, in regard to such a subject, *à priori,* lightly, and without thorough examination; who bring to the work of study neither the method, the regularity, nor the sustained attention necessary to success: still less could we give it to those who, not to lose their reputation for wit and sharpness, seek to turn into ridicule matters of the most serious import, or that are judged to be such by persons whose knowledge, character, and convictions should command respect. Let those who consider the facts in question as unworthy of their attention abstain from studying these writings; no one would attempt to interfere with their belief; but let them, on their part, respect the belief of those who are of a contrary opinion.

The characteristics of serious study are the method and the perseverance with which it is carried on. Is it strange that sensible answers are not always obtained from spirits in reply to questions

which, however serious in themselves, are propounded at random, and in the midst of a host of others, unconnected, frivolous, or foolish? Besides, a question is often complex, and the answer to it, in order to be clear, needs to be preceded, or completed, by various considerations. Whoever would acquire any science must make it the object of methodical study, must begin at the beginning, and follow out the sequence and development of the ideas involved in it. If one who is ignorant of the most elementary facts of a science should ask a question in regard to it of the most learned of its professors, could the professor, however excellent his learning, give him any satisfactory answer? For any isolated answer, given under such conditions, must necessarily be incomplete, and would, therefore, in many cases, appear unintelligible, or even absurd. It is exactly the same in regard to the relations which we establish with spirits. If we would learn in their school, we must go through a complete course of teaching with them; but, as among ourselves, we must select our teachers, and work on with steadiness and assiduity.

I have said that spirits of superior advancement are only attracted to centers in which there reigns a serious desire for light, and, above all, a perfect communion of thought and feeling in the pursuit of moral excellence. Frivolity and idle curiosity repel

them, just as, among men, they repel all reasonable people; and the road is thus left open to the mob of foolish and lying spirits who are always about us, watching for opportunities of mocking us and amusing themselves at our expense. What becomes of any serious question in such a gathering? It will certainly be replied to, but by whom? It is just as though, in the midst of a convivial dinner-party, you should suddenly propound such questions as "What is the soul? What is death?" or others equally out of harmony with the tone of the company. If we would obtain serious answers, we must ourselves be serious, and must place ourselves in the conditions required for obtaining them; it is only by so doing that we shall obtain any satisfactory and ennobling communications. We must, moreover, be laborious and persevering in our investigations, otherwise the higher spirits will cease to trouble themselves about us, as the professor ceases to occupy himself with the hopelessly idle members of his class.

The movement of inert bodies and spirit communication is a fact already proved by experience; the point now to be ascertained is, whether there is, or is not, a manifestation of intelligence in this movement separate from the medium, and, if there is, what is the source of this intelligence? We are not speaking of the intelligence displayed in the

movement of certain objects, nor of verbal communications, nor even of those which are written directly by the medium: these manifestations, of which the spirit-origin is evident for those who have thoroughly investigated the matter, are not, at first sight, sufficiently independent of the will of the medium to bring conviction to an observer new to the subject. We will, therefore, only speak, in this place, of writing obtained without the aid of an object of any kind provided with a pencil, such as a small basket, a *planchette,* etc., the fingers of the medium being placed upon the object in such a manner as to defy the most consummate skill to exercise the slightest influence on the tracing of the letters. But let us suppose that, by some wonderful cleverness, the medium succeeds in deceiving the most keenly observant eye, how can we explain the nature of the communications, when they are altogether beyond the scope of the medium's knowledge and ideas? In the temples of India an adept will have many pages of Occult teachings, dashed off, as frequently happens, with the most astonishing rapidity, sometimes spontaneously, and sometimes upon a given subject; of poems of elevated character, and irreproachable in point of style, produced by the hand of an Adept or Master. And what adds to the strangeness of these facts is, that they are occurring all over India, and that the num-

ber of mediums is constantly increasing. Are these facts real or not? To this query I have but one reply to make: "See and observe; opportunities of doing so will not be lacking; but, above all, observe often, for a long time, and according to the conditions required for so doing."

To the evidence adduced by us, what do our antagonists reply? "You are," say they, "the dupes of imposition or the sport of illusion." We have to remark, in the first place, that imposition is not likely to occur where no profit is to be made; charlatans are not apt to ply their trade gratis. If imposition be practiced, it must be for the sake of a joke. But by what strange coincidence does there happen to be an understanding between the jokers, from one end of the earth to the other, to act in the same way, to produce the same effects, and to give, upon the same subjects, and in different languages, replies that are identical, if not in words, at least in meaning? How is it that grave, serious, honorable, and educated masters can lend themselves to such maneuvers, and for what purpose? How is it that the requisite patience and skill for carrying on such a piece of deception are found even in young children? For mediums, if they are not passive instruments, must possess a degree of skill, and an amount and variety of knowledge, incompatible with the age and social position of many of them.

"But," urge our opponents, "if there be no trickery, both parties may be the dupes of an illusion." It is only reasonable that the quality of witnesses should be regarded as an element in deciding the value of their evidence; and it may fairly be asked whether the spiritist theory, whose adherents are already to be counted by millions, recruits these only among the ignorant? The phenomena on which it is based is not so extraordinary that we need admit any reasonableness of doubt in regard to them; again what is not admissible is the pretension of certain Western skeptics to a monopoly of common sense, and the unceremonious way in which, regardless of the moral worth of their adversaries, they tax all who are not of their opinion with infatuation or stupidity. For the affirmation of enlightened Adepts and priests in India and other persons who have, for a long time, seen, studied, and meditated any matter, is always, if not a proof, at least a presumption in its favor, since it has been able to fix the attention of men of mark, having no interest in propagating an error, nor time to waste upon worthless trifles.

Among the objections brought forward by Western opponents are some which are more specious, at least in appearance, because they are made by thoughtful minds.

One of these objections is prompted by the fact that the language of spirits does not always seem

worthy of the elevation Adepts attribute to beings beyond the pale of humanity. But, if the objector will take the trouble to look at the doctrinal summary we have given above, he will see that the spirits themselves inform us that they are not equals, either in knowledge or in moral qualities; that we are not to accept everything said by spirits as literal truth, and that we must judge for ourselves of the value of their statements. Assuredly, those who infer from this fact that we have to deal only with maleficent beings, whose sole occupation is to deceive us, have no acquaintance with the communications obtained in certain parts of India habitually frequented by spirits of superior advancement, or they could not entertain such an opinion. It is regrettable that they should have chanced to see only the worst side of the spirit-world, for I will not suppose that their sympathies attract evil, gross, or lying spirits, rather than good ones. I will merely suggest that, in some cases, the inquirers may not be so thoroughly principled in goodness as to repel evil, and that, taking advantage of their curiosity in regard to them, imperfect spirits make use of the opening thus afforded to come about them, while those of a higher order withdraw from them.

To judge the question of spirits by these facts would be as little reasonable as to judge of the character of a people by the sayings and doings of a

party of wild or disreputable fellows, with whom the educated and respectable classes of the population have nothing to do. Such persons are in the position of the traveler who, entering some great capital by one of its worst suburbs, should judge of all its inhabitants by the habits and language of this low quarter. In the world of spirits, as in our own, there are higher and lower castes of society. Let inquirers make a study of what goes on among spirits of high degree, and they will be convinced that the Astral World is not peopled solely by ignorant and vicious spirits. "But," it will be asked, "do spirits of high degree come among us?" To which question we reply, "Do not remain in the suburbs; see, observe, and judge; the facts are within reach of all but those alluded to by Jesus, as having eyes, but seeing not, and ears, but hearing not."

A variety of the same objection consists in attributing all spirit communications, and all the physical manifestations by which they are accompanied, to the intervention of some diabolical power—some new Proteus that assumes every form in order the more effectually to deceive us. Without pausing to analyze a supposition that we regard as not susceptible of serious examination, and that is, moreover, refuted by what has already been said, I have only to remark that, if such were the case, it would have to be admitted either that the devil is some-

times very wise, very reasonable, and, above all, moral, or else that there are good devils as well as bad ones.

SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS

But, in fact, is it possible to believe that God would permit only the Spirit of Evil to manifest himself, and this in order to ruin us, without giving us also the counsels of good spirits as a counterpoise? To suppose that He cannot do this is to limit His power; to suppose that He can do it, but abstains from doing it, is incompatible with the belief in His goodness. Both suppositions are equally blasphemous. It must be observed that, to admit the communication of evil spirits is to recognize the existence of spirit manifestations; but, if they exist, it can only be with the permission of God, and how then can we, without impiety, believe that He would permit them to occur only for a bad purpose, to the exclusion of a good one? Such a supposition is contrary alike to the simplest dictates of occult teachings and of common sense.

One strange feature of the matter, urge other objectors, is the fact that only the spirits of well-known personages manifest themselves, and it is asked why these should be the only ones who do so? This query is suggested by an error due, like many others, to superficial observation. Among the spir-

its who present themselves spontaneously, the greater number are unknown to us, and, therefore, call themselves by names that we know, and that serve to characterize them. With regard to those whom we evoke, unless in the case of relatives or friends, we naturally address ourselves to spirits whom we know of, rather than to those who are unknown to us; and as the names of illustrious persons are those which strike us most forcibly, they are, for that reason, those which are most remarked.

It is also considered as strange that the spirits of eminent men should respond familiarly to our call, and should sometimes interest themselves in things that appear trifling in comparison with those which they accomplished during their life. But there is in this nothing surprising for those who know that the power and consideration which a man may have possessed in this lower life give him no supremacy in the spirit-world. Spirits confirm the gospel statement that *"the last shall be first, and the first shall be last,"* as regards the rank of each of us when we return among them. Thus he who has been first in the earthly life may be one of the last in the spirit-world; he before whom all bowed their heads during the present life may then find himself beneath the humblest artisan, *for, on quitting the earthly life, he leaves all his grandeur behind him; and the*

most powerful monarch may be lower than the lowest of his subjects.

A fact ascertained by observation, and confirmed by the spirits themselves, is the borrowing of well-known and venerated names by spirits of inferior degree. This causes doubt to exist among many fervent adherents of spiritist doctrine, who admit the reality of the intervention and manifestation of spirits, and they ask themselves what certainty we can have of their identity? This certainty it is, in fact, very difficult to obtain; but though it cannot be settled as authentically as by the attestation of a civil register, it may, at least, be established presumptively, according to certain indications.

When the spirit who manifests himself is that of some one personally known to us, of a relative or friend, for instance, and especially if of one who has been dead but a short time, it is generally found that his language is perfectly in keeping with what we know of his character; thus furnishing a strong presumption of his identity, which is placed almost beyond reach of doubt when the spirit speaks of private affairs, and refers to family matters known only to the party to whom he addresses himself. A son could hardly be mistaken as to the language of his father and mother, nor parents as to that of their child. Most striking incidents often occur in evocations of this intimate kind—things of a nature to

convince the most incredulous. The most skeptical are often astounded by the unexpected revelations thus made to them.

Another very characteristic circumstance often helps to establish a spirit's identity. I have already said that the handwriting of the medium generally changes with the spirit evoked, the same writing being reproduced exactly every time the same spirit presents himself; and it often happens that, in the case of persons recently deceased, this writing bears a striking resemblance to that of the person during life, the signatures, especially, being sometimes perfectly exact. We are, nevertheless, very far from adducing this fact as a rule, or as being of constant recurrence; we merely mention it as a point worthy of notice.

It is only when spirits have arrived at a certain degree of purification that they are entirely freed from all corporeal influences; and as long as they are not completely *dematerialized* (to employ their own expression) they retain most of the ideas, tendencies, and even the *hobbies,* they had while on earth, all of which furnish additional means of identification; but these are especially to be found in the vast number of small details that are only perceived through sustained and attentive observation. Spirits who have been authors are seen to discuss their own works or views, approving or

blaming them; others allude to various circumstances connected with their life or death; and from all these indications we obtain what may, at least, be regarded as moral presumptions in favor of their identity, the only ones that can be looked for under the circumstances of the case.

THE IDENTITY OF THE SPIRIT EVOKED

If, then, the identity of the spirit evoked may be established, to a certain extent and in certain cases, there is no reason why that identity may not exist in others; and although we may not have the same means of identification in regard to persons whose death is of more distant date, you always have that of language and character, for the spirit of a good and enlightened man will assuredly not express himself like that of a depraved or ignorant one. As for inferior spirits who assume honored names, they soon betray themselves by the character of their language and statements. If some one, for instance, calling himself so and so gave utterance to remarks at variance with common sense or morality, his imposture would at once become evident; but if the thoughts expressed by him were always noble, consistent, and of an elevation worthy of the soul he claims to be, there would be no reason to doubt his identity, for otherwise we should have to admit that a spirit whose communications inculcate only good-

ness would knowingly be guilty of falsehood. Experience shows us that spirits of the same degree, of the same character, and animated by the same sentiments, are united in groups and families; but the number of spirits is incalculable, and we are so far from knowing them all, that the names of the immense majority of them are necessarily unknown to us. A spirit of the same category as Buzuj (a Hindu now in spirit land) may, therefore, come to us in his name, and may even be sent by him as his representative; in which case he would naturally announce himself as Buzuj, because he is his equivalent, and able to supply his place, and because we need a name in order to fix our ideas in regard to him. And, after all, what does it matter whether a spirit be really Buzuj or not, if all that he says is excellent, and such as Buzuj himself would be likely to say? For, in that case, he must be a spirit of superior advancement; and the name under which he presents himself is of no importance, being often only a means of fixing our ideas. This sort of substitution would not be acceptable in evocations of a more intimate character; but, in these, as just pointed out, I have other means of ascertaining the identity of the communicating spirit.

It is certain, however, that the assumption of false names by spirits may give rise to numerous mistakes, may be a source of error and deception, and

is, in fact, one of the most serious difficulties of practical spiritism; but I have never said that this field of investigation, any more than any other, is exempt from obstacles, nor that it can be fruitfully explored without serious and persevering effort. I cannot too often reiterate the warning that spiritism is a new field of study for the Western man, and one that demands long and assiduous exploration. Being unable to produce at pleasure the facts on which spiritism is based, you are obliged to wait for them to present themselves; and it often happens that, instead of occurring when you are looking for them, they occur when least expected. For the attentive and patient observer, materials for study are abundant, because he discovers in the facts thus presented thousands of characteristic peculiarities which are for him so many sources of light. It is the same in regard to every other branch of science; while the superficial observer sees in a flower only an elegant form, the botanist discovers in it a mine of interest for his thought.

The foregoing remarks lead me to say a few words in relation to another difficulty—viz., the divergence which exists in the statements made by spirits.

Spirits differing very widely from one another as regards their knowledge and morality, it is evident that the same question may receive from them very

different answers, according to the rank at which they have arrived; exactly as would be the case if it were propounded alternately to a man of science, an ignoramus, and a mischievous wag. The important point, as previously remarked, is to know who is the spirit to whom you are addressing your questions.

But, it will be argued, how is it that spirits who are admittedly of superior degree are not all of the same opinion? I reply, in the first place, that there are, independently of the cause of diversity just pointed out, other causes that may exercise an influence on the nature of the replies, irrespectively of the quality of the spirits themselves. This is a point of the highest importance, and one that will be explained by your ulterior study of the subject, provided that this study be prosecuted with the aid of the sustained attention, the prolonged observation, the method and perseverance that are required in the pursuit of every other branch of human inquiry. Years of study are needed to make even a second-rate physician; three-quarters of a lifetime to make a man of learning: and people fancy that a few hours will suffice to acquire the science of Occultism! Let there be no mistake in regard to this matter. The subject of spiritism is immense. It involves all other subjects, physical, metaphysical, and social; it is a new world that opens before you.

Is it strange that time, and a good deal of time, should be required for becoming acquainted with it?

The contradictions alluded to, moreover, are not always as absolute as they may seem to be at first sight. Do we not see every day that men who are pursuing the same science give various definitions of the same thing; sometimes because they make use of different terms, sometimes because they consider it from different points of view, although the fundamental idea is the same in each case? Let any one count up, if he can, the different definitions that have been given of grammar! It must also be remembered that the form of the answer often depends on the form under which the question has been put; and that it would be childish to regard as a contradiction what is often only a difference of words. The higher spirits pay no heed to forms of expression; for them, the thought itself is everything.

DEFINITION OF SOUL

Let us take, for example, the definition of *soul*. That word, having no fixed meaning, spirits like ourselves may differ in the meaning they give to it. One of them may say that it is "the principle of life;" another may call it "the animic spark;" a third may say that it is internal; a fourth, that it is external, etc.; and each may be right from his own

special point of view. Some of them might even be supposed to hold materialistic views; and yet such is not the case. It is the same with regard to the word *God*. According to some, God is "the principle of all things;" according to others, "the creator of the universe," "the sovereign intelligence," "the Infinite," "the great Spirit," etc.; and nevertheless it is always "God." And so in regard to the classification of spirits. They form an uninterrupted succession from the lowest to the highest; all attempts at classification are, therefore, arbitrary, and they may be regarded as forming three, five, ten, or twenty classes, without involving error or contradiction. All human sciences offer the same variations of detail; every investigator has his own system; and systems change, but science remains the same. Whether we study botany according to one system or another, what we learn is none the less botany. Let us then cease to attribute more importance than they deserve to matters that are merely conventional, and let us devote ourselves only to what is really important; and we shall often discover, on reflection, a similitude of meaning in statements that appeared to us, at first sight, to be contradictory, especially in occult things.

I should pass over the objection of certain Western skeptics in relation to the faulty spelling of some spirits, were it not that this objection affords me

an opportunity of calling attention to a point of great importance. Spirit-orthography, it must be confessed, is not always irreproachable; but he must be very short of arguments who would make this fact the object of serious criticism, on the plea that, "since spirits know everything, they ought to be well up in spelling." I might retort by pointing to the numerous sins against orthography committed by more than one of the lights of science in your own world, and which in no wise invalidate their scientific authority; but a much more important point is involved in the fact alluded to. For spirits, and especially for those of high degree, the idea is everything, the form is nothing. Freed from matter, their language among themselves is as rapid as thought, for it is their thought itself that is communicated without intermediary; and it must, therefore, be very inconvenient for them to be obliged, in communicating with us, to make use of human speech, with its long and awkward forms, its insufficiencies and imperfections, as the vehicle of their ideas. They often allude to this inconvenience; and it is curious to see the means they employ to obviate the difficulty. It would be the same with you if you had to express yourselves in a language of which the words and locutions were longer, and the stock of expressions more scanty, than those you habitually employ. The same difficulty is felt by

the man of genius, impatient of the slowness of his pen, which always lags behind his thought. It is, therefore, easy to understand that spirits attach but little importance to questions of spelling, especially in the transmission of serious and weighty teachings. Should you not rather wonder that they are able to express themselves equally in all tongues and that they understand them all? It must not, however, be inferred from these remarks that they are unable to express themselves with conventional correctness; they do this when they judge it to be necessary; as, for instance, when they dictate verses, some of which, written, moreover, by illiterate mediums, are of a correctness and elegance that defy the severest criticism.

"SPIRITUAL FOUNTAIN."

Oh, Eternal Spiritual Truth: permit this Volume
In justice and honor thy great cause to plead;
For in thee dwells the sum of human hope;
And faithful seeking in the mists of Ages,
Thine Ancient strides, worthily engages
The Faithful Disciple, who follows but thy lead,
Desiring of the future Clairvoyantly to read,
And understand whate'er the time presages
The voice of the Adepts, in no tones uncertain,
Says Life shall triumph over Death,
While every century still higher lifts the curtain,
And light is dawning, as their forces fulfill;
The Spiritual fountain from India Flowing,
On every nation its rich Occult gifts bestowing.

Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER IV.

INSANITY

There are persons who see danger in everything that is new to them, and who have, therefore, not failed to draw an unfavorable conclusion from the fact that some of those who have taken up the subject of spiritism have lost their reason. But how can sensible people urge that fact as an objection? Does not the same thing often happen to weak heads when they give themselves up to any intellectual pursuit? Who shall say how many have gone mad over mathematics, medicine, music, philosophy, etc.? But what does that prove? And are those studies to be proscribed on that account? Arms and legs, the instruments of physical activity, are often injured by physical labor; the brain, instrument of thought, is often impaired by intellectual labor, to which, in fact, many a man may be said to fall a martyr. But, though the instrument may be injured, the mind remains intact, and, when freed from matter, finds itself again in full possession of its faculties.

Intense mental application of any kind may in-

duce cerebral disease; science, art, religion even, have all furnished their quota of madmen. The predisposing cause of madness is to be found in some tendency of the brain that renders it more or less accessible to certain impressions; and, where the predisposition to insanity exists, its manifestation takes on the character of the pursuit to which the mind is most addicted, and which then assumes the form of a fixed idea. This fixed idea may be that of spirits, in the case of those who have been deeply absorbed by spiritist matters; as it may be that of God, of angels, the devil, fortune, power, an art, a science, a political or social system. It is probable that the victim of religious mania would have gone mad on spiritism, if spiritism had been his predominant mental occupation; just as he who goes mad over spiritism would, under other circumstances, have gone mad over something else.

I assert, therefore, that spiritism does not predispose to insanity; nay, more, I assert that, when correctly understood, it is a preservative against insanity.

Among the most common causes of cerebral disturbance must be reckoned the disappointments, misfortunes, blighted affections, and other troubles of human life, which are also the most frequent causes of suicide. But the enlightened Occultist and Adept looks upon the things of this life from so elevated a

point of view, they seem to him so petty, so worthless, in comparison with the future he sees before him—life appears so short, so fleeting—that its tribulations are, in his eyes, merely the disagreeable incidents of a journey. What would produce violent emotion in the mind of another affects him but slightly; besides, he knows that the sorrows of life are trials which aid our advancement, if borne without murmuring, and that he will be rewarded according to the fortitude with which he has borne them. His convictions, therefore, give him a resignation that preserves him from despair, and consequently from a frequent cause of madness and suicide. He knows, moreover, through spirit communications, the fate of those who voluntarily shorten their days; and as such knowledge is well calculated to suggest serious reflection, the number of those who have thus been arrested on the downward path is incalculable. Such is one of the results of Occultism. The incredulous may smile at it as much as they please; I only wish them the consolations it affords to those Adepts who have sounded its mysterious depths.

DREAD OF THE DEVIL

Fear must also be reckoned among the causes of madness. Dread of the devil has deranged many a brain; and who shall say how many victims have

been made by impressing weak imaginations with pictures of which the horrors are enhanced by the hideous details so ingeniously worked into them? The devil, it is sometimes said, frightens only little children, whom it helps to make docile and well-behaved. Yes; but only as do nursery-terrors and bugaboos in general; and when these have lost their power, they who have been subjected to this sort of training are apt to be worse than before; while, on the other hand, those who have recourse to it overlook the risk of epilepsy involved in such disturbing action upon the delicate child-brain. Religion would be weak, indeed, if its power could only be sustained by fear. Happily such is not the case, and it has other means of acting on the mind. Spiritism furnishes the religious element with a more efficient support than superstitious terror. It discloses the reality of things, and thus substitutes a salutary appreciation of the consequences of wrongdoing for the vague apprehensions of unreasonable fear.

Two objections to the teachings of Eastern Occultism still remain to be examined, the only ones really deserving of the name, because they are the only ones founded on a rational basis. Both admit the reality of the material and moral phenomena of spiritism, but deny the intervention of spirits in their production.

According to the first of these objections, all the

manifestations attributed to spirits are merely effects of magnetism, and mediums are in a state that might be called *waking somnambulism,* a phenomenon which may have been observed by any one who has studied astral magnetism. In this state the intellectual faculties acquire an abnormal development; the circle of our intuitive perceptions is extended beyond its ordinary limits; the medium finds in himself and with the aid of his lucidity, all that he says, and all the notions transmitted by him, even in regard to subjects with which he is least familiar in his usual state.

It is not by us, who have witnessed its prodigies and studied all its phases during centuries, that the action of somnambulism could be contested, and we admit that many spirit-manifestations may be thus explained; but we assert that sustained and attentive observation shows us a host of facts in which any intervention of the medium, otherwise than as a passive instrument, is absolutely impossible. To those who attribute the phenomena in question to magnetism, we would say, as to all others, "See, and observe, for you have certainly not seen everything;" and we would also ask them to consider the two following points, suggested by their own view of the subject. In the first place, we would ask them, What is the origin of the hypothesis of spirit-action? Is it an explanation invented by a

few individuals to account for those phenomena? Not at all. By whom, then, has it been broached? By the very clairvoyants and mediums whose lucidity you extol. But if their lucidity be such as you declare it to be, why should they attribute to spirits what they have derived from themselves? How can they have given information so precise, logical, sublime in regard to the nature of those extra-human intelligences? Either mediums are lucid, or they are not; if they are, and if we trust to their veracity, we cannot, without inconsistency, suppose them to be in error on this point. In the second place, if all the phenomena had their source in the medium himself, they would always be identical in the case of each individual; and we should never find the same medium making use of different styles of expression, or giving utterance to contradictory statements.

The want of unity so often observed in the manifestations obtained by the same medium is a proof of the diversity of the spiritual sources from which they proceed; and as the cause of this diversity is not to be found in the medium himself, it must be sought for elsewhere.

According to the other objection, the medium is really the source of the manifestations, but, instead of deriving them from himself, as is asserted by the partisans of the somnambulic theory, he derives

them from the persons among whom he finds himself. The medium is a sort of mirror, reflecting all the thoughts, ideas, and knowledge of those about him; from which it follows that he says nothing which is not known to, at least, some of them. It cannot be denied, for it is one of the fundamental principles of spiritist doctrine, that those who are present exercise an influence upon the manifestations; but this influence is very different from what it is assumed to be by the hypothesis I am considering, and, so far from the medium being the mere echo of the thoughts of those around him, there are thousands of facts that prove directly the contrary. This objection is, therefore, based on a serious mistake, and one that shows the danger of hasty judgments; those who bring it forward, being unable to deny the reality of occult phenomena which the science of the day is incompetent to explain, and being unwilling to admit the presence of spirits, explain them in their own way. Their theory would be specious if it explained all the facts of the case; but this it cannot do. In vain is it proved by the evidence of facts that the communications of the medium are often entirely foreign to the thoughts, knowledge, and even the opinions of those who are present, and that they are frequently spontaneous, and contradict all received ideas; the opponents referred to are not discouraged by so slight a diffi-

culty. The radiation of thought, say they, extends far beyond the circle immediately around us; the medium is the reflection of the human race in general; so that, if he does not derive his inspirations from those about him, he derives them from those who are further off, in the town or country he inhabits, from the people of the rest of the globe, and even from those of other spheres.

I do not think that this theory furnishes a more simple and probable explanation than that given by spirit control; for it assumes the action of a cause very much more marvelous. The idea that universal space is peopled by beings who are in perpetual contact with us, and who communicate to us their ideas, is certainly not more repugnant to reason than the hypothesis of a universal radiation, coming from every point of the universe, and converging in the brain of a single individual, to the exclusion of all the others.

I repeat (and this is a point of such importance that I cannot insist too strongly upon it), that the *somnambulic theory,* and that which may be called the *theory of reflection,* have been devised by the imagination of men; while, on the contrary, the *theory of spirit-agency* is not a conception of the human mind, for it was dictated by the manifesting intelligences themselves, at a time when no one thought of spirits, and when the opinion of the gen-

erality of men was opposed to such a supposition. We have, therefore, to inquire, first, from what quarter the mediums can have derived a hypothesis which had no existence in the thought of any one on earth? and, secondly, by what strange coincidence it can have happened that tens of thousands of mediums, scattered over the entire globe, and utterly unknown to one another, all agree in asserting the same thing? If the first medium who appeared in India was influenced by opinions already received in another country, by what strange guidance was he made to go in search of ideas across two thousand leagues of sea, and among a people whose habits and language were foreign to his own, instead of taking them in his own immediate vicinity?

MANIFESTATIONS IN INDIA

But there is yet another circumstance to which sufficient attention has not been given. The earliest manifestations, in India, as in other countries, were not made either by writing or by speech, but by actual communications, forming words and sentences. It is by this means that the manifesting intelligences declared themselves to be astral spirits; and, therefore, even though we should admit an intervention of the medium's mind in the production of verbal or written communications, we could

not do so in regard to manifestations, whose meaning could not have been known beforehand.

The Hindus might adduce any number of facts proving the existence of a personal individuality and an absolutely independent will on the part of the manifesting intelligence; and we, therefore, invite our opponents to a more attentive observation of the phenomena in question, assuring them that, if they study these without prejudice, and refrain from drawing a conclusion until they have made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the subject, they will find that their theories are unable to account for all of them. We will only propose to such antagonists the two following queries:

1. Why does it so often happen that the manifesting intelligence refuses to answer certain questions in regard to matters that are perfectly known to the questioner, as, for instance, his name or age, what he has in his hand, what he did yesterday, what he intends to do on the morrow, etc.? If the medium be only a mirror reflecting the thought of those about him, nothing should be easier for him than to answer such questions.

If our adversaries retort by inquiring why it is that spirits, who ought to know everything, are unable to answer questions so simple, and conclude, from this presumed inability, that the phenomena cannot be caused by spirits, we would ask them

whether, if an ignorant or foolish person should inquire of some learned body the reason of its being light at noonday, any answer would be returned to his question? and whether it would be reasonable to conclude, from the derision or the silence with which such a question might be received, that its members were merely a set of asses? It is precisely because they are at a higher point than ourselves that spirits decline to answer idle and foolish questions; keeping silence when such are asked, or advising us to employ ourselves with more serious subjects.

2. We have also to ask them why it is that spirits come and depart at their own pleasure, and why, when once they have taken their departure, neither prayers nor entreaties can bring them back? If the medium were acted upon solely by the mental impulsion of those around him, it is evident that the union of their wills, in such a case, ought to stimulate his clairvoyance. If, therefore, he do not yield to the wishes of those assembled, strengthened by his own desire, it is because he obeys an influence which is distinct from himself and from those about him, and which thus asserts its own independence and individuality.

Incredulity in regard to a future life and spirit-communication, when not the result of systematic opposition from selfish motives, has almost always

its source in an imperfect acquaintance with the facts of the case; which, however, does not prevent a good many persons from attempting to settle the question as though they were perfectly familiar with it. It is possible to be very clever, very learned, and yet to lack clearness of judgment; and a belief in one's own infallibility is the surest sign of the existence of this defect. Many persons, too, regard spirit manifestations as being only a matter of curiosity. Let us hope that the reading of these writings will show them that the wonderful phenomena in question are something else than a pastime.

Spiritism consists of two parts: one of these, the experimental, deals with the subject of the manifestations in general; the other, the philosophic, deals with the class of manifestations denoting intelligence. Whoever has only observed the former is in the position of one whose knowledge of physics, limited to experiments of an amusing nature, does not extend to the fundamental principles of that science. Eastern Occultism consists of teachings imparted by Astral Spirits and the knowledge thus conveyed is of a character far too serious to be mastered without serious and persevering attention. If the present teachings had no other result than to show the serious nature of the subject, and to induce inquirers to approach it in this spirit, it would be sufficiently important; and we should re-

joice to have been chosen for the accomplishment of a work in regard to which we take no credit to ourselves, the principles it contains not being of the Hindu Adept's own creating, and whatever honor it may obtain being entirely due to the Astral Spirits by whom it has been dictated. We hope that it will achieve yet another result—viz., that of serving as a guide to those who are desirous of enlightenment in Hindu Occultism, by showing them the grand and sublime end of individual and social progress to which the teachings of Hindu Spiritism directly tend, and by pointing out to them the road by which alone that end can be reached.

Let us wind up these introductory remarks with one concluding observation. Astronomers, in sounding the depths of the sky, discovered seemingly vacant spaces not in accordance with the general laws that govern the distribution of the heavenly bodies, and they therefore conjectured that those spaces were occupied by globes that had escaped their observation. On the other hand, they observed certain effects the cause of which was unknown to them; and they said to themselves, "In such a region of space there must be a world, for otherwise there would be a void that ought not to exist; and the effects we have observed imply the presence in that seeming void of such a world as their cause." Reasoning, then, from those effects

to their cause, they calculated the elements of the globe whose presence they had inferred, and facts subsequently justified their inference. Let us apply the same mode of reasoning to another order of ideas. If we observe the series of beings, we find that they form a continuous chain from brute matter to man. But between man and God, who is the Alpha and Omega of all things, what an immense hiatus! Is it reasonable to suppose that the links of the chain stop short with man, that he can vault, without transition, over the distance which separates him from the Infinite? Reason shows us that between man and God there must be other links, just as it showed the astronomers that between the worlds then known to them there must be other worlds as yet unknown to them. What system of philosophy has filled this hiatus? Spiritism shows that it is filled with the beings of all the ranks of the invisible world, and that these beings are no other than the spirits of men who have reached the successive degrees that lead up to perfection; and all things are thus seen to be linked together from one end of the chain to the other. Let those who deny the existence of spirits tell us what are the occupants of the immensity of space which spirits declare to be occupied by them; and let those who scoff at the idea of spirit-teachings give us a nobler idea than is given by those teachings of the handi-

work of God, a more convincing demonstration of His goodness and His power.

OCCULT PHENOMENA

PHENOMENA which are inexplicable by any known physical laws are occurring all over the world, and revealing the action of a free and intelligent will as their cause.

Reason tells us that an intelligent effect must have an intelligent force for its cause; and facts have proved that this force is able to enter into communication with men by the employment of material signs.

This force, interrogated as to its nature, has declared itself to belong to the world of spiritual beings who have thrown off the corporeal envelope of men. It is thus that the existence of spirits has been revealed to the Hindu Adepts.

Communication between the spirit world and the corporeal world is in the nature of things, and has in it nothing supernatural. Traces of its existence are to be found among all nations and in every age; they are now becoming general and evident to all. Spirits assure us that the time appointed by Providence for a universal manifestation of their existence has now come; and that their mission, as the ministers of God and the instruments of His will, is to inaugurate, through the instructions they are

charged to convey to us, a new era of regeneration for the human race.

This "Book of Death" is a compilation of their teachings. It has been written by the order and under the dictation of disembodied spirits of high degree, for the purpose of establishing the bases of a rational philosophy, free from the influence of prejudices and of preconceived opinions. It contains nothing that is not the expression of their thought; nothing that has not been submitted to their approbation. The method adopted in the arrangement of its contents, the comments upon these, and the form given to certain portions of the work, are all that has been contributed by Dr. L. W. de Laurence, to whom the duty of giving it to the world has been entrusted.

Many of the spirits who have taken part in the accomplishment of this task declare themselves to have been persons whom we know to have lived at different epochs upon the earth, preaching and practising virtue and wisdom. Of the names of others, history has preserved no trace; but their elevation is attested by the purity of their doctrine and their union with those who bear venerated names.

We transcribe the words in which, by writing, through the intermediary of various Hindu mediums, the mission of preparing this book was confided to the writer:—

ADVICE FROM ASTRAL SPIRITS TO DR. DE LAURENCE

"Be zealous and persevering in the work you have undertaken in conjunction with us, for this work is ours. In the teachings you are to give the world, we shall lay the foundations of the new edifice which is destined to unite all men in a common sentiment of love and charity; but, before making it public, we shall go through it with you, so as to ensure its accuracy.

"We shall be with you whenever you ask for our presence, and shall aid you in all your labors; for the preparation of this work is only a part of the mission which has been confided to you, and of which you have already been informed by one of us.

"Of the magical teachings given to you, some are to be kept to yourself for the present; we shall tell you when the time for publishing them has come. Meanwhile make them the subject of your meditations, that you may be ready to treat of them at the proper moment.

"Put at the beginning of *The Book of Death* the Hindu Symbol we have drawn for that purpose, because it is the emblem of the worth of the Hindu. In it are united all the material elements that most

fitly symbolize body and spirit; the figure represents the Astral World of Spirits; the letters spelling the word DEATH; the flame, the union of body and spirit. Man's labor calls forth the latent qualities of the spirit; the labor of the body develops, through the knowledge thus acquired, the latent powers of the soul.

"Do not allow yourself to be discouraged by hostile criticism. You will have rancorous contradictors, especially among those whose interest it is to keep up existing abuses. You will have such even among spirits; for those who are not completely dematerialized often endeavor, out of malice or ignorance, to scatter abroad the seeds of doubt. Believe in immortal life, and go boldly forward. We shall be with you to sustain you on your way; and the time is at hand when the truth of spiritism will shine forth on all sides.

"The vanity of some men, who imagine that they know everything, and are bent on explaining everything in their own way, will give rise to opposing opinions; but all who have in view the grand principle of Magic will be united in the same love of goodness, and in a bond of brotherhood that will embrace the entire world. Putting aside all vain disputes about words, they will devote their energies to matters of practical importance, in regard to which, whatever their doctrinal belief, the con-

victions of all who receive the communications of the higher spirits will be the same.

"Perseverance will render your labor fruitful. The pleasure you will feel in witnessing the spread of our doctrine and its right appreciation will be for you a rich reward, though perhaps rather in the future than in the present. Be not troubled by the thorns and stones that the incredulous and the evil-minded will place in your path; hold fast your confidence, for your confidence will ensure our help, and, through it, you will reach the goal.

"Remember that good spirits only give their aid to those who serve God with humility and disinterestedness; they disown all who use heavenly things as a stepping-stone to earthly advancement, and this the High Caste Adepts of India never do, and withdraw from the proud and the ambitious. Pride and ambition are a barrier between man and God; for they blind man to the splendors of spiritual existence, and God cannot employ the blind to make known the light and truth of this Great Wisdom."

CHAPTER V.

DEATH

The elements of the soul of man in their very nature are such that they are a substantial psychic organism which extends throughout the entire physical body, permeating the whole nervous system.

Again the soul of man is strictly a psychic and not a physical organism. Neither is it subject to the ordinary physical laws of dissolution and lies, as such, absolutely without the range of chemical analysis.

The human soul always has and always shall be subject to the conditions and laws of evolution and when the soul ceases to inhabit the body, abandoning its earthly habitation, it changes a condition of its existence; this condition being of no further use for its future progress or future evolution.

The condition of the soul, its desires, powers, the intellectual faculties and their law of action remain the same after the so-called death. In other words, a man, woman or child remain the same whether they exist in the physical body or on the Astral Plane.

Death or soul transition, so much talked of and so little understood by the ordinary individual and western scientists in general, is simply a decided change in the present condition of the soul's existence, but does not in the least affect its essence or actual existence, neither does it interfere with, or in any way affect its organism, faculties, desires or possibilities, and the practical student of Eastern Occultism may accept it as a Sacred Truth, that the lives of men, women and children, whom many speak of as departed spirits, have an actual and real existence after the so-called death.

ADVANCED STUDENTS OF OCCULTISM

Those who deserve to be numbered among the advanced students of Occultism must first realize this great truth, *for ye may fail to fulfill a law, but none of ye can break or destroy a law by skepticism.*

The soul is immortal and eternal, its law is eternal existence. Every soul continues to develop and increase in growth, power and understanding up to the minute of its departure from the body. Why does it depart? For this is what ye western people call death. My answer to you is simply because it can make no other progress in its present condition; that is while it remains in the body, but why should any sane person be so foolish as to assume that there is a cessation of existence? Is it any sign that

because a drop, body or stream of water is drawn up and attracted toward the sun that it ceases to exist entirely? Certainly not so, for it only changes its condition of existence.

The only actual and essential difference between the existence of the soul while it inhabits the body and after it ceases to inhabit it and ascends to the Astral Plane is that it becomes, strictly speaking, "*Clairvoyant*," it being literally spiritual in its existence and no longer encumbered with the physical organism, its sense of preception is spiritual instead of material and of course becomes Clairvoyant.

ASTRAL GUIDES AND SPIRITS

When the human soul passes fully into its great astral existence, the Clairvoyant and Spiritual graces of the soul will henceforth rule. The whole soul of man becomes transformed and for the first time his soul will be brought into complete unison with Astral Guides and Spirits, and his eternal life. Man is then, and only then, able to yield in full obedience to high spiritual laws and then to perceive clairvoyantly. He then becomes master of himself throughout and the perfect obedience, duration and extent of his powers will be co-extensive with his desires. With this change will come that development called New, or Spiritual Birth. It is then the spiritual sense will become refined and powerful, so much

so that all will see the innermost thoughts and desires of their friends and associates still in the body and they can enter into intimate spirit communication with them.

Man during his earthly existence with his physical senses to only partly inform him as to the true and actual facts of his existence may doubt some of these things. But did you ever stop to think that when you walk into a room that, although you do not see that in order to do this, you are compelled to force an amount of air, equal to the size of your body, out of the enclosure. You may not realize that to swing your body or arm through the air you must push the air first before your body or arm. And let me say right here that you have many things to learn. Many and numerous are the revelations that you will receive and the time will slowly but surely come when you will realize how little you know or ever knew. For does a tree grow and expand all at once? Can a grain of wheat feel, know and literally realize what it means to be developed and expanded into a growing sprout.

If the Air, Auror and Ether were visible to the physical eye how many would grow more weary walking or running. Then again the Great Western Scientist and Philosopher (so-called) would never have dared to have thought of shaping his absurd, nonsensical and incomprehensible story and theory

of vacant space as that which has so long disgraced their teachings. They have built their philosophy upon a vast and vague basis of nothingness, for they have sought to build before the student a great temple of mysteries and theology. A nonsensical and impenetrable wall and barrier of infinitude to keep mankind from any true or definite knowledge of his Divine existence.

Man's life during his present and future existence would be far better termed immortal than so one-sided.

Certain theories have served very well as a scarecrow for many learned pseudo-philosophers and scientists to frighten and intimidate their fellow beings and followers. Many a sprout has taught his followers that as the Almighty is Infinite, and that all Astral and Spiritual powers are such, and that therefore the mortal mind of man cannot comprehend them, but that they should trustingly and most blindly accept such as sublime mysteries. Such teachings are directly opposed to the true law of the Soul. Many have said that in immortal life man shall have knowledge of himself. But it is the Divine Right and duty of every Soul to learn, for when a true and Sacred Knowledge of Spiritism fills the soul Blind faith and mystery cannot exist there.

PSEUDO-PHILOSOPHERS

One of the great and glaring errors of our pseudo-philosophers is in regard to the first beginning cause. But let me illustrate to you the following example cloaked with their ignorance.

The natural change and alteration of common combustion in any flame will cause light. This light in its turn must cause an effect and impression on the eyeball and optic nerve. This in its turn makes an impression on the brain; and in the natural course of events becomes the origin and cause of a train or succession of ideas and thoughts or deep emotions, but do not forget that in this case as in every other of its kind the effect and motion is transferred from one object to another and what terminates as an effect at one end or step is the origin or beginning of a cause and effect at the beginning of another change.

So you must plainly see that cause and effect are only terms when rightfully used to designate the points or steps in the change of conditions in the life of men. This line, strange to state, is always a circle, because all forces and causes are convertible; therefore it becomes evident that there cannot be a beginning and first cause of anything any more than there is a beginning or end to man's life.

The reader or student of these writings will be

surprised indeed to learn that Adepts of India must be thoroughly familiar with every department of science and research, also have a detailed knowledge of all operations, also of the First Principles of Natural Magic, Astrology, Alchemy, Botany, Mineralogy, Chemistry, etc., etc. Indeed he must become intimately acquainted with every subject coming within the scope of earth and spiritual life. He must be educated by spiritual advisers and meditate for years in deep thought and logic, and live the life of one who has raised the spiritual veil so that nothing in the past, present or future is hidden or misunderstood.

He sees how the Western man clings to the "illusion of time." Realizes that even their most profound and stable of sciences (Mathematics) is based and on "The Airy Fabric of Vision." For there is no such thing as "Time." It is as much of an illusion as is the conception of space. The Western man and scientist believes that time is a succession of events.

What is a minute, an hour, a month, a century?

The Western Scientist says that twenty-four hours constitute a day, the length of time our planet consumes in rotating once around its axis.

Take the circumference of the earth, separate it into twenty-four equal parts, stand a man at each of

these twenty-four given points; what will be the result?

The Western scientist will answer you by replying that there would be one hour's time between each of the twenty-four men. Now move your men twenty degrees further north or south; you would certainly have them nearer together; but still there would be an hour's difference in time between each, for you say the globe rotates once every twenty-four hours; again move your twenty-four men so near the pole that they can shake hands, or join hands, forming a complete circle by actual contact. Now, according to the Western idea of space and time, there would be an hour's difference of time in each. If it would be one o'clock by one man's watch it is two o'clock by the man's watch to the right and twelve o'clock by the man's watch to the left. These men connected in a circle by joining hands could, according to your theory of time and space, travel in ten minutes over a hundred years of time.

They could turn the opposite way and walk into the vanished centuries of the past, or you could annul time completely by going to the next man at the minute an hour was about to expire, or by standing on the North Pole itself always have it one o'clock. This in itself would be superfluous, as no time exists there.

What the Western mathematician terms mathe-

matics or the science of numbers and their quantity is another illustration of "an illusion," the same as their idea of time, for what are your mathematics founded upon? Simply upon a presumptious, hypothetical assumption. That is to say, that your numbers in themselves, individually or collectively, amount to nothing, for as an example, the number one certainly has no existence. This, of course, will seem odd and in a great sense a revelation, but it is as old and eternal as the mountains themselves, for what is the Western mathematician's number one? An object or individual must certainly relate to some actual existing object or article, for all abstract conceptions are ideal and consequently unreal. Is it a city, a horse or a river? The certain city, horse or river will not appear the same to any two or more persons on this earth. The reason of this is that there are no two minds, as far as outward conception is concerned, that are exactly alike. Again the city which you observe this day is not the city which you beheld or observed yesterday or a week ago, as during this time your mind and soul have undergone many changes, however slight, and the universe to you is no longer the same. Your science of numbers is then founded upon a something which has no tangible or even definable existence, and when you stop to think and consider your science of mathematics you will realize that it is an

incongruous conglomeration, overflowing with contradictions and absurdities. To illustrate: An individual can picture things, imagining a possibility of reaching it or approaching an object without the least opportunity or chance of really approaching or reaching it. Now this is exactly what your Western infallible scientists and mathematicians teach you. We will assume now, for instance, that you are indebted to a second party for a certain amount of money, or say a twenty-dollar gold piece, and you enter into an agreement with said party to pay or discharge said obligation in the following manner: that is, one-half or part of said gold piece you will pay tomorrow, one-fourth of the same you will pay the following month and so on; now you are always paying one-half of the amount you have disbursed on the previous month. Have you any idea what length of time you will have to continue discharging this obligation or making payments, or when your obligation or debt will be cancelled and paid? An individual might keep this up and go on discharging his debt month after month for many millions of years and he would never pay off that gold piece. This illustration or sample of your fallacy of numbers is an exact truth, but many a Western mathematician prodigy will say it is self-evident, yet to him it involves a profound, far-reaching mystery.

SACRED CASTE OF INDIA

To further illustrate the fallacy of Western mathematics you are continuously adding one fraction to another and heaping up certain amounts of gold to an everlasting eternity without the slightest or remotest possibility of reaching the amount of your gold piece, for stop again and think that every payment lands you a trifle nearer the goal, but you never reach it. Does this not in itself demonstrate the fallacy of your entire science of numbers and prove that the same is "an illusion?" Man's existence outside of the Sacred Caste of India is certainly not one of peace of mind or joy, for during his earthly existence does he dwell in a state of happiness or sorrow and grief? Can you realize or recall a single day during your existence when you were thoroughly contented and free from desires or wish for amelioration? Are you perfectly contented now? A man may roam and travel everywhere; this in itself will be an education unto him and bring him in contact with many different races and species of mankind, but he will never meet an individual, old or young, rich or poor, of high or low Caste, king or peasant, who is perfectly contented with his condition on earth, for he will be filled with a desire and longing for something more and better. The human soul never has and never will be free

from amelioration, or ever become contented, because the very nature of his soul and his existence on the earth plane attracts to him and involves grief and tears. The constitution of man, his faculties and desires of his soul are the same all around the globe. They differ slightly, of course, in a degree, but he must necessarily possess the same qualities of soul for his universal adaptation to the law of life. Man's earthly existence in itself is conducive to, and signifies pain, both bodily and mentally, for he is encumbered with a material body, with a thousand and one desires which he will never be able to gratify. Consequently his existence instead of being a condition that is of advantage to him in his present state is an existence of longing and suffering, although he may exist under the most favorable conditions, and what he may term contentment and peace this hour is only a temporary absence of pain and want, but in time pain, desire and a longing will fill up this space the same as darkness will fill a room that is light. The earthly existence of man is full of sorrow and pain. The sensitive human soul feels the pangs of agony and sorrow that are thrown out by the millions of despairing human hearts and souls around it; consequently, how can it remain serene and peaceful surrounded by so much sorrow and suffering? The great cardinal principle of Eastern Occultism and its teachings is soul reincarnation.

The same has been subject to great thought and study by the Western man, but many have failed to grasp the far-reaching significance of this great philosophy. He is given to doubt the great eternal law and truth of soul reincarnation. Yet nothing is more self-evident. No man is able to recall to his memory the previous condition of his existence, and because of this he believes it an impossibility. Does any person recall to memory the first six months or year of his earthly life? Yet he existed three and six months in an embryonic state before his birth, but has no recollection of this condition, but within every human soul, through the faculty of intuition, there is a consciousness that he has existed forevermore. Are you able to call to mind a day or second when you did not exist? or a time when your soul or spirit will ever cease to exist? Death, as referred to previously in this chapter, is simply a change in conditions of the existence and actual condition of the soul. The soul certainly survives the change of conditions. The great advantage of death, or soul transition, lies in the fact that you are leaving behind and abandoning your poor physical body, which has held you down like a mighty weight, but the thought and sorrow that depresses the soul when it entertains the thought of death is driven out when you recollect that after soul transition you will dwell with those who have passed to the spirit life, and

who are near and dear to you, and that your life ever after will be thoroughly happy. No human soul would desire or really look upon it as a blessing to enter a state of eternal existence encumbered with a diseased and worn physical body, for when the soul leaves the body it rids itself of it and its memories, which soon fade from the mind. The body and physical senses in themselves have been the means of our entertaining many illusions and follies. They have been the instigator of many of our crimes and shortcomings. The future state of existence of the soul is not one that will involve trouble or sorrow. Man's whole life is an illusion, and the past a dream, his present state of existence is actual, his future on the earth plane also is an illusion as far as the bodily senses are concerned, because, as has been stated, he is never satisfied or contented with his present surroundings or condition, and is always cherishing a hope of wealth and future happiness some time in the future, but to him it is always in the future. His tomorrow becomes today, and a year from this day he expects to be happy, but that blissful time never materializes. The things and objects that he has so greatly desired and has expected to gain, flee from him like a rainbow or like a bird that flits from branch to branch. Thus it is ever through life on the earth plane. Old men and women let their memory flit and dwell back

over their past life like an individual who wakes up in the morning contemplating upon a dream. Then, and only then, the whole truth comes upon them that they have been chasing a rainbow, existing in a paradise that has been folly, for how many desire to live over again their life if they were to undergo the same storms of fate, ambition and revenge?

WESTERN TEACHINGS

Religion in the Western churches contains no immortality. The continuation of the soul after death to many of its members is a mere fanciful philosophy and it comes to them as a dim shadow. Nevertheless it is a stern reality, for death does not extinguish forever the human soul. It is true that that which begins at a given time must end at a given time. No man's life can begin at a certain period and go on ever afterwards, for if the life of man were to begin at a certain time and end at a given time this would have happened long, long, ago, as a great eternity lies behind you. Western teachings are not conducive to a man's studying or reasoning a thing out from an Occult or spiritual standpoint. His views are purely material, everything is doubt and uncertainty, he is surrounded by a maze of doubts. He has no consciousness of the great Occult and spiritual powers which concern

him. Many have little knowledge of the spiritual influences that seek to educate and develop him, for in his poor material blind way he turns his back and closes his soul to them. Many even sneer at the teachings of these great Hindu philosophers, but the individual who has become developed in things spiritual can easily feel those Occult and Spiritual powers which are concealed from the multitude of materialists or those who have not developed spiritual sight, but the Western student or scientist must ever realize that when he sneers at Eastern Occultism or the teachings of the great philosophers, that all ancient wisdom and "wise men" have come from the East. The Jesus of the Holy Scripture thoroughly understood the Occult secrets of the Eastern Cult and Brotherhood. Again, the Hindu of Sacred Caste, from the land of the Lotus and Magic, has descended from the subtle races who have developed strange and wonderful powers and have reached the highest pinnacle of spiritual culture. India was enchanted when Abraham and his cattle crossed the plains of Chaldea. The Hindu Priest, owing to his love for deep thought and solitary meditation, has developed latent powers and faculties far superior to the Western man. The Western student has the philosophy and teachings, also the life and works of Jesus, the Christ, and his Apostles written in the New Testament, but sad to say, there are few who

are able to interpret them, and while it is not my intention to make any comparison between Christ, the Divine Nazarene, and Buddha, it should be plainly understood that the fundamental principles that underlie all religions are the same. A deep student of Occultism respects every teaching and every form and manner of religion. He makes no distinction between the rich and poor, the great and lowly, members of any creed or of any church. These great Hindu philosophers have passed beyond this. They are true Christians in every sense of the word, and are broad enough in their comprehension to realize the truth in the different religions. The hypocritical, narrow-minded church member or Christian thinks that he sees a vast difference and inquires, "Is this man of our creed and church?" but to the true Adept, in whom dwells great spiritual light and power, some good at least is to be acquired by all of the many forms of true faith. To him all souls are eternal from one eternal God head. True spiritism should teach mankind that his life on the earth plane, while filled with dread and despair, is one of growth and development which will ultimately lead him to wisdom and harmony.

THE FEAR OF DEATH

The fear of death by those persons who believe in the future life is altogether misplaced, but when

people from birth have been thoroughly indoctrinated into the belief that there is a Hell as well as a Heaven, and that they will most likely go to the former, because whatever belongs to human life is a mortal sin for the soul, they are naturally afraid, if they retained their religious belief, of the fire that is to burn them forever without destroying them. But most of those who are thus indoctrinated in their childhood, if possessed of judgment, throw aside that belief when they grow up, and, being unable to assent to such a doctrine, become atheists or materialists; so that the natural effect of such teachings is to make them believe that there is nothing beyond this present life. "Death has no terrors for the righteous man, because, with faith, he has the certainty of a future life; hope leads him to expect an existence happier than his present one, and charity, which has been the law of his action, gives him the assurance that, in the world which he is about to enter, he will meet with no one whose recognition he will have reason to dread."

Inasmuch as death leads us to a better life, and since it delivers us from the ills of our present existence, and is therefore to be rather desired than dreaded, many may wonder why in man there exists this instinctive dread of death, but as I have told you man must seek to prolong his life in order to accomplish his task. To this end God has given him

the instinct of self-preservation, and this instinct sustains him under all trials; but for it he would too often abandon himself to discouragement. The inner voice, which tells him to repel death, tells him also that he may yet do something more for his advancement. Every danger that threatens him is a warning that bids him make a profitable use of the respite granted to him by God; but he, ungrateful, gives thanks more often to his "star of good fortune" than to his "creator."

The carnally-minded man, more attracted by corporeal life than by the life of the spirit, knows only the pains and pleasures of terrestrial existence. His only happiness is in the fugitive satisfaction of his earthly desires; his mind, constantly occupied with the vicissitudes of the present life and painfully affected by them, is tortured with perpetual anxiety. The thought of death terrifies him because he has doubts about his future, and because he has to leave all his affections and all his hopes behind him when he leaves the earth. The spiritually-minded man, who has raised himself above the fictitious wants created by the passions, has, even in this lower life, enjoyments unknown to the carnally-minded. The moderation of his desires gives calmness and serenity to his spirit. Happy in the good he does, life has no disappointments for him, and its vexations pass lightly over his consciousness, without leaving upon it any painful impress.

The human soul after it has ceased to inhabit the physical body and at death passes to the Astral Plane still possesses the powers of perception which it possessed in earth life, and many others which it did not possess in that life, because its body acted as a veil which obscured them. Intelligence is an attribute of spirit; but it is manifested more freely when not hindered by the trammels of flesh. "The nearer the soul approaches to perfection the more it knows. Spirits of the higher orders possess a wide range of knowledge; those of the lower orders are more or less ignorant in regard to everything."

The life of spirits is exterior to the idea of time as perceived by us. The idea of duration may be said to be annihilated for them; ages, which seems so long to us, appear to them only as so many instants lapsing into eternity, just as the inequalities of the earth's surface are effaced and disappear beneath the gaze of the aeronaut as he mounts into space. Spirits take a truer and more precise view of the present than we do. "Their view, in comparison with yours, is pretty much what eyesight is in comparison with blindness. They see what you do not see; they judge, therefore, otherwise than you do. But I must remind you that this depends on their degree of elevation." Spirits acquire the knowledge of the past, and this knowledge is without limits for them. "The past, when spirits turn

their attention to it, is perceived by them as though it were present, exactly as is the case with you when you call to mind something which may have struck you in the course of your present life, with this difference, however, that, as Astral Spirit's view is no longer obscured by the material veil which covers your intelligence, they remember things that are at present effaced from your memory. But Spirits do not know everything; for example, their creation."

When spirits foresee the future it depends on their degree of advancement. Very often they foresee it only partially; but, even when they foresee it more clearly, they are not always permitted to reveal it. When they foresee it it appears to them to be present. A spirit sees the future more clearly in proportion as he approaches God. After death the soul sees and embraces at a glance all its past emigrations; but it cannot see what God has in store for it. This foreknowledge is only possessed by the soul that has attained to entire union with God after a long succession of existences.

Spirits require no light in order to see things that are transpiring on the earth plane, as spirits transport themselves from point to point with the rapidity of thought they may be said to see everywhere at the same time. A spirit's thought may radiate at the same moment on many different points; but this faculty depends on his purity. The more impure

the spirit the narrower is his range of sight. It is only the higher spirits who can take in the whole at a single glance.

THE FACULTY OF VISION AMONG SPIRITS

The faculty of vision among spirits is a property inherent in their nature, and which resides in their whole being, as light resides in every part of a luminous body. It is a sort of a universal lucidity, which extends to everything, which embraces at one time space and things, and in relation to which darkness or material obstacles have no existence. And a moment's reflection shows that this must necessarily be the case. In the human being, sight being produced by the play of an organ acted upon by light, it follows that, without light, man finds himself in darkness; but the faculty of vision being an attribute of the spirit himself, independentely of any exterior agent, spirit-sight is independent of light. Spirits see more distinctly than mankind, for their sight penetrates what his cannot. They are also able to perceive and hear sounds that mankind with his obtuse senses cannot hear, as all the percepted faculties of a spirit are attributes of its nature forming part of its being. When man is encumbered with a physical body his sense of perception reach only through the channels of his physical sense

organs. Spirits of higher orders see and hear only what they choose to, but evil spirits are compelled to see and hear, often against their will, whatever may be useful for their amelioration. Spirits are also affected by music, but there is no comparison with the music of the celestial realms, the harmony of which nothing on the earth plane can compare. The one in comparison with the other is crude and the melodies of spirit life are one of perfect harmony. Earth-bound spirits, however, take great pleasure in hearing the music that is made by the hand of man, because they have not yet been able to appreciate anything more sublime. Music has great charms for spirits and is one of the best means of invocation, owing to the great development of their sensitive organs. Spirits do not experience our physical ailments and sufferings, as they know them, because they have undergone them, but they do not have to experience them materially: they are spirits. Neither do spirits experience fatigue and the need of rest. "They cannot feel fatigue as you understand it, and consequently they have no need of your corporeal rest, because they have no organs whose strength requires to be restored. But a spirit may be said to take rest, inasmuch as he is not constantly in a state of activity. He does not act materially; his action is altogether intellectual, and his resting is altogether moral; that is to say, that there are

moments when his thoughts become less active and is no longer directed to any special object, and this constitutes for him a state which is really one of repose, but a kind of repose which cannot be likened to that of the body. The sort of fatigue which may be felt by spirits is proportionate to their inferiority; for the higher their degree of elevation the less is their need of rest.

PROOFS OF IMMORTALITY AFTER DEATH

"Evidence adduced to demonstrate a peaceful and happy state beyond the tomb."

Death brings every human being face to face with the greatest mystery known to man. It is that which closes all the scenes that lie between the morn of laughter and the night of tears, and where ends the false and true, the joys and griefs, the careless, shallow and the tragic deeps of earthly life.

But why should you dread that which will come to all that that is? You do not know, you cannot realize which is the greatest blessing, life or death. You cannot say that death is not better, and those of you who believe in immortality know that the grave is not the end of your existence, but that it is the door to another and more beautiful life, and that the night of sadness here is the dawn of your soul into spiritual life.

No person standing beside a grave has any right to prophesy a future life filled with pain and sorrow; for death gives all there is of worth to life, and those who stand with breaking hearts around the coffin of their dead need have no fear or sorrow for their future; for death, even at the worst, is only life continued.

You all must know that every human being prefers happiness to misery, and that sorrow and gloom are but the result of mistakes, and when we look with pity upon those around us, upon their pain and poverty, their sorrow and despair, we realize the truth of the celebrated Hindu Adept's words, who was great and good enough to say:

"There is no darkness, but ignorance."

It is only ignorance of what death really is that causes anyone to regard it with dread and sorrow, as it has been noticed by many observing people who have been at the bedside of a dying friend or loved one that just as the soul is about to leave the poor, diseased body a bright smile appears in the face. The dying seem to realize and see that they are going to a better and happier life.

The old idea of a fiery hell and eternal torment is fading away, and this generation seems to be getting a nearer insight into the spiritual and eternal life beyond the tomb, and that there is still some-

thing warm and familiar in those loved ones of ours for whom we yearn our past the grave, not cold and ghastly as they seemed at death, but human and sympathetic, with familiar faces; for they are not lost utterly to us even on earth, only a little farther off.

There is a great wave of spiritual light spreading over the Western world, bringing man nearer to his ascended friends. The horizon broadens and is filled with a golden light and warmth. Man need not be afraid to die; for the soul there is no death, only continuous life.

There will come a day when it will be demonstrated that the human soul throughout earthly existence lives in a condition where it can have communion, actual and indissoluble, with those who have passed to the spirit world beyond, and that they can come to us at any time and are with us many times when we have no knowledge of their presence.

Death is a delighted transition to light and peace with no fear; the dying, as the earthly eyes grow dim, can with their spiritual sight look across the border to that higher life. Voices from the spirit land are human and natural; for the only angels there are those of our friends and loved ones. All superstitious dread of ghosts and the dead should be banished, as should dread and terror of death, and in their place should come that sweet and sacred

feeling of the lover and husband described in the following beautiful spiritual poem:

ALONE WERE HE AND SHE

"She is dead," they said to him, "Come away!
Kiss her and leave her, thy love in clay."
And they held their breaths, as they left the room
With a shudder, to glance at the stillness and gloom.
But he who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,
He lit his lamp and took his key
And turned it—"alone were he and she."

Our spirit, or our soul, is clad in an earthly body, and the spirits or souls from that higher life are clad in Astral Bodies. It may be asked in regard to spirit manifestations and communications, how are these things done? Tell me how you think; tell me how buds become flowers and blossoms fruit, or how all live and grow, or read carefully the ensuing pages of this volume on "Death" and they will tell you. All are as fully in accord with the natural law as the blooming of the rose or the rush of this great globe we live on, through the viewless air.

The human heart hungers for the real presence of the dear departed. The tenderest sympathies and affections, the deepest demands of the soul and the loftiest range of the intellect, all reach toward the

spirit life beyond and would make it interblend naturally and beautifully with our own earth life; communication with the souls of the dead meet these desires and should cause a harmonious search for truth and light. The fact of their presence near and with you is proof positive of immortality. They come to you, you feel their presence, realize their influence, yet you heed them not, due to ignorance of the science of Occultism and the human mind or soul. Possibly external scientific proofs of all this can not always be had by the materialist, but can the human mind be measured by a yardstick, or a soul weighed in a balance, or seen under the Western man's microscope?

The yardstick philosophy of your most sapient scientists is inadequate in cases like this, and their solemn head-wagging over what it will not account for begins to look foolish to discerning people. They do good work in their way, but they cannot dissect a soul or measure God's universe. There are several things yet for them to learn more of; especially do they need to learn two things: That the Astral Spirits (souls of the dead) can realize your danger or weakness and guide and protect you, and that to ridicule or repudiate what you cannot understand is what really wise men never do.

The Western world is now entering upon a new era. The future will mark the past century as the

era of intellectual freedom and activity, of spiritual light, of material development and inventive genius, and the century now opening as the era of spiritual culture and a more deep and interesting study of the human mind or soul of man. Every one is anxious to learn more of the Occult Powers of the soul, that mysterious and immaterial part of man, and those who interest themselves in the study of Indian Occultism and spiritualism will receive their reward. It is known throughout India and all Oriental countries that the spirits of the dead visit and influence the living. This knowledge has been in all ages, in all Eastern countries, an accepted fact not confined to rustics, but participated in by good and intelligent men.

If human testimony can be of any value there is a body of evidence reaching from the remotest ages to the present time, as extensive and unimpeachable as is to be found in the support of anything whatever that the souls of the dead do return. Spirit manifestations and communications come to us in our highest and purest condition of mind. It is then that the soul asserts its immortality. It demonstrates that your soul can and does exist without the brain, and is an intelligence still when disconnected from your material body. It furnishes proof of a future life for which so many crave, *and for want of which*

so many live and die in anxious doubt, so many in positive disbelief.

SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS IN MYSTIC INDIA

I have witnessed Spirit manifestations in many parts of Mystic India. Spirit communication is normal to the open soul, and its highest conditions are as strong in the sacred atmosphere of home and friends as in far-off India. Spiritual thinkers of whatever class or name may well realize that they stand at the verge of a wide field, rich in promise and comfort for those who have near and dear ones who have passed to eternal spirit life.

An old Hindu Priest of Delhi, India, said to a mother, heart-broken at the death of her child: "Be comforted; it is only a separation—a separation and not a parting for you. The dead are not even absent; they are simply invisible to those whose Occult Powers or Inner Sight have not been developed. Every time you think intensely of your baby boy he will be attracted to you." This learned man would say to his friends: "We do not die altogether; our individuality survives us, and while I am talking to you I know for certain that all around me are the Souls of my friends and Astral Guides, who assist me in producing these phenomena which astonish you all."

His last hours were in a sort of trance, in which all his spirit friends came to him, and he looked forward with exceeding joy, speaking in tender and thoughtful affection to those around him, saying, "I am now with my friends," meaning Astral Spirits.

And this is true with all who have died, and death, instead of being sorrow and grief, is simply a beautiful transition of the soul to a higher and purer life, full of light and peace. This is death and is as natural as any of God's laws. Thus it comes, light and peace, but no fear, for as our bodily eyes grow dim our spiritual sight is opened before us and we behold visions of our ascended friends and loved ones who have gone before us. We must be true and fearless and fettered by no superstition, realizing that soul-knowledge is deeper than what the outer senses alone can give, and be in that "spiritual condition" of mind which makes the soul open to the noble influences which sweep through the universe. At death, or when the soul leaves the body and we stand between the two worlds, light comes to us from spirit life and our souls are lifted up in joy and reverence.

One instance among others which has come under the writer's notice, showing the experiences of the last illness and death of a noble soul and Disciple of Eastern Occultism. I attended his funeral and learned from his daughter something of the last ill-

ness of her father, who was over a hundred years of age, with no bodily disease, but only a weariness which led him often to murmur, "How long, O guides, how long." Healthful in mind and serene in soul he waited for the time when his soul would pass to spirit life. For weeks before it came he had visions of his ascended wife and son and of other friends who had died. His beautiful daughter, sitting at his bedside, would hear him quietly and pleasantly carrying on conversations with those whom none but the father could see. Occasionally the daughter would ask, "Father, who are they?" And always a rational and natural answer would be given. This was no fancy of a fevered brain, no excitement, but peace and cheerfulness. Thus came his death, a beautiful transition, full of light and peace, but no fear or terror. He had looked across the border and his spiritual sight had been opened wider as the bodily eyes grew dim. Such experiences are frequent in India and are of the Hindus rarely beautiful and instructive.

MIST RISING FROM THE DEAD BODY

Another Hindu girl, watching with her mother by the deathbed of a dying and dearly beloved sister, says, when the end came, she distinctly saw a delicate mist rising from the dead body. When they asked the priest about it he said: "You saw life

departing visibly from the physical form." This was at Benares, India.

How many times have persons been present at the beside of a dying friend. The eyes closed, the last breath ceased and they thought their friend was dead. Suddenly the eyes opened; light came back to them; then a look of surprise, admiration, inexpressible; then it passed away. This phenomenon, or the passing of soul, can be witnessed at the death-bed by any one who can properly induce the condition which is commonly called clairvoyance, or, in other words, by the withdrawal of all the attention from other objects and affairs and the concentration of thought and sympathy, as well as sight, on your dying loved ones and friends. You can then clearly see the separation of the spiritual body from the dying physical form, as clairvoyance is finer and farther reaching than the sight of your dull physical eyes.

The spiritual body, which Paul speaks of, is the soul you see passing out of the body at death. With it your personality is not lost by bodily death, you cannot be anything but yourselves after that event any more than now. You shall not be formless and disembodied shadows. You cannot die. Paul says: *"Although the outer man perish the inner is renewed day by day,"* suggesting the thought of an imperishable soul or spirit within the physical body.

CHAPTER VI.

GOD

"God is the power and cause of all things and the Supreme Intelligence."

Many have said that God is infinity, but it should be remembered that God is infinite in His Power and Perfections of all things; but "infinity" is an abstraction, and to state that God is infinity is to ignorantly substitute the attribute of a thing for the thing itself, and to define something unknown by referring to some other thing equally unknown.

The proof of the existence of God (which the writer desires to be understood as meaning the Supreme Intelligence and First cause and Power of all things) lies in the axiom which is applied in all the sciences and arts of mankind, viz.: "That there is no effect without cause." Seek ye out the cause and whatever is not the work of man has its first origin in God, and to prove to yourself the existence of God you have only to look around you on the works of His creation. The worlds exist, therefore they have a cause, and if you doubt the existence of God you doubt that every effect has a cause, and are

assuming that the Great Universe, which lies directly under the control of the Supreme Creator, has been made from nothing.

Every human soul infers from intuition the existence of God, for from whence could the human soul and mind of man derive this intuition if it had no real foundation, and the direct inference to be drawn from this Divine intuition is a carollary of the axiom. There is never effect without cause.

If our intuitive sense of the existence of God were the result of education and ideas acquired by religious ideas and teachings how could this intuitive sense be possessed by the savage? Again if the intuition of the existence of a Supreme Being were only the result of religious education it would not be so universal, and would only exist like all other superficial knowledge, in the minds of those who had received the special education to which it would be due.

To attribute the first formation of things to the essential properties of matter would be to take the effect for the first cause, for those properties are an effect which must have a cause.

To attribute the first formation of things to a fortuitous combination of matter, in other words, "Blind chance," is in itself another absurdity, for who that is possessed of common sense can regard chance as an intelligent agent, and, besides, what is

Blind Chance? Answered, Nothing! for the harmony which regulates the mechanism of the universe can only result from combinations adopted in view of predetermined ends, and thus, by its very nature, reveals the existence of an intelligent Power. To attribute the first formation of things to blind chance is substituting ignorance for intelligence; for if chance could be intelligence it would cease to be chance.

SUPREME INTELLIGENCE

The proof that you have that the first cause of all things is a Supreme intelligence superior to all other intelligence lies in the old maxim, which says, "The workman is known by his work." Gaze around you and meditate upon the quality of the work, and from its quality infer that of the workman. Every man should be fair-minded enough to judge the quality and power of an intelligence by its creations; and as no human being could create that which is produced by God, it is evident that the first cause must be an intelligence paramount to man, and whatever may be the prodigies accomplished by human intelligence that intelligence itself must have a cause, and the greater must be the cause of which it is the effect, and it may be accepted as an absolute fact by mankind, of every cult and creed that it is God, the great Supreme Power and intelligence, that is the first

cause of all things, whatever the name by which mankind chooses to designate it.

Again the very nature and inferiority of the human intelligence renders it impossible for man to comprehend the essential nature of God. In the infancy of the human race man often confounds the Creator with the creature, and attributes to the former the imperfections of the latter; but in proportion as man's moral sense becomes developed his thoughts penetrate further into the secret depths of nature and he is able to form to himself a more just and more natural idea of God, although his individual idea of the Supreme Being will always be imperfect and incomplete unless he develops his inner or spiritual sight, because he will never perceive spiritual works or things with his poor physical eyes, and only by spiritual development will he ever fully realize the essential nature and perfections of God, and his comprehension of them will increase in proportion as he raises himself above materialism; then he will obtain knowledge through the exercise of his Occult faculties. Every person should understand that there are things in the universe that transcend the intelligence of the most intelligent man, and for which his language, limited as it is to his ideas and sensations, has no intelligent expression. Man's reason tells him that God must possess those perfections in the Supreme Degree; for, if one

of them were deficient or were not possessed by him in an infinite degree, He would not be superior to all and able to govern and guide a man, and consequently would not be God. In order to be able to provide and guide man God must undergo no vicissitions of which man's imagination can conceive. The infallible and providential wisdom of the Divine laws is revealed as clearly in the smallest things as in the greatest; and this wisdom renders it impossible for the intelligent person to doubt his existence, justice or His goodness.

No human soul can doubt the existence of God because his intuition tells him better, and this is one essential point, but do not dare or seek to go beyond it, for if you do you will lose yourself in a labyrinth which for you will be without issue. This will not make you any better, but will rather tend to add to your pride, by causing you to imagine that you know something without proper spiritual development, while, in reality, you would know nothing. Put aside the teachings of materialism; you have many important spiritual things to concern yourself with. Study your own imperfections that you may get rid of them. This will be far more useful to you in understanding spiritual powers than anything else.

The dictates of man's own reason will tell him that these facts are true, and if he reflects on teachings contrary to them he will have no difficulty in detecting their absurdity and will not oppose God.

CHAPTER VII.

SOUL AND BODY

Soul and body become united at the very moment of conception, and is completed at the time of birth. Before conception a given entity or spirit is preordained to become reincarnated in a body. At the moment of conception the spirit designated to inhabit a given body becomes united to said body by a fluidic element, which becomes closer and denser up to the moment of birth; the faint cry of the infant at birth announces and is the alarm that the entity is now to be numbered among the living on the earth plane. The union between a spirit or entity with its future body at the moment of conception is definitive.

No other entity could replace the one designated for the body. The strands that unite a spirit and its fluidic body are at first very weak and easily broken and could be severed by the spirit or a number of spirits if they so wish, and of course in this case conception, although it had taken place, would not materialize and the child would die; then this

spirit would inhabit another body; but death of this kind is more times caused by imperfections of matter. Many times such deaths are only intended as a trial for parents. Whenever a spirit or entity fails in reincarnating itself another existence is not always immediately provided for it. Many spirits after they become permanently united to an infant body regret their conditions and may complain of the life they are forced to undergo. The spirit, of course, after it becomes united to its body has no recollection that it became united to said body through its own choice, consequently it cannot regret a choice which it is not conscious of having made. This is one of the keys and causes of so many suicides, as you have many persons who believe that their burden in life is to heavy to bear and that the only recourse is suicide. A spirit during the interval between conception and birth has the use of its faculties more or less, according to the various periods of gestation; for it is not yet fully incarnated in its new habitation or body, but only attached to it. But from the instant of conception concern begins to take possession of the entity, who is now aware that the vital moment is near for it to enter upon an earthly existence; its confusion and concern becomes more pronounced until the moment of birth. During the interval between conception and birth the spirit that is to be reincarnated passes

through a condition of concern that increases in portion as the moment of birth approaches, the knowledge of its past life and spiritual existence becomes effaced, together with its remembrance of all previous states and periods of existence, of which, when once it has entered upon earth life, it is no longer conscious of its past. But this memory will come back to it slowly after it returns to Spirit Life after death of its body. The Spirit at the moment of birth does not recover the plentitude of its faculties, as they become gradually developed with the growth of its physical organs and Earth Life, for it becomes an entirely new existence; it is even forced to learn to make use of its new body. In time certain ideas come back to it little by little, as a dream will gradually come to the surface of your memory. A complete union of spirit and body are not definitely consummated until the birth has taken place, and the fœtus cannot be considered as having a soul, as the spirit who is to inhabit it exists as it were outside of it. Strictly speaking, therefore, it has no soul, since the incarnation of the entity is only in course of being effected, but is only attached to the soul which is to have it. The nature of intra-uterine life is that of the plant which vegetates. The fœtus, however, lives with vegetable and animal life, to which the union of a soul with the child body at birth adds spiritual life. There are many children

so constituted that they cannot live. These births are preordained and permitted as a trial, either for the parents or for the spirit appointed to animate the body. Again, there are among still-born children many who were never intended for the reincarnation of a spirit. That is to say, the fœtus has never had the spirit assigned to it. The still-born infant being simply a trial for the parents. The consequence of abortion makes the existence of a spirit on the earth plane null and void and must be commenced over again. Artificial abortion is a sin and crime, no matter at what period of gestation it may be produced, as every transgression of the law of God is a crime. The mother, father or any other person who commits an abortion, thereby taking the earth life of an unborn child away, is necessarily a criminal; for by so doing a soul is prevented from undergoing the trials of which the body thus destroyed has been the instrument. In case of the life of a mother being in danger by the birth of a child it is not a crime to sacrifice the body of the child in order to save the mother, for it is better to sacrifice the being whose existence on earth has not been begun than the existence of the being or soul which is not yet complete. The will and handiwork of God should be respected by treating the fœtus with the same respect that would be given to the body of a child had it lived and died.

"GRAVES OF THE DEAD"

The soul is always affected by the remembrance by those whom they loved and cared for during their Earth Life, far more than the ordinary person has any idea; for, if they are happy on earth, this remembrance adds to their happiness; if they were unhappy or had great misfortune and sorrow on earth it affords them much consolation to know that they are remembered by their friends and loved ones after they have passed to Spirit Life. Every Soul is attracted toward its friends upon the earth by the return of the day which in some countries, especially India, is consecrated to the memory of those who have passed to Spirit Life, and they always make it a point to go and mingle with those who on that day go to pray beside the graves where their mortal remains are interred, as every spirit or soul will readily answer to the call of affectionate remembrance on that day, as they do at any other time. Spirits ofttimes go to the cemeteries when called there by the thoughts of a loved one who may go to sorrow over their grave, but no spirit will go to a cemetery for any other than their friends. Upon spirits coming to these places, if they were to render themselves visible to their friends, their form and appearance would be the same as during their Earth Life. Spirits who are forgotten and whose graves no one ever visits, and

for whom no one has any affection, very seldom ever visit their graves, because there is nothing to attract or attach them to it. Whenever a friend or loved one visits the grave of the dead it is a sign given to the spirit that he is not forgotten; but it is deep prayer that sanctifies the action of the memories; the place where it is offered is of little importance, whether it be at home or in the cemetery. Whenever head stones, monuments or statues are erected at the graves of the dead their spirits are present at this time and can witness these ceremonies with pleasure and satisfaction, greatly to the envy of the more unfortunate in Spirit Life, but some spirits, of course, attach less importance to the honors paid to them than to the remembrance in which they are held.

Some spirits desire to be buried in one place rather than another. This, of course, is a sign of inferiority on the part of a spirit that he should attribute importance to a matter purely material. To an elevated spirit one spot of earth is the same as another, and he realizes that his soul will be united with those whom he loves, even though their bones are separated; consequently it is unnecessary to bring together the mortal remains of all members of a family in the same burial lot, as this reunion is of very little importance to spirits, but it is useful to those whose remembrance of the spirits who have

gone before them is thus strengthened and rendered more serious.

Every soul upon its return to spirit life is gratified by the honors paid to its mortal remains. However, when a spirit has reached a certain degree of advancement it becomes purified from the terrestrial vanities, for it comprehends their futility. But there are many spirits who, in the early periods of their return to immortal life, take great pleasure in the honors paid to their memory, or they are much disturbed and concerned at finding themselves completely forgotten, for they still retain some of the false ideas they held during their Earth Life. Many spirits attend their own funeral, but in some cases, without really understanding what is going on, being, of course, still in that state of confusion that always follows death. They, of course, feel more or less flattered by the presence of a large number of persons at their funeral. Especially so if it is pure sentiment that has brought them together. Spirits are mostly always present at the meeting of their heirs, especially where there has been a will left for the disposition of their property and earthly possessions. Providence has so ordained it for the spirit's own instruction and for the chastisement of selfishness. The deceased is thus enabled to judge of the worth of the many protestations of affection and devotion addressed to them during their earth life;

their disappointment on witnessing the rapacity of those who dispute the property they have left is often very great; however, the punishment of their greedy heirs will fall to them in due time. The respect which mankind, in all ages and among all people, has always instinctively shown to the dead, is to be attributed to an intuitive belief in a future state of existence. The one, of course, is the natural consequence of the other; for were it not for this belief such respect would have neither object or meaning. Two souls who have known and loved each other upon the earth plane may meet and recognize one another upon the Astral Plane. The attraction resulting from the ties of a previous existence upon the earth plane is often the cause of the most intimate unions of a subsequent existence. It often happens upon the earth plane that two persons are attracted together by conditions which appear to be merely fortuitous, but this is really due to the attraction exercised upon one another by two spirits who are unconsciously seeking each other amidst the crowds by whom they are surrounded. Two spirits existing upon the Astral Plane who are in harmony naturally seek one another, even if they have not been previously acquainted with each other upon the earth plane. The instinctive repulsion sometimes excited in persons who see each other for the first time is due to the latent antipathy of their spirits,

who divine each other's nature and recognize one another without the need of speaking together. This instinctive antipathy of course cannot always be taken as a sign of an evil nature on the part of one or both of the parties who feel it, as two spirits are not necessarily evil because they are not sympathetic, as this antipathy may have its origin from a want of similarity in their way of thinking. But in spirit life as the soul ascends these degrees of difference are effaced and their antipathy will disappear. On the Astral Plane an evil spirit feels an antipathy against any person who is able to judge and unmask him. On meeting such a spirit for the first time he knows that he will be disapproved by him, and his repulsion changes into hatred or jealousy and inspires him with a desire of doing harm to the object of his antipathy. A good spirit always feels repulsion for an evil one, because it knows that it will not be understood by it, and that they do not share the same sentiments; but, strong in his own superiority, he feels neither hatred nor jealousy toward him and contents himself with avoiding and pitying him.

CHAPTER VIII.

"DREAMS"

The human soul while on the Earth Plane never rests like the body during sleep, for the soul is never inactive. The bonds which unite it to the body are relaxed during sleep, and as the body does not then require the presence of a spirit or soul it can travel through space. (This is sometimes spoken of as propelling the Astral Body.) The soul can now enter into more direct relation and communication with the spirits of the Astral Plane. You may ask how you can be able to ascertain the fact of a spirit's liberty during sleep. I will inform you. Simply by dreams; for you may be very sure that, when the body is asleep the soul or spirit enjoys the use of its Occult faculties, of which the outer man or body is unconscious while awake. The soul in this condition remembers the past and is able to forsee the future. By acquiring more power it is also able to enter into communication with other spirits, either on the Earth or Astral Plane. Many a person has often remarked that they have had a horrible and strange dream, in fact a frightful

dream, without any likeness to reality. This is a mistake, for a dream is often the remembrance of places and things which you have seen in the past, or a foresight of those which you will see in your existence upon the Astral Plane at some future time, or in this in the near future. Very few human souls know little of anything of the commonest phenomena of their life. They may fancy themselves to be very learned, but they are easily puzzled by the most ordinary thing. A small child may ask you what do we do when we are asleep? What are dreams? You have no knowledge of them and are incapable of giving an intelligent reply. Sleep affects a partial separation of the soul from the body.

WISE MEN OF THE EAST

During deep sleep the soul rests, for the time being, in a state and condition in which it will be after death. Those spirits who at death are promptly freed from the physical body are those who during their lives have had what may be called spiritual sleep, as they, when asleep, mingle in the society of other spirits superior to themselves. The soul then can go about with them, conversing with them and gaining instruction from them; they even work, in the spirit world, at undertakings, which, on dying, they find already completed. So as I have instructed you in the beginning of these writings you see how

little death should be dreaded, since, according to the saying of the Wise Men of the East, "You die daily." What has been written above refers of course to those souls who while inhabiting the body have lived in an elevated degree of advancement. The unlearned and common people and those not advanced in Occult and spiritual teachings, after their death, remain for many days in a state of confusion and uncertainty of which you have no idea, for during their sleep they have went into spirit realms of lower rank than the earth, to which they are drawn to by old affections, or by the attractions of pleasures still baser than those to which they are addicted while awake. During these visits they gather ideas more vile, more ignoble and more devilish than those which they possessed during their working hours. Again, that which engenders sympathy in the earthly life is nothing else than the fact that you feel yourselves on waking affectionately attracted toward those with whom you have passed many hours of happiness or pleasure. On the other hand, the true explanation of the invincible antipathies you sometimes feel for certain persons is also to be found in the intuitive knowledge you have thus acquired of the fact that those persons have a soul unfit to mingle with you and you feel that you know them without having previously seen them with your bodily eyes. It is this same fact, moreover, that ex-

plains the indifference of some people for others; for there are many who do not care to make new friends because they know that they have others in spirit life by whom they are loved and cherished. And I give it unto you as a warning that dreams and sleep have more influence in shaping your earth life than you have any idea. For by the effect of sleep the soul is always in connection with the spirits of the Astral Plane; again through the effects of sleep, incarnated spirits are directly in connection with the spirit world; and it is in consideration of this fact that spirits of a high order consent, without much resistance, to incarnate themselves among you. It has been so willed that during their contact with vice they may go forth and fortify themselves afresh at the source of rectitude in order that they who have come into your world to instruct others may not fall into evil themselves. Reincarnated spirits always sleep the sleep of peace and this sleep is the avenue open for them by the great Creator that they may pass through it to their friends in the spirit world. This is their reward and recreation after labor, while awaiting the great deliverance, the final liberation, that will restore them to their true place in spirit life. Dreams are the remembrance of what your soul has experienced and seen during sleep. Many may remark that they do not always dream. Because they do not always remember what they have seen it is no

sign that the soul has not been active during sleep. Dreams themselves do not always reflect the action of your soul in its full development; for they are often only the reflection of the confusion that accompanies your departure or your return back into the body, mingled with a vague remembrance of what you have done, or what has occupied your thoughts in your waking state. Again, evil spirits, also, make use of dreams to frighten and torment weak and timid souls.

THE PRACTICAL STUDENT OF OCCULTISM

The practical student of Occultism (and what I mean by this is an individual or soul who is sincere in their desire to learn and become developed in an Occult and spiritual way, for there is nothing but a curse that will ever come out of the effort of a soul that is not sincere in seeking after occult teachings) will before long become developed so that he can reason out any kind of a dream. The nature of these dreams is one that has been given to every ancient prophet and Hindu Priest. The dream I allude to is one that is a remembrance of the soul's experience while entirely free from the body. The memory as it is of your second life, because you people of the western world prefer to remark that when death takes place you have lived one life, but you should always recollect that you only live one

life, and that that life is eternal. It would be far more sensible and intelligent upon your part to say that you have experienced a section or a given part of your existence. Every person should use great care in distinguishing between the two kinds of dreams that everyone is liable to have, for as remarked before in this chapter, there is one dream that may be given by an evil spirit, the other is a kind of a dream that is produced by the experience of the soul in its future life. The true dream is a product of the emancipation of the soul and is rendered more real and active by the suspension of the active life of relation to the earth plane. The soul in this state will now enjoy a sort of clairvoyance which extends to places at a great distance from it, that that soul has never seen, even to other worlds. This state of interior concentration of the soul, or emancipation as it is generally termed in India, but spoken of in this country as clairvoyancy, is also due to the remembrance which retracts to our memory the events that have occurred in our present existence or in our preceding existence. The strangeness of the surroundings of the soul when the Astral Body is propelled and taken to worlds unknown, is something that will be realized by their soul in this condition. A failure to remember all of your dreams is explained by the gaps resulting from the incompleteness of your remembrance of what has appeared

to you and what you have experienced while in a deep sleep. This incompleteness is similar to that of a story where whole sentences or parts of it have been dropped or forgotten by chance, and its remaining parts have been thrown together at random and have lost all intelligent meaning. The reason why many do not remember their dreams is that what they call sleep is only the repose of the body for the spirit and soul is always active and in motion. The soul during sleep again recovers its liberty and can enter into communication with those who are dear to it, either on the Earth Plane or upon the Astral Plane, and this is the reason why so many persons dream that they have been with and had certain experiences with people who are dead. A person will sometimes dream that they have been with a soul which has died, and experienced the same suffering that the soul did while on earth, but in reality they have been in the society of those souls and mingled with them on the Astral Plane, while they themselves thought they were only sound asleep. The physical or outward bodily senses are heavy and gross, and a dream cannot always be remembered by them. Consequently it is very difficult for these senses to retain upon waking the wanderings and experiences of the soul while said senses have been asleep, because these experiences have not been re-

ceived by the soul through the outward or bodily organs.

No dream is really an indication of the sense attributed to it by many of the so-called fortune tellers; but it is not foolish to believe that a certain kind of a dream is the sign of a certain event which is about to happen. But they are indications in this sense—viz., that they present images which are real for the spirit, though they may have nothing to do with what takes place in his present corporeal life. Dreams are also, in many cases, as I have said, a remembrance; they may also be sometimes a presentiment of the future, if permitted by God, or the sight of something which is taking place at the time in some other place to which the soul has transported itself. Have you not many instances proving that persons may appear to their relatives and friends in dreams, and give them notice of what is happening to them? What are apparitions, if not the soul or spirit of persons who come to communicate with you? When you acquire the certainty that what you saw has really taken place, is it not a proof that it was no freak of your imagination, especially if what you saw were something which you had not thought of when you were awake?

Those things may take place in the experience of the spirit, though not in that of the body; that is to say, that the Soul sees what it wishes to see because

it goes to find it. You must not forget that, during sleep, the spirit is always more or less under the influence of matter; that, consequently, it is never completely free from terrestrial ideas, and that the objects of its waking thoughts may therefore give to its dreams the appearance of what it desires or of what it fears, thus producing what may be properly termed an effect of the imagination. When the mind is much engaged with any idea, it is apt to connect everything it sees with that idea.

You may say that in a dream, we see persons who are well known to us doing things which they are not in any way thinking of, is it not a mere effect of the imagination?

Of which they are not thinking? How do you know that it is so? Their spirit may come to visit yours, as yours may go to visit theirs; and you do not always know, in your waking state, what they may be thinking of. And besides, you often, in your dreams, apply to persons whom you know, and according to your own desires, impress or influence them. Is it necessary to the emancipation of the soul that the sleep of the body should be complete?

The soul recovers its liberty as soon as the senses become torpid. It takes advantage, in order to emancipate itself, of every moment of respite left it by the body. As soon as there occurs any prostration of the vital forces, the spirit disengages itself

from the body, and the feebler the body, the freer is the soul. For even in the dozing state or a mere dulling of the outward senses the same phenomena will be experienced. Again, many times a person will hear as it were within themselves words distinctly pronounced or spoken, still having no meaning or connection whatever with the subject which they are thinking. Indeed you may often hear words and entire sentences, especially so when the outward or physical senses become quiet. This is an impression or transmission of the utterance of a spirit who wishes to communicate with you. Again when only half asleep with your eyes closed you see distinct images or figures around you; these are disembodied spirits. There are many times when a person is half-asleep that they have superior ideas pass through their mind in relation to some business or project, but which despite all their efforts to recall them are effaced from their memory when waking. This is the result of the freedom that the soul has enjoyed during its emancipation from the body when it can use the proper faculty during its time of liberty from the body to become advised and counseled by the spirits of the Astral Plane.

SPIRIT COUNSEL AND ADVICE

It may be remarked, where is the use of this counsel and advice since we do not remember it after

we have awakened, or how can we profit by it; but it should be remembered that this advice comes from the spirits of the Astral Plane and although the body or outward man may forget, the spirits do not, and they will continue at the proper time to give these ideas, advice and counsel to you and you will realize it as coming to you some time in the future as an inspiration. It is a well known fact that many persons have had a presentment of their death, and even a clear foreknowledge of it. This counsel and knowledge has been given to them by Astral Spirits and it is thus that some persons are enabled to foresee the time of their death or the death of another with perfect exactness. The reason why the physical body feels fatigued or a person may sometimes feel tired and nervous after waking from sleep, is because the spirit, during its emancipation, reacts upon the body in the same manner that you may attach or fasten a kite or balloon to a post, the post is shaken and affected by the movements of the balloon or kite, so it is that the experiences or activity of the soul reacts to the body, and may leave it in a fatigued and nervous condition, and in this explanation will be found the reason why many people are never profited by sleep. This emancipation or touring of the soul during sleep proves that every human being leads two lives, that is, his relation to the earth plane, which is exterior, and the Occult relation

of the soul to spirit realms or the Astral Plane. Practically speaking, of course this does not in itself constitute two lives, but rather two phases of one and the same life, for no person can lead a double life. Many persons who are acquainted with one another, visit one another in this Spiritual or Occult way while asleep. This act of visiting during sleep of friends, relatives, and acquaintances is extremely frequent, and there is scarcely a person who does not experience some phenomena almost every night, and the intuition or impression of it usually remains with them after they awaken, and is often the origin of certain ideas which afterward occur to them as it were, spontaneously without their being able to account for it. In other words, you may have a certain impression, a certain sympathy, or a decided antipathy for a person, that you yourself, that is the outward man, will not be able to account for, but in reality you have obtained this knowledge or impression through spirit intercourse which has been carried on during your sleep. A person can insure the visit of a spirit to him during his sleep by an exertion of his will, by simply literally deciding to himself upon going to sleep, that he will go and meet such and such a person in spirit life and consult or seek his advice regarding a certain matter or thing. If the person who decides to do this is firm and steadfast of mind, after he has gone to sleep his spirit will

pass to the Astral Plane, but unless he is of a firm and steadfast mind, his spirit is often far from following out the plan which has been resolved upon by the outward man, as thoughts and ideas of the outward senses do not always interest the spirit or soul when it becomes clairvoyant. There are many times that the same idea or the discovery of a certain thing oftentimes suggests itself at a certain time to different persons, although they may be at a great distance from one another, for during sleep spirits or souls communicate with one another and thus spirits or souls who are still in the body upon the earth plane awaken and remember what they have seen, heard and learned from spirit life. It is thus that several persons may have identical ideas at the same time of the same thing, for in this way one spirit on the Astral Plane may often reveal to souls in the body many things without their being aware of it, as the spirits upon the Astral Plane are able to form an idea of the object of our meditation before we pass to sleep. After the spirit or soul passes to the Astral Plane it is no longer encumbered with the physical body and can radiate wherever it pleases in any direction, and the spirit can then hold communication with other spirits with whom it is in sympathy, and it can also, as written above, communicate with other souls while they are still an inhabitant of the body. There is also different souls

dwelling on the earth and on the Astral Plane, between which communication is so keen and clear that it enables two persons or spirits to understand each other without having any need of human speech, and it may be well said that they speak the language of spirits.

OCCULT AUROS AND ASTRAL WAVES

During the act of Dreaming, the fragments of Mental Impressions and Images float about, like the motes that dance in the sunbeams to the Central Sun. Touching each other, they blend and adhere to each other, thereby forming as it were, a great system of Mental Telepathy. During sleep these Astral Waves of thought and Mental Impressions, pass and flow from soul to soul, with wonderful accuracy and exactness, for these Mental and Occult Currents of thought, dominate over the physical sense organs. The regular outward organs of thought are for the time suspended. Sensation and physical perception, memory, reflection, desire and action no longer succeed each other in the manner of the waking state. When the mind is especially sensitive and passive, it becomes so clear that impressions of ideas or, of facts, and also Spirit Communications may be received from the Souls of the Astral Plane, or from minds distant, still inhabiting the body, or even from

those in our immediate surroundings. This Occult Auro or Astral Fluid is even finer than the ordinary sunlight, hence, it is impossible to represent its extreme beauty and delicacy, in a painting or an engraving, and it is only to be seen by the sensitive Medium or Clairvoyant under a decidedly increasing intensity of common vision, or at such times as the rods and cones of the eye become more tense under some forms of mental excitement, when consequently, they vibrate to the fine Occult Auros and Astral Waves. This Auro will then appear as a soft, diffused light around the head and form of an individual, or it may shoot out in glowing bands or it may form irridescent clouds at a greater or less distance from him. This Auro and Astral Force often appears like a crown of Spiritual Brightness, decorated with flaming jewels. When a person is greatly excited and active, this Aurora will be bright and intense, flashing up vividly. This is sometimes expressed by saying that your mind feels bright. A public speaker whose soul and mind is greatly excited, is said to make a brilliant effort. Those who use these terms regard them simply as figures of speech, little dreaming that in Occult Science it will be proved that they were true in the most literal sense. During sickness this Auro is thrown off from the body of the person who is dull and obscure, for during sickness the mind is dull and the

thought slow. A refined and Spiritually developed person will throw off an Auro of clear light blue color. But the Auro of one of the opposite nature, in which sensuality predominates, will be of a dull red and foul and impure in its nature. When a person is enlightened, he increases the quality and quantity of this Astral Force. To the eye of the sensitive, or the Clairvoyant, these Astral Auros appear like an illuminous force of sunlight, radiating from the body of an individual as only Astral Waves give out a light that is of infinite softness. This is sometimes spoken of as the sun of righteousness. A good Auro is the reward of intellectual culture, refined and Spiritual excellence. Every object radiates Astral Forces which impress an image of itself upon the soul of the Clairvoyant and also upon surrounding objects, for if you lay a key or ring upon a smooth plate of steel for a short time, and then remove it, the image of the key or ring may be evoked by heating the plate. This may be done years after the contact, so, whether consciously or not, the human mind and soul and the objects of the Universe are thus continually writing their history in these marvelous pictures. By coming in contact with a person or an object the sensitive or Clairvoyant may perceive and describe the images and impressions they have received and retained. For example, by holding a manuscript letter in gen-

tle contact with the forehead or the hand, the personal appearance and even the thoughts of the writer at the time of writing may be faithfully described. A fossil plant, or animal examined in this way, gives up a faithful picture of its ancient surroundings, in pre-historic ages. In the experiments and Occult Work of the Hindus, this is done again and again. Those acts of contact which express the various forms of affection prove the reality of this Spiritual Auro beyond all possibility of a doubt. All animals with a distinct nervous system, from the insignificant worm up to man, express their sexual, parental, filial or friendly affection, by the contact of caressing. Among human beings alone, there are millions of examples where this fact is fully illustrated daily. And only one explanation is possible. There must be some actual force passing from one living being to another in these acts of caressing. This soul and Astral Force is a vital part to everyone and its projection and reception in this way is just as real as the reception of force through the food we eat; thus parental, filial, fraternal and sex-love are connected with the lips and with the bosom; hence, kissing or caressing brings out this Auro or force which expresses these affections.

Through this radiating force one person actually imparts something of his being to another person and to every being which he touches, or is brought

in contact with, and, in turn, he constantly receives from the accumulated force left by others, and it is by the means of these influences, or Auro, which is invisible to the physical eye of man, that a dog is able to follow his Master or identify him by a garment that he has worn. In any locality where a large number of wise, good and refined people exist, there will be an Auro thrown out and radiated from one to the other, that will last for many years. Such a refined atmosphere or Auro is highly favorable to clearness of thought, social and spirtual harmony. It is a part of human destiny to surround a given point in this way with the living Auro of refinement, Spiritual Truth and Love. This law should teach man that he is responsible to his fellow being for every thought, and feeling which he entertains as well as for every action which he performs. These silent Occult Auros and Astral waves vibrate from soul to soul, whether the soul inhabits the Spirit World or whether it still retains its habitation in the physical body. All human souls are united by an inseparable link of a composite Spiritual and Occult Force and when the Hindu tells you that there is a great Occult Antiquity and Sympathy existing between all things in the Universe he speaks the truth.

"INDIA, THE LAND OF OCCULTISM."

In this broad land, the gathered
Occult thought of centuries is
Presented in all its varied acceptations.
The Disciple needs must reap superabundant
Harvest, perhaps the most, from those
Who differ farthest; as I have heard,
Sometimes extremes, by meeting,
But prove they have a circle been completing.

Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER IX.

DEATH TRANCE

During the state of Death Trance, an individual always sees, and hears what is taking place around him, but at the same time he is unable to manifest himself through the outward organs, but it is not through the bodily senses that he has received the impressions of his earthly environments, for they are received by and through the Occult faculties of the soul, and the reason why the individual cannot express himself is because the state of his body prevents him from doing so, and this peculiar state of the physical body and its organs demonstrates that man consists of something more than a material body, for right here we have an illustration of the body and its organs that no longer work, for they are completely inactive, yet the spirit and soul has perfect action and great freedom, also wonderful intelligence. The human soul in this peculiar state of lethargy or coma can entirely separate itself from the physical body so as to give the latter all the outward appearances of death, and afterwards come back and inhabit it; for while in this state the body

itself is not dead as it still continues to accomplish its functions and coagulation will not take place in the circulatory system. The body's vital powers, as in chrysalis, are not annihilated and the spirit will remain connected with the physical body as long as it remains alive, and the body will remain alive as long as the spirit and soul is linked or connected with it, and it is only when this strand is snapped asunder, that death and disaggregation of the bodily organs take place, it is then that the separation of the soul and body, soul transition and death, as it is termed in this country, takes place. After this the spirit can never come back into the body, and in any case where one has apparently died comes back to life again, it is because the strand which unites body and soul has not been broken, or in other words, the process of death has not been entirely consummated. It is also possible by means of timely spiritual help to strengthen these ties which were about ready to part, and to give back life to a person who but for this help would have died. Death Trance precedes from the temporary loss of sensibility, power and motion, which is psychologically explained in this chapter. In the condition of Death Trance the suppression of the vital powers is complete and gives to the body all the appearances of death, but in catalepsy this suppression is localized and may affect the whole or less extensive portion of the body, while

leaving the intelligence free to manifest itself. Lethargy or coma is perfectly natural, that is to say, that it has its origin in natural law. Catalepsy is, strictly speaking, a condition which has been produced spontaneously, and may be produced and dissipated by artificial means, such as hypnotism, etc.

The Lethargic state or Death Trance is an independent condition or Coma-Somnolentun state which is characterized by the diminution of the powers of voluntary motion, and from which it is very difficult and at times impossible to arouse the patient; for having once passed into this comatose state he ceases to be "en rapport" with those around him and having passed completely from his physician. This condition of Coma when induced by hypnotism is the result of the operator permitting his subject to remain inactive too long after he has induced somnambulism. This is an extremely dangerous state, and the operator should guard against it by keeping his subject interested and doing something. He should be kept engaged and active by inducing various delusions. This employs his imagination and keeps him conscious of his environments and susceptible to suggestion; but if left to himself and preoccupied his eyes will assume the trance-like or vacant state and he is very liable to pass into the Death Trance or State of Coma. If the hypnotist has more than one subject under control at the same

time he should be very careful to keep them all busy by doing something to attract their attention, and if he cannot use them all at once he should awaken some of them before they pass into this apparently lifeless condition.

There is no doubt that many people have been in this state of Coma when the autopsy has been performed upon their supposed dead body, and their heart and other vitals will give unmistakable signs of life during the autopsy if in this state.

This strange psychical condition of profound trance or Lethargy, which so accurately counterfeits and resembles death that living interments are often made, is a form of suspended animation, there being an absolute suspension of the heart and lung action attending the induction of this profound degree of lethargic sleep. This phenomenon of suspended functions is characterized by an absence of bodily warmth, accompanied by all the ordinary indications and usual evidences of departed life, and giving the body every appearance of a corpse. The duration of this death-trance before the spirit or soul takes its final leave and passes from the body, is very indefinite, being governed by conditions decidedly complex in character and assuming various aspects, determined by the different mental and physical phases with which it is associated. There can be little doubt but that there are many persons buried alive

while in this comatose state. Its duration being indefinite and the characteristics similar to those of death, the attending physician, if he has no knowledge of medical Psychology or Spiritism, will, after administering the usual stimulants and means of provoking reaction (and these fail of course) unhesitatingly pronounce the patient dead and the unfortunate being is placed in his coffin, where he regains consciousness and dies a horrible death, suffering agony of suffocation or dies under the knife on a dissecting table.

LIVING INTERMENT

A case of living interment which came under the author's notice in India was that of a young Hindu of low caste, about thirty years of age, who took an Indian drug called *Cannabis Indica or Indian Cannabis* (made from the plant Cannabis Sativa), with suicidal intent. He was to all appearances dead when found by relatives. An English physician was called and after making the usual examination and tests in such cases, pronounced the young man dead. His funeral services were held three days later; the coffin containing the supposed corpse being placed in a receiving cave. At the expiration of the ten days, the time set for burial, the coffin was opened by the attendant in order that the relatives might have a last look at their

dead. A horrible sight met their gaze—a sight that filled their hearts with horror and unutterable grief. The young man had turned half over upon his left side, while in his right hand, clenched in death's agony, was found fragments of hair which had been torn from his head. The cloth around his neck also showed evidence of his attempt to tear it away during the struggle he had made against death.

In these cases of profound trance or lethargy neither coagulation nor decomposition set in; even though its duration be from three to six months. And strange as it may seem to the uninformed, the soul continues its existence within the body and life is sustained without air; but once the patient is revived and resumes his normal condition he must have air to breathe or he will die.

This death trance or comatose state can be induced by voluntary effort or Auto-Suggestion. While in this condition and apparently unconscious and unaffected by any of the stimulants which ordinarily induce reaction, the patient really does appear corpse-like, and it is well for the medical man, when called in a case of death trance, suspected to be either of a hypnotic or hysterical or drug origin, to understand something of this strange psychical condition, that he may know the best course to adopt.*

**Instructions for producing reaction will be found in Dr. de Laurence's celebrated work entitled "Medical Hypnosis," Physicians' Edition.*

In the deep condition of death trance the independence of the soul is more decided, as its functions are more developed, than during the sleeping state, and it has preceptions that it has not during sleep. For in trance the soul is entirely free from any connection with matter or the material organs. This state is deeper than catalepsy or lethargy and the soul is no longer receptive to external impressions. The death trance condition may occur during deep sleep, for then the spirit is able to absent itself from the body which has been given up to that repose and rest that is indispensable to the physical body. Whenever this trance state occurs it is because the spirit or soul of the sleeper, intent upon doing something or other that requires the aid of the body, makes use of it in a manner analogous to that which spirits make use of a table, or other material objects, in producing the phenomena of physical manifestations, or of a human hand, in giving written communications. In the dreams of which a man is conscious, his organs, including those of memory, are beginning to awaken; and, as they only receive and transmit to the spirit imperfectly the impressions made on them by exterior objects or action, the spirit, who is then in the state of repose, only perceives these impressions through confused and often disconnected sensations, which, in many cases, are still further confused by being mingled with vague

remembrances of his present life and anterior existences. It is easy, therefore, to understand why somnambulists do not remember their visions, and why the greater number of the dreams you remember have no rational meaning. I say the greater number, for it sometimes happens that dreams are the consequence of a precise remembrance of events that have occurred in one of your former lives, or even a sort of intuition of the future.

The only difference between hypnotic trance and state of death trance is that the hypnotic trance is produced artificially. The so-called magnetic fluid or hypnotic force is a vital auro or universal fluid and all conditions of clairvoyance, second sight, mediumship, mind reading, somnambulism, etc., are pure soul sight. The reason why soul-sight or clairvoyance can see through opaque bodies is that opaque bodies only become such to the gross or physical organs as matter is not an obstacle for the spirit of soul, for it can pass and see freely through it. A person who has soul-sight or clairvoyance may often tell you that he sees through his forehead or some part of his body, and you living a pure material existence may not understand that this clairvoyance or soul-sight is both independent and superior to the outward or physical organs of sight and the soul left to itself readily understands that it can see into every part of his own body or another

body, that is to say, that it can see its own body independent of its own body.

SOUL SIGHT

Astral Spirits of low degree do not see and comprehend everything, for, as you know, they still share their errors and their prejudices; and, in the next place, as long as they remain more or less attached to matter, they have not the use of all their spirit-faculties. God has given the faculty of clairvoyance to man for serious and useful purpose, and not to inform him of what it is not permitted for him to know; and this is why somnambulists do not know everything.

You may wonder what is the source of the somnambulist's innate ideas, and how can he speak correctly of things of which he is ignorant in his waking state, and which are even above his intellectual capacity?

A somnambulist may possess more knowledge than you give him credit for; but this knowledge is latent in his waking state, because in his waking state he is not able to remember all he knows as a spirit. But, in point of fact, what is he? Like all of us, he is a spirit who has been incarnated in matter for the accomplishment of his mission, and in going into the somnambulic state or death trance rouses him from the lethargy of incarnation. I have

repeatedly told you that you live many times. It is changing of your existences that causes man to lose sight, in a new connection with matter, of what he may have known in a preceding one. On entering into this state, which in India is called a Soul Sight, he recalls what he has formerly known, but not always with completeness. He knows, but he cannot tell whence he derives his knowledge, nor in what way he possesses it. The trance over, his reminiscences fade from his consciousness, and he re-enters the obscurity of corporeal life.

Experience shows that somnambulists also receive communications from other spirits, who tell them what they are to say, and supply them with what is lacking on their part. This supplementing of their insufficiency is often and especially witnessed in medical consultations; the spirit of the clairvoyant seeing the malady, and another spirit indicating the remedy required. This double action is often patent to bystanders, and is also frequently revealed by such expressions on the part of the somnambulist as, "I am told to say," or "I am forbidden to say," etc. In the latter case, it is always dangerous to persist in the effort to obtain a revelation refused by the clairvoyant, because, by doing so we open the door to frivolous and unscrupulous spirits, who prate about everything without any regard to veracity.

The Human Soul transports itself during death

trance the same as it does during sleep to a greater or less degree of somnambulic clairvoyancy, not depending so much upon the physical organization of an individual as the spiritual condition of a soul. Nevertheless there are certain physical qualities which allow the soul to separate itself more easily from the body. The Occult faculties enjoyed by the soul during the trance are the same as though in action and possessed by the soul or spirit after death, that is to say they are the same only up to a given point, for you must take into consideration the influence of the physical body to which the soul is attached during earth life. The extent to which a person who is clairvoyant, can see disembodied spirits depends on the nature and degree of their development. The greater number of them see other spirits perfectly well, but they do not always recognize them at once as being such, and thus mistake them for corporeal beings; a mistake that if often made by somnambulists, and especially by those among them who know nothing of spiritism. Not understanding anything of the essence of spirits, they are astonished at seeing them in human form, and suppose them to be living persons.

The same effect is produced at the moment of death in the consciousness of those who suppose themselves to be still living. Nothing about them appears to them to be changed. The spirits around

them seem to have bodies like theirs, and they take the appearance of their own body to be that of a real body of flesh. Whenever the soul propels the Astral Body away in space the somnambulist feels in his body the sensation of heat or cold of the place where the Astral Body has been propelled even though very far distant from his body. The reason of this is that his soul has not entirely quitted his body, to which it is still attached by the link which unites them together; it is this link that is the conductor of sensation. When two persons in two different cities correspond with each other by electricity, it is the electricity that constitutes the link between their thoughts and enables them to communicate with one another as though they were close together. The human soul which upon earth has been psychic or clairvoyant is greatly influenced by the use he has made of his powers while on earth. The same holds good with the good or bad use that is made of all the faculties that mankind is possessed of. The essential difference between deep sleep and the trance condition is that trance is a deeper state. It is then that the soul is more at liberty and independent of the body. The soul can now enter into high spiritual realms and communicate with the spirits dwelling there. There are also many times when a medium in a trance state expresses a desire to leave the physical body or to propel their Astral Body away

in space. This desire is sincere and the request will depend upon the depth of the spirit's purification, for it is then in a condition to see whether its future existence will be superior to its present life. If this is so the soul may make an effort to remain out of the body entirely. In this case death would take place and the only way to call the soul back into the body is to bring to his mind everything that will attract and attach him to earth life by making him see that if he remains out of the body he will make use of the most effectual means of preventing his remaining in a happy state in spirit life. Much care should be given to the information received by a person in the trance state for they may express what they have seen or heard in any language accommodated to their prejudice or own individual ideas in which they have been brought up, thinking of course that will be better understood in this way; as they are most likely to make an error. Again of course they are very likely to be mistaken, especially when due effort is made to penetrate that which is to remain a mystery to man while he inhabits the body, and the very moment that he does this he becomes the prey and sport of evil designing and deceiving spirits who will take advantage of him, overwhelming him with their false statements. Every person should study this phenomenon and they will find by deep and serious meditation, over the same, the solu-

tion of more than one Occult Mystery which their physical senses have sought in vain to solve. The student who will study these things sincerely and justly, without prejudice or preconceived ideas, will be greatly benefited thereby. Second-sight is a Power which when once developed becomes permanent, that is to say, the faculty which gives the Occult Power, becomes permanent.

SECOND SIGHT

Second-sight usually occurs spontaneously. The will nevertheless often plays an important part in producing this phenomenon. Take, for example, the persons who are called fortune tellers—and some of them really have that power—and you will find that action of their will helps them to this Second-Sight and to what you call vision. Clairvoyance or second-sight is susceptible of being developed by certain Hindu Occult Exercises which will be given later on in this volume. Sincere effort and application always leads to progress in Occult Powers as in anything else and the veil that hides Occult and Spirit Mystery will readily become transparent to the sincere student. The reason why clairvoyancy is hereditary in certain people is because of the development of these faculties by application and education in those who have transmitted it from one generation to another. This applies to the Hindus

more than to any other race of people. It is true that circumstances develop second-sight. Illness, the approach of danger, any great commotion may develop it. The body is sometimes in a state which allows of the spirit's seeing what cannot be seen with the physical eye. In times of great excitement and of calamity, powerful emotions, all the causes, in short, which excite the soul may develop second-sight. It would seem as though Providence gave us when in the presence of danger, the means of escaping it. All creeds and all people subjected to persecution have offered numerous instances of this fact. Clairvoyants do, and can, give foreknowledge of future events; they may also give presentiments of great danger, for there are many degrees in this faculty, and the same person may possess all those degrees, as he may possess only some of them. The phenomena of natural somnambulism occur, spontaneously, and independently of any known external cause; not only in persons endowed with a special organization or gift, for clairvoyancy may be produced by any one having a knowledge of Eastern Occultism. The only difference between the state designated as self-induced somnambulism, and natural somnambulism is, that the one is produced by development, while the other is spontaneous.

NATURAL SOMNAMBULISM

Natural somnambulism is a notorious fact, the reality of which few now dispute, notwithstanding the marvelous character of the phenomena it presents. Why then, should self-induced somnambulism be regarded as more extraordinary or incredible, simply because it is produced by study and application like so many other things? It has been abused by charlatans, some persons will reply; but that fact only affords an additional reason for not leaving it in their hands. When science shall have taken possession of it, charlatanism will have much less credit with the masses; but, meanwhile, as somnambulism, both natural and artificial, is a fact, and as a fact cannot be argued down, it is making its way, despite the ill-will of its adversaries, and obtaining a footing even in the temple of western science, which it is entering by many side-doors, instead of entering by the principal one. Its right to be there, ere long, will be fully recognized. For somnambulism is more than a physical phenomenon; it is a light thrown on the subject of psychology; it is a state in which you can study the soul, because the soul shows itself, so to say, without covering. Now, one of the phenomena which characterizes the soul is clear-seeing independently of the ordinary physical organs. Those who contest this fact do so on the ground that the somnambulist does not see at all times, at

will of the skeptic, as with the eyes. Need we be astonished if the means employed being different, the methods are not the same? Is it reasonable to demand identical effects in cases in which the instruments employed are not the same? The soul has its properties just as has the eye; and the former must be judged of by themselves, and not by analogy with the latter.

The case of the clairvoyant and of the natural somnambulist is identically the same; it is an attribute of the soul, a faculty inherent in every part of the incorporeal being which is in us, and has no other limits than those assigned to the soul itself. The somnambulist sees wherever his soul can transport itself, no matter what distance. In sight at distance the somnambulist does not see from the point at which his body is, and as though through a telescope. The things he sees are present with him, as though he were at the place where they exist, because his soul is there in reality; and it is for this reason that his body is, as it were, annihilated, and seems to be deprived of sensation, until the moment when the soul comes back and retakes possession of it. This partial separation of the soul and the body is an abnormal state, which may last for a longer or shorter time, but not indefinitely; it is the cause of the fatigue felt by the body after a certain lapse of time, especially when the soul, during that partial

separation, busies itself in some active spiritual pursuit. The fact that soul-sight or spirit-sight is not circumscribed, and has no definite seat, explains why somnambulists are unable to assign to it any special organ or focus. They see, because they see, without knowing why or how; their sight, as spirit-sight having no special focus. If they refer their perception to their body, this focus seems to them to be in the organic centers in which the vital activity is greatest, especially in the brain, in the epigastric region, or in whatever organ appears to them to be the point at which the bond between the spirit and the body is most tenacious. The scope of somnambulic lucidity is not unlimited. A spirit, even when completely free, only possesses the faculties and the knowledge appertaining to the degree of advancement at which he has arrived, a limitation which becomes still further narrowed when he is united with matter, and thus subjected to its influence. This is the reason why somnambulic clairvoyance or soul sight is neither universal nor infallible; and its infallibility is all the less to be counted on when it is turned aside from the aim which has been assigned to it by nature, and made a mere matter of curiosity and experimentation.

In the state of comparative freedom in which the somnambulist finds himself, he enters more easily into communication with other spirits, incarnate or

disincarnate; and this communication is established through the contact of the fluids which compose their perispirits, and serve, like the electric wire, for the transmission of thought. The somnambulist therefore has no need to articulate speech as a vehicle of thought, which he feels and divines; as a mode of perception that renders him eminently accessible to, and impressionable by, the influences of the moral atmosphere in which he finds himself. For the same reason, a numerous concourse of spectators, and especially of those who are attracted by a more or less malevolent curiosity, is essentially unfavorable to the manifestations of his peculiar faculties, which close up, so to say, at the contact of hostile influences, and only unfold freely in intimacy, and under the influence of sympathetic surroundings. The presence of those who are malevolent or antipathetic produces upon him the effect of the contact of the hand upon a sensitive plant. The somnambulist sees, at the same time, his own spirit and his body; they are, so to say, two beings which represent to him his double existence, spiritual and corporeal, and which nevertheless, are blended into one by the ties which unite them together. The somnambulist does not always comprehend this duality, which often leads him to speak of himself as though he were speaking of another person; in such cases, the corporeal being sometimes speaking to the spiritual

being, and the spiritual being sometimes speaking to the corporeal being. The spirit acquires an increase of knowledge and experience in each of his corporeal existences. It loses sight of these gains during its reincarnation in matter which is too gross to allow of its remembering them in their former state; but it remembers them as a spirit. It is thus that some somnambulists give evidence of possessing knowledge beyond their present degree of instruction, and even of their apparent intellectual capacity. The intellectual and scientific inferiority of a somnambulist in his waking state, therefore, proves nothing against his possession of the knowledge he may display in his lucid state. According to the circumstances of the moment and the aim proposed, he may draw this knowledge from the stores of his own experience, from his clairvoyant perception of things actually occurring, or from the counsels which he receives from other spirits; but, in proportion as his own spirit is more or less advanced, he will make his statements more or less correctly.

PHENOMENA OF SOMNAMBULISM

In the phenomena of somnambulism, whether natural or self-induced, Providence furnishes us with undeniable proof of the existence and independence of the soul, by causing us to witness the sublime spectacle of its emancipation from the fetters of the

body, and thus enabling us to read our future destiny as in an open book. When a somnambulist describes what is taking place at a distance, it is equally evident that he sees what he describes, and that he does not see it with his bodily eyes. He sees himself at that distant point, and he feels himself to be transported thither. Something of himself, therefore, is really present at that distant point; and that something, not being his body, can only be his soul or his spirit. While man, in search of the causes of his moral being, loses himself in abstract and unintelligible metaphysical subtleties, God places daily before his eyes, and within reach of his hand, the simplest and most certain means for the study of experimental psychology.

Trance is the state in which the soul's independence of the body is made most clearly visible, and, so to say, palpable, to the senses of the observer. In dreaming and somnambulism, the soul wanders among terrestrial worlds; in trance, it penetrates into a sphere of existence of another order, into that of the etherealized spirits with whom it enters into communication, without, however, being able to overstep certain limits which it could not pass without entirely breaking the links that attach it to the body. Surrounded by novel splendors, enraptured by harmonies unknown to earth, penetrated by bliss that defies description, the soul enjoys a foretaste of

celestial beatitude, and may be said to have placed one foot on the threshold of eternity.

In the state of trance, the annihilation of corporeal ties is almost complete. The body no longer possesses anything more than organic life; and we feel that the soul is only held thereto by a single thread, which any further effort on its part would break forever.

In this state all earthly ties disappear, and give place to the purified perception that is the very assence of our immaterial being. Entirely absorbed in this sublime contemplation, the ecstatic regards the earthly life as being merely a momentary halt upon our eternal way; the successes and misfortunes of this lower world, its gross joys and sorrows, appear to him only as the futile incidents of a journey of which he is delighted to foresee the end.

It is with the ecstatic as with somnambulists; their lucidity may be more or less perfect, and their spirit, according as it is more or less elevated, is also more or less apt to apprehend the truth of things. In their abnormal state, there is sometimes more of nervous excitement than of true lucidity; or, to speak more correctly, their nervous excitement, impairs their lucidity and, for this reason, their revelations are often a mixture of truths and errors, of sublime ideas and absurd or even ridiculous fancies. Inferior spirits often take advantage of this nervous

excitement (which is always a source of weakness to those who are unable to control it), in order to subjugate the ecstatic, and to this end they assume to his eyes the appearances which confirm him in the ideas and prejudices of his waking state. This subjugation of clairvoyants by the presentation of false appearances is the "rock ahead" of this order of revealment. But all of them are not equally subject to this dangerous misleading; and it is for us to weigh their statements coolly and carefully, and to judge their revelations by the light of science and of reason.

EMANCIPATION OF THE SOUL

The emancipation of the soul occurs sometimes in the waking state, and gives to those who are endowed with the faculty designated by the name of second-sight, the power of seeing, hearing and feeling, beyond the limits of the bodily senses. They perceive things at a distance at all points to which their soul extends its action; they see them, so to say, athwart their ordinary sight, and as though in a sort of mirage.

At the moment when the phenomenon of second-sight occurs, the physical state of the seer is visibly modified. His glance becomes vague; he looks before him without seeing; his physiognomy reflects an abnormal state of the nervous system. It is evi-

dent that his organs of sight have nothing to do with his present perceptions; for his vision continues, even when his eyes are shut.

The faculty of second-sight appears to those who are endowed with it to be as natural as ordinary sight. It seems to them to be an attribute of their being; and they are not aware of its exceptional character. They generally forget this fugitive lucidity, the remembrance of which, becoming more and more vague, disappears at length from their memory like a dream.

The power of second-sight varies from a confused sensation to a clear and distinct perception of things present or distant. In its rudimentary state, it gives to some persons tact, perspicacity, a sort of sureness, in their decisions and actions, that may be styled the rectitude of the moral glance. At a higher degree of development, it awakens presentiments; still further developed, it shows to the Seer and Adept events that have already happened, or that are about to happen.

Natural and artificial somnambulism, trance and second-sight are only varieties or modifications of the action of one and the same cause. Like dreams, they are a branch of natural phenomena and have therefore existed in every age. History shows us that they have been known, and even abused, from the remotest antiquity; and they furnish the ex-

planation of innumerable facts which superstitious prejudices have led men to regard as supernatural.

ASTRAL SPIRITS

Astral Spirits take up very little time in transporting themselves through space from one point or place to another, as their motion is as rapid as that of thought, and really their thought is wherever their soul is, since it is the soul that thinks, and thought is a part of the soul. A spirit can travel in either way. It can if it will, take cognizance of the distance it passes through or it can rid itself entirely of the sense of distance. This, of course, depends upon the spirit's will and also upon the degree of development. Spirits can also pass through everything—space, air, earth, water and even fire are equally accessible to them. There is no division of any given spirit, but every spirit is a center which radiates in all directions and it is thus that a spirit may appear to be in every place at once. The sun is only one body, yet it radiates in all directions and sends out its rays to great distance, but it is not divided. Of course, it must be remembered that there is a great difference between spirits in this respect. It depends upon the degree of their purity. Every spirit dwelling upon the Astral Plane and in other spirit realms is an indivisible unity, but each spirit has the power of extending his thoughts on all sides

without thereby dividing himself, and it is only in this sense that the spirit of ubiquity, attributed to spirits, is to be understood. It is thus that a spark sends out its brightness far and wide and may be perceived from every point of the horizon. It is thus also that a man can, without changing his place, and without dividing himself, transmit orders, signals, etc., to many different points in many different directions. Astral Spirits are enveloped in an auro, which is a substance which would at first appear to the clairvoyant as a mere vapor, but which, nevertheless, appears very gross to the Adept, though it is sufficiently vaporous to allow the spirit to float in the atmosphere and to transport himself through space at pleasure. Spirits draw this semi-material body from the universe of fluid of the globe, and for this reason a peri-spirit is not the same on all planets, for in passing from planet to planet, the spirit changes its Astral Body as you would change a garment, but when spirits who inhabit realms of high degree come among us upon the Earth Plane they are obliged to take on grosser conditions. That is to say, they are obliged to clothe themselves with certain auros in order to enter upon the Earth Plane. This auro or substance can be made to assume any form that the spirit may choose to give it. A spirit is able at any time to make himself invisible to you whether in

dreams or in a clairvoyant state, or he can take unto himself any form that may be visible and even palpable to your senses, or one that is repulsive and will greatly alarm you. Spirits have fixed degrees of purification. The number of these degrees is unlimited because there is nothing like a barrier or line of demarkation between the degrees of elevation of the human soul. Nevertheless in determining the general characteristics of spirits, they may be reduced to three principal orders or degrees. In the first degree or rank are those who have reached a degree of relative perfection which constitutes what may be termed pure intelligence. In the second rank are those who have reached the middle of the ascensional ladder or those who have achieved the degree of purification in which aspiration after perfection has become the ruling desire. In the third or lowest rank and caste are all those imperfect spirits who are really earth bound, and evily disposed toward mankind, and are characterized by ignorance, their love of evil and all the low passions that retard the progress of the human soul. Spirits of the second degree have great desire for aspiration and perfection, and the desire to do so is given them in degrees proportionate to the degree of purification at which they have arrived. Many of them are distinguished by their scientific knowledge, others by their wis-

dom and kindness, but all of them have still to undergo discipline, trial, temptation and suffering.

SPIRITS OF THE THIRD CLASS

Among spirits of the third class there are some who are inactive and neutral, not doing either good or evil. Others, on the contrary, take pleasure in evil and are delighted when they find an opportunity of tormenting men who are doing wrong. Others, again, are frivolous, foolish, fantastic and mischievous rather than wicked, and tricky rather than positively malicious, amusing themselves by mystifying the human being on whom they are able to act, causing them various petty annoyances for their own diversion. They are inclined to evil and make it the object of all their thought and activities. As evil spirits, they give to men perfidious counsel, stir up discord and discontent and assume every sort of mask in order to more effectually deceive the souls in the body, besetting those whose character is weak enough to yield to their suggestions and who they can draw aside from the path of happiness, rejoicing when they are able to retard their advancement by causing them to succumb under the appointed trials of Earth Life. Evil spirits are always revealed by their communications for every spirit who in his communication betrays an evil intention may be relegated to the lower order, and every evil thought

suggested to our mind comes from spirits of this order. They see the happiness enjoyed by good spirits and this sight causes them perpetual torment and they experience all the agonies produced by envy and jealousy. They also preserve the remembrance and perfection of the suffering of earth life and this impression is often more painful than the reality, and they suffer both, in fact, from the ills they have thus endured and from those which they have caused to be endured by others, and as these sufferings endure for a long time they believe themselves to be destined to suffer forever, and God, for their punishment wills that they should believe this, and as written above, spirits of this order may be recognized by their language for the trivial expressions of spirits as by men is always an indication of moral if not intellectual inferiority, and their communication through mediums or certain unsophisticated clairvoyants show the baseness of their intentions, though they may try to impose upon the medium by speaking with an appearance of reason and propriety they are able to keep up this false appearance and end by betraying their real quality. These spirits are addicted to all vice engendered by vile and degrading passions, sensuality, cruelty, hypocrisy, etc. They commit evil for its own cause and are devilish without any definite motive, and form a hatred for all that is good, and generally choose

their victim from among honest and worthy mediums who have no knowledge of their powers or existence. In plain words, they are a test of humanity, being ignorant, mischievous, and addicted to mocking them loudly in everything and replying to their questions without paying any attention to the truth. They delight in causing petty annoyances, raise false hopes in petty joys, in misleading clairvoyants and people in mystifications and trickery, and these evil spirits have vulgarly been called devils, etc. In their communications through mediums their language is sometimes witty and fatuous, and they are quick to grasp absurdities of man, and things on which they comment with sarcastic sharpness. They will borrow distinguished names and are fond of doing it because by this means they can deceive mankind. Again their knowledge is often considerable, but they imagine themselves to know considerably more than they really do, for having made a certain amount of progress from various points of view, their language has an air of gravity that may easily give a false impression as to their capacities and enlightenment, but their ideas are generally nothing more than the reflections of the prejudice and false reasoning of their earth life, their statements often containing a mixture of truths and absurdities in the midst of which traces of presumption, pride, jealousy and obstinancy from which they have not

yet freed themselves are plainly active and perceptible. Again, they are not sufficiently advanced to take any part in doing good, nor are some of them bad enough to be active in committing evil, for they incline sometimes to the one and sometimes to the other, never raising above the ordinary level of the earth bound spirits, either in point of morality or of intelligence and are strongly attached to things of the Earth Plane, whose gross satisfaction they regret. There are also noisy and boisterous spirits who do not, strictly speaking, form a distinct class in virtue and their personal qualities, as they may belong to all classes of the third order, and often manifest their presence by production of phenomena perceptible to the senses, such as raps, the movement and displacing of abnormal bodies, the agitation of the air, etc., which among the Hindus is termed "Objective Change." Spirits of this nature are more evil than any other class or grade of spirits. They are the particular agents in determining the vicissitudes of the elements of the earth. They approach the air, water, fire and the various bodies in the entrails of the earth, and when these bodies present certain phenomena of character and intention and intelligence, this phenomena should not be attributed to a mere fortuitous and physical cause as all spirits are able to produce physical phenomena or objective change. Spirits of an elevated degree

easily leave this phenomena to those of the lower order, who are more apt for action upon matter than things of intelligence, when they judge it to be useful to produce physical manifestations such as death raps, thundering noises around the bed and in the room of a person whose time of death has already been fixed. Spirits of this grade are employed for this work and while there are many wise people, so-called, who are skeptic in regard to the death raps, warnings, etc., there is absolutely no question of these phenomena as no human soul has ever left the physical body without the writing having appeared somewhere at some time and in some place upon the wall or, in other words, there has been a warning of their death sent and given by these spirits; but if we are too busy or too ignorant to know these things when they come, the fault is our own.

Predominance of the spirits of the second degree over matter; their desire of excellence and their qualities and their power for good are proportionate to the degree at which they have arrived. Some of them possess scientific knowledge, others have acquired wisdom and charity; the more advanced among them combine knowledge with moral excellences. Not being yet completely dematerialized, they perceive the traces of their corporeal existence, more or less strongly marked, according to their rank—traces of which are seen either in their mode

of expressing themselves, in their habits, or even in some cases in the characteristic eccentricities and hobbies still retained by them, and but for these weaknesses and imperfections they would be able to pass into the category of spirits of the first order.

They have acquired the comprehension of the idea of God and of infinity, and already share the felicity of the higher spheres. They find their happiness both in the accomplishment of good and in the prevention of evil. The affection by which they are united affords them ineffable delight, troubled neither by envy, remorse nor any other of the evil passions which make the torment of spirits of lower degree; but they have still to undergo the discipline of trial until they have completed the work of their purification. As spirits, they infuse good and noble thoughts into the minds of men, turn them from the paths of evil, protect those whose course of life renders them worthy of their aid, and neutralize by their suggestions the influence of lower spirits on the minds of those who do not willingly yield to the evil counsels of the latter.

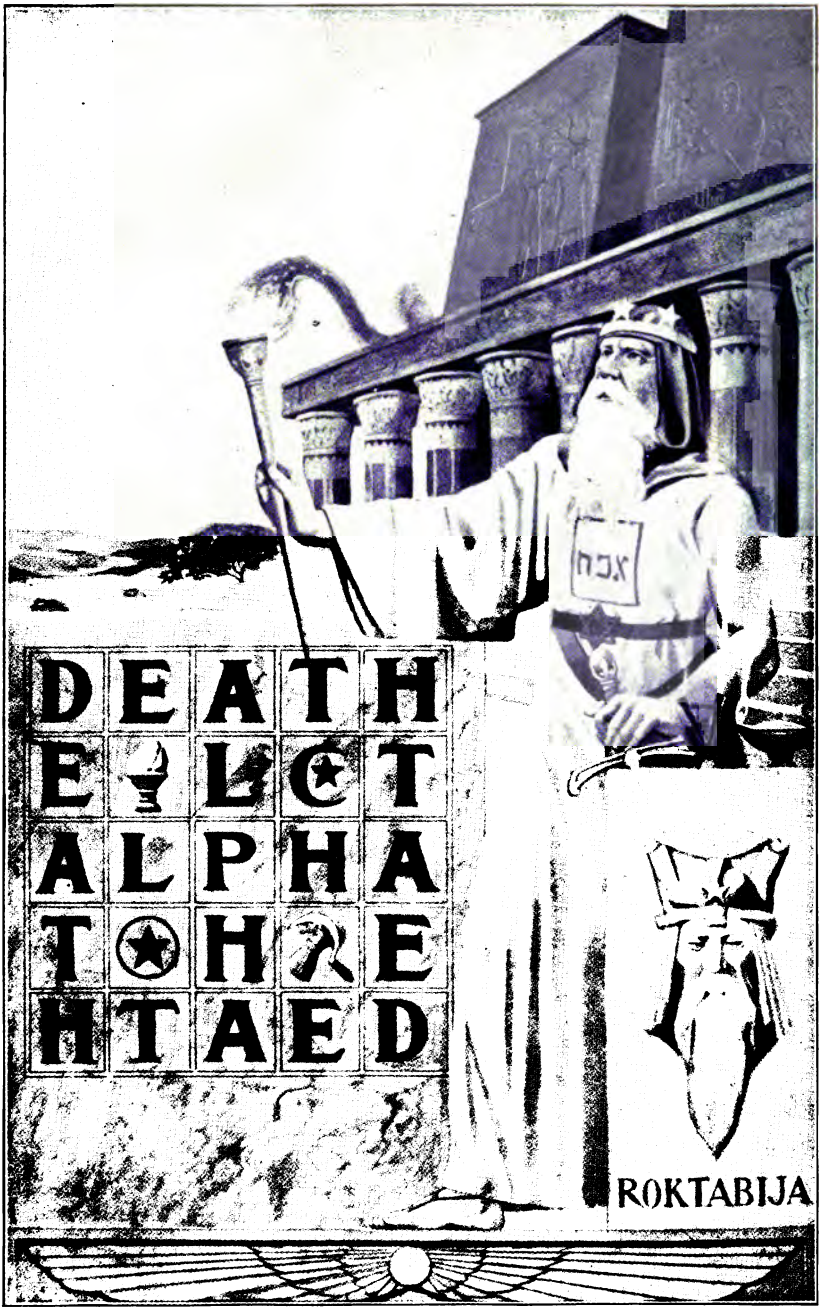
The human beings in whom they are incarnated are upright and benevolent; they are actuated neither by pride, selfishness, nor ambition; they feel neither hatred, rancour, envy, nor jealousy, and do good for its own sake. To this order belongs the spirit commonly designated in the popular beliefs by the names

of good genu, protecting genu, good spirits. In periods of ignorance and superstition men have regarded them as beneficent divinities.

"THE HINDU ADEPTS."

We recognize alone, in the unreal,
That Astral power exists,
All matter is at strife,
And all material things at war with life,
So, quite discarding interest in these,
Abandoning the field to those who please,
What we call "Spirit Power" seek we to attain,
And scourge the flesh with all its fancies vain.

—Dr. de Laurence.



"O death, where is thy sting"?
"O grave, where is thu victoru"?

CHAPTER X.

BENEVOLENT SPIRITS

The dominant quality of benevolent spirits is kindness. They take pleasure in rendering services to men and in protecting them, but their knowledge is somewhat limited as they have progressed in morality rather than in intelligence and learned spirits are especially distinguished by the extent of their knowledge. They are less interested in moral questions than in scientific investigations, for which they have a greater aptitude. Their spiritual studies are always prosecuted with a view of practical utility, and they are entirely free from the base passions common to spirits of lower degree of advancement. The wise spirits are those whose elevated morals calls for very distinctive characteristics without having arrived at the position of unlimited knowledge. They have reached the development of intellectual capacity which enables them to judge accordingly of man and of things. High Caste spirits are those who unite in the very highest degree of scientific knowledge. Their impression and communications are all surpassed only by the pure be-

nevolence which is always noble and elevated, often sublime, as their superiority renders them more apt than any others to impart to the medium and those whom they care to impress just and true ideas in relation to the incorporeal world within the limits of the knowledge permitted to mankind. They willingly enter into spirit communication with good mediums and those who seek them truly in simplicity and sincerity, and who are sufficiently freed from the point of sensuality and materialism to be capable of understanding them, but they turn from those whose inquiries are prompted only by curiosity, or who will be drawn away from rectitude by the evil attractions of material things, and when under exceptional circumstances they incarnate themselves in the physical body, it is always for the accomplishment of a mission of progress, and they thus show us the highest type of perfection to which we can inspire in the present world.

INFLUENCE AND SIGHT OF SPIRITS

Spirits are able to penetrate the innermost thoughts of mankind if they choose, as they are continually around him, but no disembodied spirit sees only those things to which it directly gives its attention and pays no heed whatever to those things that do not interest it. Owing to the fact of their being able to read our most secret thoughts they often see

and find out many things that we would desire really to hide from ourselves, and it will be seen that it is far more easy to conceal a secret or hide a fact from a person living than to conceal it from the same person after death. Many an individual has fancied himself entirely alone and hidden from every eye, but at the same time he is surrounded by a crowd of spirits who can watch his every move and learn his most secret thought if they desire. Evily disposed spirits enjoy the little annoyances that come to mankind and laugh and amuse themselves at his impatience or anger. The higher grade of spirits pity mankind for his imperfections and shortcomings, and endeavor to aid and cure him of them. Many have asked, "Do spirits influence the thoughts and actions of mankind?" They do beyond any peradventure of a doubt, and this influence upon your thoughts and actions is far greater than you suppose it to be, as spirits very often attract and control mankind. There are times when man has thoughts that originate with himself, and others that are suggested by disembodied spirits, for you must remember that your soul is a spirit, and you have also observed that many thoughts, and frequently very opposite ones comes into your mind, referring to the same matter, but at the same time. In cases of this kind some of these thoughts and ideas are your own, some belong to the spirits themselves and

are the cause of your uncertainties, because you have thoughts in your mind that have different origins and are consequently opposed to each other. The way and manner of distinguishing between thoughts that belong to you and come from yourself directly, and those which are transmitted to you by spirits is as follows: those thoughts which come to you first are usually your own, but when a thought comes to you like a voice speaking unto you, it comes from a disembodied spirit. In point of fact this distinction is of practical importance, especially if the impressions that are about to be given you come from the spirits who are good advisers. In consequence of the above, you will see that man is not left to his own freedom even in regard to his innermost thoughts in life. Men of great genius and intelligence do not always draw their ideas from their own minds. It is true their ideas sometimes come from their own souls, but they are more often transmitted to them by the spirits of the Astral Plane, whenever they are thought capable of receiving and understanding them and being worthy of the knowledge transmitted to them. There are times when an individual will not be able to find the idea or thought that he seeks in himself, and if he will make an appeal for inspiration or an evocation, he will receive assistance. It should, of course, be remembered that every person is not able to distin-

guish clearly between their own thoughts and those which are transmitted to them by spirits. If this were best, of course, the power to do so would have been given to every one, as they have been given the power to distinguish between day and night, but when any matter has been left by the Creator for an individual in a state of vagueness, it has been left so because it is better for him. As stated before, our first thoughts are usually our own. The ideas and thoughts transmitted from the spirits upon the Astral Plane may be good or bad, owing to the nature of the spirit, but every person should at all times close the door of their souls to bad impressions. They should also study the quality of the thoughts and impressions transmitted to them, for good spirits give only wise counsel, and it is for us to be able to distinguish between good and bad. The reason why evilly disposed spirits desire to prompt and excite us to evil actions is, because they desire that we suffer the same as they do themselves, because a disembodied spirit is possessed of envy and jealousy of any person who is happier and more pure than they are themselves. Evilly disposed spirits are used as the instruments of God to test man's faith and constancy for well doing, and the human soul must advance in knowledge of God and it is for this purpose and end that it is forced to pass through the trials and tests of evil in

order to attain goodness. The mission of the good spirits who dwell in Spirit Life are the same as those of a good man or woman upon the earth plane, that is to lead and direct you in the right path. The soul of man is like a magnet, that is to say, that it will attract what it desires, for like always attracts like. Any person who is influenced or acted upon by an evil spirit has attracted these spirits to himself by his evil desires, as evil spirits will always come to aid you in doing evil and performing anything that is bad. They can assist you in doing wrong and will prompt you to wrong whenever you give way to your evil desires. If a man is a murderer or a thief in his heart he will attract to himself and there will surround him, many evilly disposed spirits who were murderers and thieves themselves and they will actuate the desire to murder and keep it active within his soul. On the other hand, there will be good spirits and they will try to influence you for good and this will restore you to your balance and make you able to master yourself if you are inclined to listen to their impressions. It is thus that man has been left to his own conscience and to choose the path and road he desires or decides to follow. He has the liberty and free will of yielding to one influence or the other, as both of these opposing influences act upon the soul of every man. Consequently, it is well for you to remember that you can

only detach yourself from evil spirits by setting yourself and your soul against evil thoughts and desires, because evil spirits whose influences and impressions are repelled by your will and soul, are forced to remove their temptations, for as soon as they see that they cannot accomplish their aim they give up the attempt, but are ever watching to continue at the first possible moment, the same as a hawk will watch its prey,. and it is only by doing what is right and putting all of your trust in God that you are able to repel the influence of evil spirits and prevent them from obtaining power and control over you. You should be ever careful not to listen to the impressions of spirits who are inclined to inspire you with evil thoughts or desires or they would stir up discord in you and excite you to evil passions. Set yourself against those spirits who would flatter you and make you vain and proud, for in doing so they attack mankind on his weakest side. This is why you have been taught to pray thus, "Let us not succumb to temptation but deliver us from evil."

SPIRITS OF EVIL INFLUENCE

The spirits who influence and incline us to evil by putting our firmness into rectitude have not received a mission to do so, and they themselves are responsible for this evil and wrongdoing of this mission, for no soul or spirit has ever received a mission from

the Almighty to commit evil, and when it does it of its own free will and inclination, and therefore has got to answer the consequences of its wrong doing. Man may take the way and path of evil but he does not do it because he has been commanded to do it. It is for him to repel and not attract evil unto himself, and I will say to you again that it is a great universal and immutable law, *"that like attracts like,"* and he who maintains and entertains an evil condition of mind will attract evil influences (Spirits) to him, consequently the fault is all his own. Whenever the human soul feels a vague anxiety or nervous undefinable sensation, or a condition of entire content and satisfaction without any visible assignable cause these sensations and conditions do not proceed from any physical or material source, as they are the direct result of the communication and influences received from disembodied spirits or that we have received during sleep or deep meditation. Whenever spirits desire to excite us to evil they can take advantage of the condition in which they find us, or they themselves, if we let our souls open to them can bring about circumstances and conditions which are favorable to their designs. However, they are ever ready to take advantage of an occurrence or any favorable circumstances. They bring the same about by influencing or urging you, without your being aware

of it, toward the object of your unwise desire. As an illustration, you may find an amount of money on the street. You should not be foolish enough to imagine that disembodied spirits placed this amount on the street for you, but they may have suggested to you the idea of going that way and when you have picked up the money they can transmit to you the idea of keeping it in your possession without making any effort of finding the rightful owner. A good spirit will suggest to you that it would be right to restore it to its rightful owner, and it is thus with all of the temptations of life.

The writer has been often asked, is it possible for a disembodied spirit to for a time, enter the body of a living person? That is to say, can he incarnate himself into an animate body and act in a certain place in the place of the soul incarnated in it. A disembodied spirit does not enter into the body of another, but it can assimilate itself with the soul of another who has the same defects and the same qualities as itself, and influence him to do as he pleases. No spirit can substitute itself in the place of a soul who is existing, is a physical body, for a soul is indissolvably united with its body until the time of death. An individual may become possessed, dominated, subjugated and obsessed by a disembodied spirit to such an extent that the will is entirely subdued, and it is this which really constitutes the term obses-

sion, but this domination and control is never established without the participation of the soul who is subjected to it either through its weakness or own free will, and the real condition that brings the human soul under the control and power of an evil spirit despite its resistance, is the result of its own wrong doing. There are many cases of insanity that are not the result and work of evil spirits. These cases of course do not need the assistance of the exorciser. The word obsession in its common acceptation presupposes the existence of demons or devils of the category of evil beings and a nature essentially bad, and the cohabitation of one of these beings with a soul of a man in the body of the latter. The truth is that there are no such beings as demons in the sense above defined, and since two spirits cannot at the same time inhabit the same body there is no such a thing as possession in the sense commonly attributed to that word, and the word obsession or possessed can only be explained as expressing a state of soul subjugation to which the soul in the body may be reduced by the evil spirits under whose influence and domain it has fallen. It is very difficult for a soul that has been obsessed to free itself or drive away an evil spirit and it is only through steadfastness and firmness and a decided resolve to do so that a person is able to escape from these evil influences. Where this influence and fascination exer-

cised by an evil spirit is so complete that the person subjugated should be unable to rid himself of it, it is necessary for a third person to end the control, and the following course should be taken. An upright man or priest should be procured, who by attracting the co-operation of good spirits in the work of deliverance of the subjected soul, will be able to free it of bad spirits, for the more upright a man is, the more power he possesses both over evil spirits to drive them away and over good ones to attract them and bring them to his assistance. However, the best Adept in these matters will be perfectly powerless unless the obsessed person inclines himself to the efforts made in his behalf, and it should be remembered that there are many persons who take delight in the state of dependence which panders to depraved tastes and desires and in no case can one who is powerful in a spiritual way exercise a liberating influence, for, unless the person affected sincerely desires to be assisted, he would be despised by good spirits and they would refuse to assist him, while the bad ones stand in no alarm of him. There are many formulas and receipts given by the unlearned in true Occultism for Exorcism over bad spirits. Many of these formulas and ceremonies do no good, for when bad spirits see anyone foolishly endeavoring to get rid of them by such means they laugh at them and grow only the stronger in their obsession. When-

ever a person becomes obsessed and their intentions are good it is best for them to tire out the patience of evil spirits by taking no heed of their suggestions, by showing them that they are simply wasting their time and as soon as they can see that they are not going to accomplish anything they will quickly leave. Deep and serious prayer is always an effective means of obtaining help, but it must be remembered that the chanting or saying of certain words will have no effect in obtaining what you desire, and no man can be helped unless he is inclined to help himself. It is therefore necessary to use prayer, and the person possessed must do so to cure himself first of his evil thoughts and defects which first attracted evil spirits to him. This in connection with the Occult Powers of a true Adept in Art Magic will give them relief.

"INDIA'S IDOLS."

The idols are not worshiped, but fulfill
A part in representing to the mind
The great idea, which is but enshrined
Within the heart, though dimly. He who bows
In India to an idol, will arouse
And tell you:
"Him the sun cannot repress,
Nor moon, nor stars, nor lightning can express,
Nor fire explain; they through Him only shine,
While all that live, exist through Him divine"—
Though undeveloped intellect may screen
The far idea, by the image seen.
In this America my eyes have viewed
Some acts which might be equally construed:
To bow before a picture, statue, saint,
Excites in Christian Churches no restraint,
And I perceive no difference, unless
In this: less beauty and less comeliness
And less attractiveness, to chain the heart
Have India's idols, than their counterpart.
The very argument, as urged to me
In free America, is India's plea.
Buddhist, Brahman, and Hindoo adduce
The image merely serves to reproduce

The great idea, which, though not defined,
Has yet to every phase some form assigned.
The Christians raise to saints memorial shrines,
And loved relations; where, then, draw the lines?
If Hindus to their Saints due honors use,
Which shall be blamed, and who shall dare accuse?
While Mussulmen, who so from idols shrink
When others bow, what shall those others think
Of Mecca's black, unshapen stone, and tomb?
And what, when to their consciousness there loom
The thousands who before Mahomet's name
Fall and adore?
Are not these acts the same?
Mahomet, who was man, nor greatness earned,
Above Confucius, or Gautama learned.
Gautama Buddh his followers forbid
To search the realms, where mystery is hid,
Where origin unfolds itself complete,
Since this involves inquiry indiscreet,
And questioning of God.
But 'tis comprised
In Sanscrit literature, and clear advised
By Constitution of the Cosmos' tried,
Symbolical expressions set aside,
What previous Hierophants confirmed,
'Is now by modern thinkers reaffirmed;
The precept old, is of new thought the kernel—
That Spirit and that life are eternal.
The written word of India's ancient minds,
The present to the past securely binds,

While recent sciences, and theory,
Advance conclusions in philosophy,
Like echoes sounding from the Orient,
Reverberating to the Occident.
Thus thought, revolving like the circling earth,
Completes an era, and attains new birth.

—Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER XI.

CASTING OUT EVIL SPIRITS

Many people speak of casting out devils or demons. The truth of this saying depends upon the meaning you attach to the words devils or demons. If you mean by that term a bad spirit who subjugates a human being, it is evident that, when his influence is destroyed, he will really be driven away. If you attribute a malady to the devil, you may say, when you have cured the malady, that you have driven the devil away. This statement may be true or false, according to the meaning attributed to certain words. The most weighty truths may appear absurd when you look only at the form under which they are presented and *when an allegory is taken for a fact.* Get this principle well into your mind, and keep it there, for it is of *universal application.* Spirits play a very important part in that phenomena exhibited by certain individuals designated under the name of convulsionaries, as does also the agent that the Hindu calls Astral Fluid, whether employed by human beings or by spirits; for this agent is the original source of those phenomena. But charlatans

have often exaggerated these effects and made them a matter of speculation, which has brought them into ridicule. The nature of the spirits who help produce this phenomena are those of very slight elevation, for no spirit of high degree will be guilty of committing these acts. Whole populations may be suddenly thrown into the abnormal state of convulsions through sympathy. Moral dispositions are also exceedingly contagious, for you are not so ignorant of the effects of human magnetism and Astral Fluid as not to understand this, and also the part that certain spirits would naturally take in such occurrences through sympathy with those by whom they are produced. Among the strange peculiarities remarked in convulsionaries several are evidently identical with those of which somnambulism, mingled with Astral Fluid, offer numerous examples, viz., physical insensibility, thought reading, sympathetic transmission of sensations, etc. It is waking somnambulism, determined by the influence which they unwittingly exercise upon each other. They are at once mesmerizers and mesmerized unconsciously to themselves.

The cause of the physical insensibility sometimes remarked in convulsionaries, and sometimes also in other persons when subjected to the most atrocious tortures, is in some cases simply an effect of human magnetism, which acts upon the nervous system in

the same manner as do certain substances. In other cases mental excitement deadens the sensibility of the organism, the center of consciousness retiring from the body in order to concentrate itself in the spirit. Have you not observed that, when the soul is intensely occupied with any matter, the body neither feels, nor sees, nor hears. The excitement of fanaticism and enthusiasm offer, on the part of persons subjected to a violent death, examples of a calmness and coolness that could hardly triumph over excruciating pain unless the sensibility of the patient were neutralized by a sort of soul anesthesia. It is known that, in the heat of battle, a severe wound is often received without being perceived; whilst, under ordinary circumstances, a mere scratch is felt acutely.

Since the production of these phenomena of anesthesia is due, in part, to the action of physical causes and in part to that of spirits, it may be asked how it can have been possible for the civil authorities, in certain cases, to put a stop to them. The reason of this is, however, very simple. The actions of spirits in these cases is only secondary; they do nothing more than take advantage of a natural tendency. The public authorities did not suppress this tendency, but the cause which kept up and stimulated it, thus reducing it from a state of activity to one of latency; and they were right in so doing, because

the matter was giving rise to abuses and scandal. Such intervention, nevertheless, is powerless in cases where the action of spirits is direct and spontaneous.

Good spirits sympathize with all men who are good or susceptible of amelioration; inferior spirits with men who are bad or who may become such. The attachment, in both cases, is a consequence of the similarity of sentiment, or as I have told you that, *like attracts like.*

AFFECTION OF CERTAIN SPIRITS FOR CERTAIN PERSONS

The affection of certain spirits for certain persons is not one of exclusive sentiment, for true affection has nothing of carnality; but when a spirit attaches himself to a living person it is not always through affection only; for there may also be in that attachment a reminiscence of human passions. Good spirits take an interest in our misfortunes and prosperity. Those who wish us well are grieved by the ills we undergo during life. Good spirits do you all the good they can and rejoice with you in all your joys. They mourn over your afflictions when you do not bear them with resignation, because in that case affliction produces no beneficial result, for you are like the sick man who rejects the disagreeable draught that would cure him. The kind of ills that cause the most grief to your spirit friends are those

of selfishness and hard-heartedness, for these are the root of all your troubles. They smile at the imaginary sorrow that are born of pride and ambition; they rejoice in those which will shorten your term of trial.

Our spirit friends, knowing that corporeal life is only transitory and that the tribulations by which it is accompanied are the means that will enable you to reach a happier state, are more grieved for you by the moral imperfections which keeps you back than by physical ills, which are only transitory. Spirits attach as little importance to misfortunes which affect you only in your earthly ideas as you do to the trifling sorrows of childhood. Seeing the afflictions of life to be the means of your advancement they regard them only as the passing means which will restore the sick man to health. They are grieved by your sufferings, as you are grieved by those of a friend; but, judging the events of your lives from a truer point of view, they appreciate them differently. While inferior spirits try to drive you to despair, in order to hinder your advancement, the good ones seek to inspire you with the courage that will turn your trials into a source of gain for your future.

'Tis easy enough to be pleasant
When Life goes by with a song,
But the Soul worth while,
Which will receive Amelioration,
Is the one who can smile
When everything goes wrong.

SPIRIT PROTECTORS

There are certain spirits who attach themselves to a particular person in order to protect and help him. These are what are termed the spirit brother, spirit protector or the good genius of a person, and is often spoken of as a guardian angel, or spirit protector of high degree. The mission of the spirit protector is the same as that of the father toward his child. It is their aim and desire to lead the object of their protection into the right road, to aid him with his counsels, to console him in his afflictions and sustain his courage under the trials of his earthly existence. This spirit protector is attached to a person from the moment of his birth to the time of his death, when this attachment is continued after death in spirit life and in even their next earthly existence, if this particular spirit or soul should become reincarnated or live on earth again at some future period. Every person's spirit protector is obliged to watch over him, because he has accepted the charge and duty, but the spirit brother or protector has the privilege of choosing his ward from

among those who are sympathetic and congenial with him. It is many times that this duty is a pleasure, others it is a mission. Once a spirit protector has attached himself to a given person he need not necessarily refrain from protecting another person, but he does so less exclusively.

A spirit protector sometimes abandons his ward when the latter persists in neglecting his counsels. He withdraws from him when he sees that his counsels are useless and that there is a stubborn determination to yield to the influence of inferior spirits, but he does not abandon them entirely and continues to make himself heard. It is not the spirit who quits the man, but the man who closes his soul against the spirit. As soon as the man calls him back the spirit returns to him.

If there be a doctrine that should win over the most incredulous by its charm and its beauty it is that of the existence of the spirit protectors or guardian angels. To think that you have always near you beings who are superior to you and who are always beside you to counsel you, to sustain you, to aid you in climbing the steep ascent of self-improvement, whose friendship is truer and more devoted than the most intimate union that you can contract upon the earth. Is not such an idea most consoling? Those good spirits are near you by the commands of God. It is He who has placed them beside you.

They are there for love of Him, and fulfill towards you a noble but laborious mission. They are with you wherever you may be; in the dungeon, in solitude, in the lazar-house, even in the haunts of debauchery. Nothing ever separates you from a true friend whom you cannot see, but whose gentle impulsions are felt, and whose wise monitions are heard in the innermost recesses of your heart.

REVELATION

Would that you were more fully impressed with this truth; how often would it aid you in your moments of need; how often would it save you from the snares of evil spirits; but at the great day of account how often will your guardian angel have to say to you, "Did I not urge you and yet you would not follow my leading? Did I not show you the abyss, and yet you persisted in throwing yourself into it? Did I not cause your conscience to hear the voice of truth, and have you not followed lying counsels?" Question your guardian spirits; establish between yourselves and them the affectionate intimacy which exists between tried and loving friends. *For did not Christ say, "I always listen for the inner voice of revelation."* Do not think to hide anything from them, for they are the eye of God and you cannot deceive them. Think of the future; seek to advance on the upward road; your trials will be

shorter, your existence happier. Men, take courage; cast far from you all prejudices and mental reservations; enter resolutely upon the new road that opens before you. You have guides, follow them. Your goal cannot fail you, that goal is God Himself.

To those who may think it impossible that spirits of high degree should bind themselves to a task so laborious and demanding so much patience on their part, my reply is that spirits influence your souls while at many millions of leagues from you. To them space is nothing, and, while living in another world, spirits preserve their connection with yours. They possess qualities of which you can form no idea; but be sure that God has not imposed upon them a task above their strength, and that He has not abandoned you upon the earth without friends and without support. Every guardian angel has his ward, over whom he watches as a father watches over his child; he rejoices when he sees him following the right road; he mourns when his counsels are neglected.

Do not fear to weary them with your questions. Remain, on the contrary, always in connection with them, and you will thus be stronger and happier. It is this communication between each man and his familiar spirit and the spirits of the Astral Plane that will eventually make all men mediums and drive out incredulity from the world. You who have re-

ceived instruction instruct in your turn. You who are possessed of talents raise your brethren. You know not how great a work you accomplish by so doing; it is the work of Christ, the work imposed on you by God. Why has God given you intelligence and knowledge, as well as Great Occult and Spiritual Powers if not to share them with your brethren to aid them to advance on the road that leads to eternal felicity. The doctrine of guardian spirits watching over their wards, notwithstanding the distance which separates different worlds, has in it nothing that should excite your surprise; it is as natural as it is grand and sublime. Do we not see a mother, upon the earth, watch over her child even though at a distance from her and aid him by the wise counsels of her letters and advice? Why, then, should it be deemed surprising that spirits should guide, from one world to another, those whom they take under their protection, since, to them, the distance which separates worlds is less than than which, on earth, separates continents. Besides have they not the use of the universal Astral fluids, which binds together all the worlds of the universe and makes them part and parcel of each other? This Astral Fluid acts for them as the universal vehicle for the transmission of thought, as the air acts for us the vehicle of the transmission of sound.

EVIL SPIRITS UNITE TO NEUTRALIZE THE ACTION OF THE GOOD ONES

If a spirit abandons his ward and no longer watches over him he will never do him any harm, as good spirits never do harm to any one. They leave that to those who take their place and you then accuse fate of the misfortunes that overwhelm you, while in reality it is the results of your own wrong-doings and your own sad mistakes. Evil spirits unite to neutralize the action of the good ones, but the soul of the ward suffices to give back all the power to his spirit protector. When the one protected has a positive will for good it renders it easy to help him. In such a case he takes advantage of doing good while awaiting the return of his ward. Whenever your spirit protector allows you to wander into evil ways and wrong paths it is not because he is unable to cope with the bad spirits which mislead you, but because he does not choose to do so. He knows that you will become wiser and better through the trials that you will have brought upon yourself. Your spirit brother will assist you through great counsels and will suggest to your mind ideas and thoughts which are not always heeded, but this will be due to your own weakness, carelessness or pride, and this in itself gives great strength and power to bad spirits as their power over you comes solely from your not opposing sufficient resistance to

their action and influence. Again you may wonder if your spirit protector and counselor is constantly with you. There are, of course, circumstances under which the presence of your protector is not necessary. When once the human soul has reached a degree of development which enables him to guide himself, as the time comes when a scholar no longer needs a master or teacher, the soul has no longer need of his guardian angel, but this point or stage in your spiritual development is never reached upon the Earth Plane. The good spirits of the Astral Plane many times assist you when you have no knowledge of the same, and it is well that you have no knowledge of this, for if you count on their support you will not act of yourself, consequently your self action and soul cannot progress, for in order to convince each man to acquire personal experience, often at the expense of his own soul, he must exercise his soul powers, otherwise he would live like a child who is not allowed to walk alone. The action of the spirits who desire your welfare is always regulated in such a way as to let you use your own free will, for if you had no responsibility you would not advance on the road that is to lead you to a better spiritual existence. Mankind not seeing his spiritual supporters puts forth his own strength, but his spiritual guides, however, watches over him and calls to him from time to time to bid him beware of approaching

danger. Whenever your spirit protector succeeds in guiding you upon the right path, he thereby benefits you and also himself, as his work is a meritorious work which will be counted to him either for his advancement or his happiness. He rejoices when he sees his ward and care crowned with success, and triumphs as a teacher triumphs over the success of a student. If he has done everything for you that has depended on him and has not succeeded for you, you and not he will be held responsible. Spirit protectors always feel grieved at the errors made by mankind and pity him, but this has nothing of the anguish of earth life, because the spirit guide knows that there is a remedy for the evil and that what is not done to-day will be done in the future. If you desire to evoke your spirit guide give him any name you please, that is to say, any name that you feel would do for a superior spirit for whom you feel great veneration; your spirit guide will then always answer your appeal, for all good spirits are brothers and assist each other. There are many spirit guides who take well known names of persons. These persons have been in sympathy with these spirits and in many cases come by their order, and if you desire them to take a name they will do so to inspire you with their confidence. A father or mother in spirit life cannot be the real spirit guardian of their child, for such guardianship possesses a certain degree of

spirit elevation and the power granted by God. However, a parent who watches over his child may himself be assisted by a spirit of more elevated degree. A soul which has passed from the earth plane under favorable conditions can in a sense become a protector of those whom they left and that have survived them, but their power is more or less narrowed by their position and advancement. This, of course, does not always leave them free of liberty and action. Savages and men who are very low as regards their moral state have their protectors, for every man has a spirit who watches over him, but missions are always proportioned to their object. You would not give the professor of philosophy to a child who is learning its grammar. The advancement of the guardian spirit is always proportioned to that of the soul he protects. While you yourself have a spirit of higher degree who watches over you, you may in turn become the protector of a soul who is lower than you, and the progress you help him make will contribute to your own advancement, for God does not demand of any soul or spirit more than is consistent to its nature and with the degree at which it has arrived. It would not be entirely correct to say that a good spirit and an evil one is attached to each individual for the purpose of exciting him to evil and thus furnishing him with the opportunity of struggling between good and evil. Nevertheless it is true

the bad spirits do endeavor to draw you out of the right road whenever they find an opportunity of doing so, but when an evil spirit attaches himself to an individual he does so of his own accord, because he hopes to be able to influence him and cause him to not listen to good. In this case there is a struggle between the good and evil spirit, and the victory remains with the one whose influence the man has subjected himself to, or as written above, has attracted to him by his own condition of mind and soul, which must be either good or bad.

THE MASTER OF SPIRITISM.

His snowy hair and beard identified
With purple robes and manner dignified,
While inviting you, in a kindly voice,
Come to India's teachings, to conquer, and rejoice.

—Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER XII.

FAMILIAR SPIRITS

From the above explanations of the nature and possibilities of Spiritism, which are the results of years of meditation and observation, as well as communication with all kinds of nature of spirits on the Astral Plane, who attach themselves to and influence man, you may draw the following conclusions and rely upon them as being literally and sacredly true: That the spirit protector, good genius or guardian angel is the one whose mission it is to follow each man through the course of life, and to aid him to progress to his degree of advancement which is always superior to that of his ward.

Familiar spirits attach themselves, to certain persons for a longer or shorter period, in order to be useful to them within the limits (often somewhat narrow) of their possibilities; they are generally well-intentioned, but sometimes rather backward and even frivolous. They busy themselves with the every-day details of human life, and only act by order with the permission of the spirit guardians.

Sympathetic spirits are those who are drawn to us

by personal affection, and by a similarity of tastes in good or in evil. The duration of their relationship with us is almost dependent on circumstances. An evil genius is an imperfect or wicked spirit, who attaches himself to a man for the purpose of perverting him, but he acts of his own motion and not in virtue of a mission. His tenacity is proportionate to the more or less easy access accorded to him. A man is always free to listen to the suggestions of an evil genius or to repel them.

There are persons who attach themselves to others in order to urge and influence them on to their injury, or to direct them in the right path. And many persons do in fact exercise over others a fascination and influence which seems irresistible. When this influence is used for evil it is to be attributed to an evil spirit or soul, who makes use of evil men in order the more effectually to subject their victim, and this is often done in order to try a person. Many times spirits attach themselves to all the members of a family in order to watch over, aid and guide them, and as spirits are attracted to a family so they become attracted to a large number of individuals by sympathy. They are also attracted to an order or company of people and become united in their views with them. Spirits go by preference to the places where they meet their similars; they are more at ease among such and more sure of being listened

to. Every one attracts spirits to himself according to his tendencies, whether as an individual or as an element of a collective whole, such as a society, a city or a nation. Societies, towns and nations are therefore assisted by spirits of more or less elevated degree, according to the character and passions which predominate in them. Imperfect spirits withdraw from those who repel them, from which it follows that the moral excellence of collective wholes, like that of individuals, tends to keep away bad spirits and to attract good ones, who rouse and keep alive the sense of rectitude in the masses, as others may sow among them the worst passions.

Agglomerations of individuals, such as societies, cities, nations, have their special spirit guardians, for these assemblages constitute collective individualities, who are pursuing a common end, and who have need of a higher direction. There are certain spirits who advance the progress of Occult teachings by protecting those who cultivate them. Again there are special spirit protectors who assist those by whom they are invoked when they judge them to be worthy of their help; but what could they do with those who fancy themselves to be what they are not. They cannot make the blind see nor the deaf hear.

The ancients converted these spirit guardians into special deities. The Muses were nothing else than the allegoric personification of the spirit protectors

of arts and sciences, just as the spirit protectors of the family circle were designated by the name of lares or of penates. Among the moderns the arts, the various industries, cities, countries, have also their protecting patrons, who are no other than spirit guardians of a higher order, but under different names.

Each man having his sympathetic spirit it follows that, in every collective whole, the generality of sympathetic spirits correspond to the generality of individuals; that stranger spirits are attracted to it by identity of tastes and thoughts, in a word, that these assemblages, as well as individuals, are more or less favorably surrounded, influenced, assisted, according to the predominant character of the thoughts of those who compose them. Among nations the conditions which exercise an attractive action upon spirits are the habits, manners and dominant characteristics of their people and, above all, their legislation, because the character of a nation is reflected in its laws. Those who uphold the reign of righteousness among themselves combat the influence of evil spirits. Wherever the laws consecrate injustice, inhumanity, good spirits are in the minority, and the mass of bad ones who flock in, attracted by that state of things, keep the people in their false ideas and paralyze the good influences which, being only partial, are lost in the crowd, like a solitary wheat ear in the midst of

tares. It is therefore easy, by studying the character of nations, or of any assemblage of men, to form to oneself an idea of the invisible population which is mixed up with them in their thoughts and in their actions.

PRESENTIMENT

Is a presentiment always a warning from the spirit guardian? you may ask. A presentiment is a counsel privately addressed to you by a spirit who wishes you well. The same may be said of the intuition which decides the choice of his next existence by a spirit about to reincarnate himself; the voice of instinct is of the same nature. A spirit, before incarnating himself, is aware of the principal phases of his new existence, that is to say, of the kind of trials to which he is about to subject himself. When these are of a marked character he preserves, in his inner consciousness, a sort of impression respecting them, and this impression, which is the voice of instinct, becoming more vivid as the critical moment draws near, becomes presentiment. Whenever presentiments or impressions are somewhat vague or you are not in doubt always invoke your Astral Guides or spirit protectors or beseech and implore the Almighty God, who is our common Master, to send to you a spirit guide or messenger. I will teach you how to do this further on in these writings

of Spiritism. Warnings from Spirit Life are not given solely for your moral guidance alone, but they are given in reference to everything that concerns you.

Your spirit guardians endeavor to lead you to take, in regard to everything that you have to do, the best possible course; but you often close your ears to their friendly counsels and thus get yourselves into trouble through your own fault. Our protecting spirits aid us by their counsels and by awakening the voice of our conscience; but as we do not always attach sufficient importance to these hints, they give us more direct warnings through the persons about us. Let a man reflect upon the various circumstances of his life, fortunate or unfortunate, and he will see that, on many occasions, he received advice which, had he followed it, would have spared him a good deal of annoyance. You erroneously imagine that the action of spirits can only be manifested by extraordinary phenomena; you would have spirits come to your aid by means of miracles, and you imagine them to be always armed with a sort of magic wand. Such is not the case; all that is done though usually takes place without your being aware of it. Thus, for instance, they bring about the meeting of two persons who seem to have been brought together by chance; they suggest to the mind of some one the idea of going in a particular direc-

tion. They call your attention to some special point, if the action on your part thus led up to it by their suggestion, unperceived by you, and will bring about the result they seek to obtain. In this way, each man supposes himself to be obeying only his own impulse and thus always preserves the freedom of his will. Spirits possess the power of acting upon matter and they can bring about incidents that will insure the accomplishment of a given event. As an illustration, a person is destined to die in a certain way, at a certain time. He gets into a boat and is drowned. Spirits do not really upset the boat in order to accomplish the destiny previously accepted or imposed upon this man. For while spirits have the power of acting upon matter and causing what is termed in India "objective change" but only for the carrying out of the laws of nature, and not for derogating from them by causing the production at a given moment of some unforeseen event, in opposition to these laws. In the case which I have cited, the boat upturns because the waves are too rough for it or the man within it is ignorant of the science of handling it. But as it was the destiny of this man to be killed in this way, the spirits about him will have put into his mind the idea of getting into a boat that will sink down under his weight and his death will thus have taken place naturally and without any miracle having been required to bring it about. Let

us take another illustration; one in which the ordinary conditions of matter would seem to be insufficient to account for the occurrence of a given event. A man is destined to be killed by lightning. He is overtaken by a storm, and seeks refuge under a tree; the lightning strikes the tree, and he is killed. Is it by spirits that the thunderbolt has been made to fall, and to fall upon this particular man?

The explanation of this case is the same as that of the former one. The lightning has fallen on the tree at this particular moment, because it was in accordance with the laws of nature that it should do so. The lightning was not made to fall upon the tree because the man was under it, but the man was inspired with the idea of taking refuge under a tree upon which the lightning was about to fall; for the tree would have been struck all the same, whether the man had been under it or not. An ill-intentioned person hurls against some one a projectile which passes close by him but does not touch him. The missile, in such a case, has been turned aside by some friendly spirit, for if the individual aimed at were not destined to be struck, a friendly spirit would have suggested to him the thought of turning aside from the path of the missile, or would have acted on his enemy's sight in such a way as to make him take a bad aim; for a projectile, when once impelled on its way, necessarily follows the line of its projection.

Many evil spirits take pleasure in causing vexations which serve as trials for the exercise of your patience; but they tire of this game when they see that they do not succeed in ruffling you. But it would neither be just or correct to charge them with all your disappointments, the greater number of which are caused by your own heedlessness. When your crockery is broken, the breakage is much more likely to have been caused by your own awkwardness than by spirit-action. There are some evil spirits who annoy an individual and torment him from pure personal animosity. There are others who vex a person without their having any particular reason or aim simply to gratify their malice. In some cases these spirits are enemies whom an individual has made during his present earth life and who pursue him accordingly; others act without any fixed motive. Those spirits or souls whom a man has harmed while they lived in the body usually revenge the wrong he has done them and in many cases they continue to pursue him with their animosity, if God permits them to do so, as a continuation of his trial, and the only way for him to escape their persecution is by praying for them, because by thus rendering them good for evil, you gradually bring them to see that they are in the wrong. And, in all cases, if you can show them, by your patience, that you are able to rise superior to their machinations they will cease

to attack you, seeing that they gain nothing by so doing. Experience proves that imperfect spirits follow up their vengeance from one existence to another, and that we are thus made to expiate, sooner or later, the wrong we may have done to others. Know also, that it often depends on yourselves to avert misfortunes, or, at least, to attenuate them. God has given you intelligence in order that you may make use of it, and it is especially by so doing that you enable friendly spirits to aid you most effectually—viz., by suggesting useful ideas; for they only help those who help themselves: a truth implied in the words, *"Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."* Besides, you must remember that what appears to you to be a misfortune is not always such; for the good which it is destined to work out is often never recognized by you, because you are too apt to think only of the present moment and of your own immediate satisfaction. It is true that spirits can obtain gifts of fortune for a person and direct them to hidden and buried treasures, but after they have directed you and guided you in a manner that you become wealthy and independent and you fail to remember them or give thanks by burning certain fumigations and giving up certain secret invocations, and if this is not done your future demands will be refused, as you yourself would refuse the inconsiderate demands of a child,

for even the great God and Creator of the Universe, who is a common Master of all mankind, will not answer your pleadings unless you deserve them. The above mentioned demands and favors are answered by both good and evil spirits, for the quality, both of the request and of the grant, depends on the intention by which they are prompted. But such acquiescence is more frequent on the part of spirits who desire to lead you astray, and who find an easy means of doing this through the material pleasures procured by wealth. Many obstacles which seem to be placed by fate in the way of our projects are sometimes thrown in our way by evil spirits and sometimes by good spirits, who know what is best for us in the end. Again they are attributable to our own bad management, judgment or decision. Position and character and knowledge, especially of Occult and Spiritual things, have everything to do with our successes or failures, for if we persist in following a path which is not a right one we ultimately become our own evil genius, consequently we cannot attribute to spirits the disappointments that result from our own ignorance and mistakes. If we are fortunate we should certainly by deep meditation and prayer, both to God and the good spirits of the Astral Plane, thank them. However, if we neglect to do this our faith is that of the ungrateful. You may say that there are individuals living

today on the earth plane who never pray or give thanks, but are fortunate in everything that they undertake, but my advice to you, and it is good, I assure you, is to wait until the end of their lives in the body, for they shall surely pay dearly for their temporary prosperity, which they do not deserve; for the more they have received and the more they have indulged themselves at the expense of their fellow beings the more they will have to answer for it. Spirits exert an action over the phenomena of nature and some act in one way while others are busy in another. As an illustration, meditate to yourself on the myriads of animalculæ that build up islands and archipelagoes in the midst of the sea; do you believe that there can be, in this process, no providential intention, and that this transformation of the surface of the globe is not necessary to the general harmony. Yet all this is accomplished by animals of the lowest degree in providing for their bodily wants and without any consciousness of their being instruments of God. In the same way spirits of the most rudimentary degrees are useful to the general whole; while preparing to live, and prior to their having the full consciousness of their action and free will, they are made to concur in the development of the various departments of nature, in the production of the phenomena of which they are the unwitting agents. They begin by executing the orders of their super-

iors; subsequently, when their intelligence is more developed, they command in their turn and direct the processes of the material world; still later again they are able to direct the things of the moral world. It is thus that everything in nature is linked together, from the primitive atom to the archangel, who himself began at the atom; an admirable law of harmony which your mind is, as yet, too narrow to seize in its generality.

In the case of those who are killed in battle, as in all other cases of violent death, a spirit, during the first few moments, is in a state of bewilderment, and as though he were stunned. He does not know that he is dead and seems to be taking part in the action. It is only little by little that the reality of his situation becomes apparent to him. A soul, under such cirmcumstances, is never calm at the first moment; he may still be excited against his enemy and even pursue him, but when he has recovered his self-possession he sees that his animosity has no longer any motive. But he may nevertheless retain some traces of it for a longer or shorter period, according to his character. Very few deaths are altogether instantaneous. In most cases the spirit whose body has just been mortally struck is not aware of it for the moment; it is when he begins to come to himself that his spirit can be seen moving beside his corpse. This appears so natural that the

sight of the dead body does not produce any disagreeable effect. All the life of the individual being concentrated in his spirit the latter alone attracts the attention of the spirits about him. It is with him that they converse, to him that orders are given.

PACTS WITH SPIRITS

Pacts with spirits of the Astral Plane is sympathy between an evil nature and evil spirits. For example, you wish to torment your neighbor, but you know not how to set about it, and you therefore call to your help some of the inferior spirits, who, like yourself, only desire to do evil, and who in return for the help they give you in carrying out your wicked designs expect you to help them with theirs. But it does not follow that your neighbor will not be able to get rid of such a conspiracy by an opposing conjuration and the action of his will. He who desires to do an evil deed calls evil spirits to his assistance by that mere desire, and he is then obliged to serve them as they have served him, for they, on their side, have need of his help in the evil they desire to do. What you call a pact consists simply in this reciprocity of assistance in evil. The subjection to evil spirits in which a man sometimes finds himself proceeds from this abandoning himself to the evil thoughts suggested by them and not from any sort of stipulations between them and him. The idea of a

pact in the sense commonly attached to that word is a figurative representation of the sympathy which exists between a bad man and malicious spirits. The meaning of the fantastic legends of persons selling their soul to Satan in order to obtain from him certain favors is that all fables contain a teaching and a moral; your mistake is in taking them literally. The one referred to is an allegory and is thus explained: He who calls evil spirits to his aid in order to obtain from them the gifts of fortune or any other favors rebels against Providence. He draws back from the mission he has received and from the trials he was to have undergone in his earthly life, and he will reap the consequences of his rebellion in the life to come. By this we do not mean to say that his soul is condemned to misery forever; but, as instead of detaching himself from matter, he plunges himself deeper and deeper into it, his enjoyment of earthly pleasures will only have led to his suffering to the spirit world, until he shall have redeemed himself from the thraldom of evil by new trials, perhaps heavier and more painful than those against which he now rebels. Through his indulgence in material pleasures he brings himself under the power of impure spirits and thus establishes between them and him a tacit compact which leads him to his ruin, but which it is always easy for him to break with the assistance of higher spirits if he have the firm determination to do so.

CHAPTER XIII.

SORCERERS AND CONJURORS OF SPIRITS

A bad man with the aid of evil spirits under his orders can cause harm to his neighbors, and certain persons who possess strong Occult and Magnetic Powers of which they may make bad use are always seconded by evil spirits. The existence of these powers have been demonstrated, as there are spirits who give secret signs and words and direct certain acts and with the aid of a sorcerer can perform certain things. It is possible when a person confides and believes in a certain talisman to attract a spirit to him that will assist in performing what he desires, as a talisman has virtue and is a sign which assists both the spirit and a conjuror to concentrate their Occult power and bring about certain things. Those who are called sorcerers and conjurors of spirits are persons possessed with certain exceptional Occult Powers and you may not be amazed if such persons perform and bring about things that you do not comprehend. Occult powers are possessed by some to cure disease and is known as the gift of healing, and has very great action when seconded by purity

of intention of soul and an ardent desire to relieve the suffering and infliction. Benedictions and curses have certain virtue, as the soul of man is subjected to opposite influences which are both good and evil. A curse has also a decided action even upon matter and this action when it takes place is an increase of a trial for him who is its object. Curses are usually bestowed on the wicked and benedictions on the good. But neither blessing nor cursing can ever turn aside the justice of Providence, which only strikes the one who is cursed if he is wicked and only favor the one who is blessed if he merits its protection. Spirits besides working out their own personal amelioration co-operate in the production of harmony of the universe by executing the volitions of God, whose ministers they are. Spirit life is a continual occupation, but one that has nothing in common with the painful labor of the earthly life, because there is in it no bodily fatigue nor the anguish of bodily wants. Inferior and evil spirits all have duties to fulfill, as does the lowest mason, as does the lowest apprentice in the construction of a building, which is as useful as that of the architect. Spirits inhabit all regions and acquire the knowledge of all things, but as is taught in Hindu Sancrit there is a spirit and a time for everything. Thus one spirit is perfect, another will accomplish his amelioration or has already accomplished it at another period, upon

the earth, in the water, in the air, etc. All spirits have to ascend all the steps of the ladder in order to attain perfection. God, who is just, is not willed to give science to some without labor, while others only acquire it through painful effort. Thus, among men, no one arrives at the highest degree of skill in any art without having acquired the necessary knowledge through the practice of that art in all its degrees from the lowest upwards. Spirits of the highest order do not enter a state of absolute repose, as nothing can remain idle throughout eternity, for eternal idleness would be eternal torture and all spirits are incessantly occupied. That is to say, that their thoughts are always active, for living as they do a spiritual existence they live only in thought and mental activity. Their activity is itself a delight through the consciousness they have of being useful. This is easily understood as regards good spirits, but it is the same in regard to inferior spirits. Inferior spirits have occupations suitable to their nature. Would you entrust intellectual undertakings to an ignorant soul. Of course there are some spirits who do not employ themselves always in something useful and at times are idle, but this idleness is only temporary and depends on the development of their intelligence. Certainly there are among spirits, as among men, some who live only for themselves, but their idleness weighs upon them, and, sooner or

later, the desire to advance causes them to feel the need of activity and they are glad to make themselves useful. I speak of spirits who have arrived at the point at which they possess self-consciousness and free will, for, at their origin, they are like new-born children and act more from instinct than from a determinate will.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPIRITS

The classification of spirits is based upon the degree of their advancement, upon the qualities which they have acquired, and upon the imperfections from which they have still to free themselves. This classification, however, is by no means absolute. It is only in its totality that the character of each category is distinctly marked for each category merges in the one above it by imperceptible gradations, the peculiarities of the successive categories shading off into one another at their extremities, as in the case in the various reigns of nature, in the colors of the rainbow, in the phases of a human life. Spirits may, therefore, be divided into a number of classes more or less considerable, according to the point of view which we consider the subject. It is in this matter as in all other systems of scientific classifications. The systems adopted may be more or less complete, more or less rational, more or less convenient for the understanding, but whatever may be their form they

change nothing in regard to the facts of the science which employs them. That the answers of spirits, when questioned on this point, should vary as to the number of the categories into which they are divided is, therefore, a matter of no practical importance. Too much weight has been attributed to this apparent contradiction by those who forget that disincarnate intelligences attach no importance whatever to mere conventionalities. For them the meaning of a statement is the only important point about it. They leave to man the question of its form, the choice of terms and of classification, in a word, all that belongs to the making of system.

Another thing that should never be lost sight of is the fact that there are among spirits, as well as men, some who are ignorant, and that we cannot be too much on guard against a tendency to believe that all spirits know everything simply because they are spirits. The work of classification demands method, analysis and a thorough knowledge of the subject investigated. But those who, in the spirit world, possess only a small amount of knowledge, are as incompetent as are ignorant human beings to embrace the whole of any subject or to formulate a system. They have no idea, or but a very imperfect one, of any sort of classification. All spirits superior to themselves appear to them to be of the highest order, for they are as incapable of discriminating the

various shades of knowledge, capacity and morality by which they are distinguished as one of our savages would be to discriminate the various characteristics of civilized men. Those who are capable of this discrimination may vary, in their appreciation of details, according to their special point of view, especially in regard to a matter which, from its very nature, has nothing fixed or absolutely about it. Linnæus, Jussieu, Tournefort, have each their special system of classification, but the nature of botany has not been changed by this diversity of system among botanists. The latter have not invented either plants or their characteristics; they have merely observed certain analogies, according to which they have formed certain groups or classes. I have proceeded in the same way. I have not invented either spirits or their characteristics. I have seen and observed them, I have judged them by their own words and acts and I have classed them by order of similitude, basing my classification on the data furnished by themselves. The higher spirits generally admit the existence of three principal categories, or main divisions, among the people of the other world. In the lowest of these, at the bottom of the ladder, are the imperfect spirits, who are characterized by the predominance of the instincts of materiality over the moral nature and by the propensity to evil. Those of the second degree are characterized by the pre-

dominance of the moral nature over the material instincts and by the desire of good. They constitute the category of good spirits. The first or highest category consists of those who have reached the state of pure spirits and have thus attained to the supreme degree of perfection imaginable by us. This division of spirits into three well-marked categories appears to me to be perfectly rational; and, having arrived at this general classification, it only remained for me to bring out, through a sufficient number of subdivisions, the principal shades of the three great spirits categories thus established. And this I have done with the aid of the spirits themselves, whose friendly instructions have never failed me in carrying out the work upon which I have been led to enter.

CHAPTER XIV.

REVEALING THE FUTURE

The future life with its happenings and events is always hidden from the blind materialists, but this in itself is a wise provision and the future is never opened to any man unless he has developed his inner or spiritual sight, and this is a provision of God, for if man knew the future he would neglect the present and would not act with the same freedom, because he would be swayed by the thought that if such and such a thing is to happen there is no need to occupy one's self about it, or else he would seek to prevent it. God has willed that it should not be thus in order that each may concur in the accomplishment of the designs of Providence, even of those which He would desire to thwart; and thus you, yourselves, often prepare the way, without your knowing it, for the events that will occur in the course of your life.

The reason why the future is sometimes revealed to certain people by and through those who are clairvoyant is because that in such cases this fore-knowledge, instead of hindering the accomplishment of the thing that is to be will facilitate it by inducing

the person to whom it is revealed to act in a different way from that in which he would otherwise have acted. And, besides, it is often a trial. The prospect of an event may awaken thoughts more or less virtuous. If a man becomes aware, for instance, that he will succeed to an inheritance which he had not expected he may be tempted by a feeling of cupidity or elation at the prospect of adding to his earthly pleasures by a desire for the death of him to whose fortune he will succeed in order that he may obtain possession of it more speedily; or, on the other hand, this prospect may awaken in him only good and generous thoughts. If the prediction be not fulfilled it is another trial, viz., that of the way in which he will bear the disappointment, but he will none the less have acquired the merit or the blame of the good or bad thoughts awakened in him by his expectation of the event predicted.

The spirits of the Astral Plane know everything. They know whether a man will or will not fail in anything which he begins. Where then is the use of this trial since it can show God nothing that He does not already know in regard to that man?

You may as well ask why God did not create man accomplished, perfect, or why man has to pass through childhood before arriving at an adult age. The aim of trial is not to enlighten God in regard to man's deserts, for God knows exactly what they

are, but to leave to man the entire responsibility of his conduct, since he is free to do or not to do. Man having free choice between good and evil, *trial* serves to bring him under the action of temptation, and thus to give him the merit of resistance; for God, though knowing beforehand whether he will triumph or succumb, cannot, being just, either reward or punish him otherwise than according to the deeds he has done.

The same principle is practically admitted among men. Whatever may be the qualifications of a candidate for any distinction, whatever may be our confidence of his success, no grade can be conferred on him without his having undergone the prescribed examination, that is to say, without his deserts having been tested by trial, just as a judge only condemns the accused for the crime he has actually committed, and not on the presumption that he could or would commit such crime. The more you reflect on the consequences that would result from your knowledge of the future the more clearly will you see the wisdom of Providence in hiding it from you. The certainty of your future good fortune would render you inactive; that of coming misfortune would plunge you in discouragement; in both cases your activities would be paralyzed. For this reason the future is only known to man as an end which he is to attain through his own efforts, but without

knowing the sequence of events through which he will pass in attaining it. The foreknowledge of all the incidents of his journey would deprive him of his initiative and of the use of his free will; he would let himself be drawn, passively, by the force of events down the slope of circumstances without any exercise of his faculties. When the success of a matter is certain you no longer busy yourselves about it.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANETS BY ASTRAL SPIRITS

According to the statements of Astral Spirits this planet, as regards the physical and moral qualities of its inhabitants, is one of the least advanced of all the globes of our solar system. Mars is stated to be at a point even lower than that of the earth, and Jupiter to be greatly superior to the earth in every respect. The sun is not a world inhabited by corporeal beings, but is a place of meeting for the spirits of a higher order, who from thence send out the radiations of their thought toward the outer worlds of the solar system, which they govern through the instrumentality of spirits of a less elevated degree, to whom they transmit their action by the intermediary of the universal fluid. As regards its physical constitution the sun would appear to be a focus of elec-

tricity, and all other suns seem to be identical with ours in nature and function.

The size of planets and their distance from the sun have no necessary relation with their degree of advancement, for Venus is more advanced than the earth and Saturn is declared to be less advanced than Jupiter.

The souls of many persons well known in this earth are reincarnated in Jupiter, one of the worlds nearest to perfection, and much surprise has been felt on hearing it stated that persons who, when here, were not supposed to merit such a favor should have been admitted into so advanced a globe. But there is nothing in this fact that need surprise us if we consider, first, that certain spirits who have inhabited this planet may have been sent hither in fulfillments of a mission which, to our eyes, did not seem to place them in the foremost rank; secondly, that they may have had, between their lives and here and in Jupiter, intermediary existences in which they have advanced, and thirdly, that there are innumerable degrees of development in that world as in this one, and that there may be as much difference between these degrees as there is amongst us between the savage and the civilized man. It no more follows that a spirit is on a level with the most advanced beings of Jupiter because he inhabits that planet than

it follows that an ignoramus is on a level with a philosopher because he inhabits the same town.

The conditions of longevity, also, are as various in other worlds as they are in our earth, and no comparison can be established between the ages of those who inhabit them. A person who had died some years previously, on being evoked by a Hindu, stated that he had been incarnated for six months in a world which the name is unknown to us. Being questioned as to his age in that world he replied, "That is a point which I am unable to decide, because in the first place we do not count time in the same way as you do, and in the next place our mode of existence is not the same as yours. Our development is much more rapid in this world, for, although it is only six of your months since I came here, I may say that, as regards intelligence, I am about what one usually is at the age of thirty in your earth."

A great number of similar replies have been given by other spirits, and these statements contain nothing improbable. Do we not see upon our earth a host of animals that acquire their normal development in the course of a few months? Why should not men do the same in other spheres? And it is to be remarked, moreover, that the degree of development acquired by a man at the age of thirty upon the earth may be only a sort of infancy in comparison with what he is destined to arrive at in worlds of

higher degree. Short-sighted indeed are they who look upon their present selves as being in all respects the normal type of creation, and to suppose that there can be no other modes of existence than their present one is, in short, a strange narrowing of their idea of the possibilities of the Divine action.

The life of a spirit in his totality goes through successive phases similar to those of a corporeal lifetime. He passes gradually from the embryonic state to that of infancy, and arrives, through a succession of periods at the adult state, which is that of his perfection, with this difference, however, that it is not subject either to decrepitude or to decline, like the corporeal life; that the life of a spirit, though it has had a beginning, will have no end; that he takes what appears from your point of view to be an immense length of time of passing from the state of spirit infancy to the attainment of his complete development, and that he accomplishes this progression, not in one and the same sphere, but by passing through different worlds. The life of a spirit is thus composed of a series of days, in each of which he acquires a new increment of experience and of knowledge. But just as in a human lifetime there are days which bear no fruit, so in the life of a spirit there are corporeal existences which are barren of profitable result, because he has failed to make the right use of them.

The line of march of all spirits is always progressive, never retrograde. They raise themselves gradually in the hierarchy of existence; they never descend from the rank at which they have once arrived. In the course of their different corporeal existences they may descend in a rank as man, but not as spirits. Thus the soul of one who has been at the pinnacle of earthly power may, in a subsequent incarnation, animate the humblest day laborer, and vice versa, for the elevation of ranks among men is often in the inverse ration of that of the moral sentiments. Herod was a king, and Jesus a carpenter. The certainty of man's being able to improve himself in a future existence would not in itself lead him to persist in an evil course by thinking that he will at some period be able to make amends. For he who made such a calculation would have no real belief in anything, and such a one would not be any more restrained by the idea of incurring eternal punishment, because his reason would reject that idea, which leads to every sort of unbelief. An imperfect spirit, it is true, might reason in that way during his corporeal life, but when he is freed from his material body he thinks very differently, for he soon perceives that he has made a great mistake in his calculations, and this perception causes him to carry an opposite sentiment into his next incarnation. It is thus that progress is accomplished, and it is thus also that you

have upon the earth some men who are farther advanced than others who have not yet acquired knowledge, but will be gradually acquired by them. It depends greatly upon each spirit to hasten his own advancement or to retard it indefinitely. The man who has an unsatisfactory position desires to change it as soon as possible. He who is convinced that the tribulations of the present life are the consequences of his own imperfections will seek to insure for himself a new existence of a less painful character, and this conviction will draw him away from the wrong road much more effectually than the threat of eternal flames, which he does not believe in. Man's spirit or soul influences his body, for the soul is everything, the physical body simply a house for its earthly habitation, a something that is subject to the physical laws of decomposition. Nothing more.

A material illustration of the various degrees of purification of the soul is furnished by the juice of the grape. It contains the liquid called spirit of alcohol, but is weakened by the presence of various foreign elements which change its nature, so that it is only brought to a state of absolute purity after several distillations, at each of which it is cleared of some portion of its impurity. The still represents the corporeal body, into which the spirit or soul enters for its purification; the foreign elements represent the imperfections from which the perispirit is

gradually freed, in proportion as the spirit approaches the state of relative perfection.

SPIRIT OF A CHILD WHO DIES IN INFANCY

The soul of a spirit or of a child who dies in infancy advances in spirit life greater than does that of an adult, for this soul may have previously lived longer and acquired more experience before its birth on earth and consequently has already made considerable progress, and the spirit of a child may advance more rapidly in spirit life than that of its parents. Many may think that the spirit of a child who has died in infancy without having been able to commit any evil belongs to the higher spirit realms, for if this soul has committed no evil it has also done nothing good, and God does not exonerate it from the trials which it has to undergo, and if this spirit belongs to high degree it is not because it has manifested itself on earth in a child, but because it has achieved that degree of advancement as a result of its previous experience. Many may wonder why the life of a child is cut short. The duration of the life of an infant may be for the spirit thus incarnated, and the completement of an existence interrupted before its appointed time and its death is often a trial or an expiration for its parents. The spirit of an infant

who dies recommences a new and better existence, for if man had but a single existence and if after this existence his future state were fixed for all eternity, by what standard of merit could eternity be adjudged to that of the human race which dies in childhood, and by what right would it be exonerated from the conditions of progress, often so painful, imposed on the other half? Such an ordering could not be reconciled with the justice of God. *Through the reincarnation of spirits the most absolute justice is equally meted out to all.* The possibilities of the future are open to all without exception and without favor to any. Those who are the last to arrive have only themselves to blame for the delay. Each man must merit happiness by his own right action, as he has to bear the consequences of his own wrongdoing. It is, moreover, most irrational to consider childhood as a normal state of innocence. Do we not see children endowed with the vilest instincts at an age at which even the most vicious surroundings cannot have begun to exercise any influence upon them? Do we not see many who seem to bring with them at birth cunning, falseness, perfidy and even the instincts of thieving and murder, and this in spite of the good examples by which they are surrounded? Human law absolves them from their misdeeds, because it regards them as having acted without discernment, and it is right in

doing so, for they really act instinctively rather than from deliberate intent. But whence proceed the instinctual differences observable in children of the same age, brought up amidst the same conditions and subjected to the same influences? Whence comes this precocious perversity if not from the inferiority of the spirit himself, since education has had nothing to do with producing it? Those who are vicious are so because their spirit has made less progress; and, that being the case, each will have to suffer the consequences of his inferiority, not on account of his wrongdoing as a child, but as the result of his evil course in his *former existences.* And thus the action of providential law is the same for each, and the *justice of God reaches equally to all.*

SEX OF SPIRITS

Spirits do not have sex, as this term is used upon the Earth Plane, for sex in that sense depends on the corporeal organization. Love, Affection and Sympathy, it is true, exist among spirits, but is founded on similarity of sentiments, and the spirit who has animated the body of a man may animate the body of a woman in a future existence and vice versa. It may be asked does a spirit when existing in spirit world prefer to be incarnated as a man or as a woman, but to this a spirit is indifferent, and the point is always decided in view of the trials

which it has to undergo in its new earth life, and spirits incarnate themselves as men or as women, because they are of no sex, and as it is necessary for them to develop themselves in every direction. Both sexes, as well as every variety of social position, furnish them with special trials and duties and with the opportunity of acquiring experience. A spirit who has always incarnated itself as a man would only know what is known by men, and vice versa.

MORAL LIKENESS

The spirit and soul of parents are not without influence upon the soul of their offspring after its birth, as they exercise on the contrary a very great influence upon it. As I have already told you spirits are made to conduce to one another's progress. To the spirits of the parents is confided the mission of developing those of their children by the training they give them. It is a task which is appointed to them, and which they cannot without guilt fail to fulfill. You may ask how is it that good and virtuous parents often give birth to children of perverse and evil nature? In other words, how is it that good qualities of the parents do not always attract to them through sympathy a good spirit to animate their child. A wicked spirit may ask to be allowed to have virtuous parents, in the hope that their counsels may help to amend his ways, and God often confides

such a one to the care of virtuous persons in order that he may be benefited by their affection and care. Parents cannot by their intentions and prayers attract a good spirit into the body of their offspring instead of an inferior spirit, but they can improve the spirit of the child whom they have brought into the world and who is confided to them for that purpose. It is their duty to do this, but bad children are often sent as a trial for the improvement of the parents also. The similarity of character often noticed among brothers and sisters, especially so between twins, is owing to the sympathy of two spirits who have been attracted by the similarity of their sentiments and who desire to be together and who are thus made happy. Aversion is sometimes felt between brothers and sisters and twins for one another owing to the fact that the bad spirits have been brought into this relation to improve them. Spirits constitute different families, formed by the similarity of their tendencies, which are more or less purified according to their elevation. Each body is a great family formed by the assembling together of sympathetic spirits. The tendency of the members of these families to unite together is the source of the resemblance which constitutes the distinctive character of each people. Do you suppose that good and benevolent spirits would seek to incarnate themselves among rude and brutal people. No, spirits

sympathize with masses of men as they sympathize with individuals. They go to the region of the earth with which they are most in harmony.

CHAPTER XV.

LOSS OF THOSE WE LOVE

Many think that the loss through death of a loved one who is near and dear to us is a legitimate source of sorrow, as this loss is both irreparable and independent of our action, but this cause for an event of great sorrow, which acts alike upon the rich and poor, is the common law of humanity, for it is either a trial or an expiation, but you have the consolation of holding communication with your friends through the means already possessed by you, while awaiting other means that will be more direct and more accessible to your senses. There are many who think that spirit communication with the souls of the dead is a profanation, but these wise ones should learn that there can be no sin or wrong where there is reverent concentration of thought and sympathy and when spirits are invoked or conjured with fitting respect there is no sin, and the proof of this statement is found in the fact that the spirits who love you take pleasure in coming to you; they rejoice in being remembered by you and in being able to converse with you. But there would be profanation in this

communication if carried on in a spirit of frivolity. Again the possibility of entering into communication with spirits is most consoling, since it gives us the means of holding converse with those of relatives and friends who have quitted the earthly life before us. By our evocation we draw them nearer to us; they come to our side, hear us and reply to us; there is, so to say, no longer any separation between them and us. They aid us with their counsels, and assure us of the pleasure afforded them by our remembrance. It is a satisfaction for us to know that they are happy to learn from themselves the details of their new existence, and to acquire the certainty of our rejoining them in our turn. The effect of the inconsolable sorrow of those who survive their loved ones is very disappointing to a spirit or soul which has passed out of the body; of course every spirit and soul is touched by the remembrance of sorrow and regret of those whom it has loved during its earth life; but a persistent and unreasonable sorrow affects him painfully, because he sees, in this excessive grief, a want of faith in the future and of confidence in God, and consequently, an obstacle to the advancement of the mourner, and, perhaps, to their reunion.

A spirit when disincarnated, being happier than he was upon the earth, to regret his change of life is to regret his being happy. Two friends are prison-

ers, shut up in the same dungeon; both of them are some day to be set at liberty, but one of them obtains his deliverance before the other. Would it be kind on the part of him who remains in prison to regret that his friend has been set at liberty before him? Would there not be on his part more selfishness than affection in wishing his friend to remain in captivity and suffering as long as himself? It is the same with two persons who love one another upon the earth; he who quits it first is the first delivered; and the other ought to rejoice in his deliverance, while awaiting with patience the moment when he shall be delivered in his turn.

We may illustrate this subject by another comparison. You have a friend whose situation, while remaining near you, is a painful one; his health or his interests require that he should go to another country, where he will be better off in every respect. He will no longer be near you at every moment, but you will be still in correspondence with him; the separation between you will be only in your daily life. Should you grieve for his removal, since it is for his good?

By the evident proofs which it gives us of the reality of the future life, and of the presence about us and the continued affection and solicitude of those we have loved, as well as by the relations which it enables us to keep up with them, Spiritism offers us

the most effectual consolation under the greatest and most painful of earthly sorrows; it does away with solitude and separation, for it shows us that the most isolated of human beings is always surrounded by a host of friends, with whom he can hold affectionate converse.

We are often impatient under the tribulations of life; they seem to us so intolerable that we cannot believe it to be possible for us to bear up under them; and yet, if we have borne them with courage, if we have been able to silence our murmurings, we shall rejoice to have undergone them, when we have finished our earthly career, as the patient rejoices, when convalescent, to have resigned himself to the painful course of treatment that has cured him of his malady.

THE ANCIENT ADEPT.

An Adept unto his Chelas long endeared,
In teachings Ancient, whose striking, snowy beard
Flows o'er his Robes, whose intelligent face add
To dignity; in robes of Occult clad,
In duty to fulfill an Ancient Obligation,
Of Spirits law,—ere man's declaration,
Or joining issues, that the Adept should stand,
To give Occult teachings of spiritual Peace.

—Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is an implication of that of reincarnation, as now taught by spirits, for it could not be otherwise, and it is in regard to that expression as to many others and only appear unreasonable because they are taken literally, and are thus placed beyond the pale of credibility; let them only be rationally explained, and those whom you call free-thinkers will admit them without difficulty, precisely because they are accustomed to reflect. Free-thinkers, like the rest of the world, perhaps even more than others, thirst for a future; they ask nothing better than to believe, but they cannot admit what is disproved of by science. The doctrine of the plurality of existence is conformable with the justice of God; it alone can explain what, without it, is inexplicable; how can you doubt, then, that its principle is to be found in all religions?

Orthodox religion teaches the dogma of the resurrection of the body, but in reality it teaches the doctrine of reincarnation. This is very evident, but the Western Church will soon see that the reincarna-

tion of the soul is implied in every part of the Holy Scriptures, for Spirits do not come to overthrow religion by their teachings as many assert. They come, on the contrary, to confirm it and sanction it by irrefragable proofs. Spirits invoked by the Hindus renounce the use of figurative language, they speak without allegories, and give to every statement a clear and precise meaning that obviates all danger of false interpretation. For this reason there will be, ere long, a greater number of persons sincerely religious and really believing than are to be found at the present day.

Physical Science demonstrates the impossibility of resurrection according to the common idea. If the relics of the human body remained homogeneous, even though dispersed and reduced to powder, we might conceive the possibility of their being reunited at some future time; but such is not the case. The body is formed of various elements—oxygen, hydrogen, azote, carbon, etc., and these elements, being dispersed, serve to form new bodies, so that the same molecule of carbon, for example, will have entered into the composition of many thousands of different bodies (we speak only of human bodies, without counting those of animals); such and such an individual may have, in his body, molecules that were in the bodies of men of the earliest ages; and the very same organic molecules that you have this day

observed in your blood may have come from the body of some one whom you have known; and so on. Matter being finite in quantity, and its transformations being infinite in number, how is it possible that the innumerable bodies formed out of it should be reconstituted with the same elements? Such a reconstruction is a physical impossibility. The resurrection of the body can, therefore, be rationally admitted only as a figure of speech, symbolizing the fact of reincarnation; thus interpreted, it has in it nothing repugnant to reason, nothing contrary to the data of physical science.

THEOLOGICAL DOGMA

It is true that, according to the theological dogma, this resurrection is not to take place until the "Last Day," while, according to spiritist doctrine, it takes place every day; but is not this picture of "The Last Day Judgment' a grand and noble metaphor, implying, under the veil of allegory, one of those immutable truths that will no longer be met with incredulity when restored to their true meaning? To those who carefully ponder the spiritist theory of the future destiny of souls, and of the fate that awaits them as the result of the various trials they have to undergo, it will be apparent that, with the exception of the condition of simultaneousness, the judgment which condemns or absolves them is not a fiction, as

is supposed by unbelievers. It is also to be remarked that the judgment which assigns to each soul its next place of habitation is the natural consequence of the plurality of worlds, now generally admitted; while, according to the doctrine of the "Last Judgment," the earth is supposed to be the only inhabited world.

THE DISCIPLE OF OCCULTISM.

"I recognize a power, subtle, deep,
Disturbing, and aggressive, which shall sweep,
All Materialism down."
A strange power through me thrilling,
Almost too marvelous to utter, filling
My heart with awe; a reverence o'er me stealing
For what I see before, quite clear revealing
That I, to-day, upon the threshold standing
Of some new era, change complete demanding,
In methods old, of thought; and this assembling,
From Spirit life, shows human creeds are trembling;
My soul quivers, the material bonds are breaking,
Occult Powers are hastening; history is making.

—Dr. de Laurence.

OCCULT TEACHINGS.

The Occult teachings of India's former dispensation,
The History of Thibet, India and China's conservatism,
Their origin and future, have outlined . .
With no Occult Knowledge undefined.

—Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER XVII.

EARTHLY JOYS AND SORROWS

Human souls during their existence on the Earth Plane are often the cause and in reality are the artisans of their own bodily afflictions and affections; they are also the instigators and the artisans of their moral sufferings. Even more so, for their worldly sufferings are often independent of their action; but it is wounded pride, disappointed ambition, the anxieties of avarice, envy, jealousy, all the passions, in short, that constitute the torments of the soul.

Envy and jealousy! Happy are they who know not those two gnawing worms. *Where envy and jealousy exist, there can be no calm, no repose.* Before him who is the slave of those passions, the objects of his longings, of his hatreds, of his anger, stand like so many phantoms, pursuing him without respite, even in his sleep. The envious and jealous are always in a fever. Is such a state a desirable one? Can you not understand that, with such passions, man creates for himself the most terrible tortures, and that the earth really becomes a hell for him?

Many of our colloquial expressions present vivid pictures of the effects of the different passions. We say, "puffed up with pride," "dying with envy," "bursting with spite," "devoured by jealousy," pictures that are only too true to their originals. In many cases, these evil passions have no determinate object. There are persons, for instance, who are naturally jealous of every one who rises, of everything that oversteps the common line, even when their own interest is in no way concerned, and simply because they are not able to command a similar success. Every manifestation of superiority on the part of others is regarded by them as an offense to themselves; for the jealousy of mediocrity would always, if it could, bring every one down to its own level.

DISAPPOINTED AMBITION

Much of the unhappiness of human life is a result of the undue importance attached by man to the things of this world; vanity, disappointed ambition, and cupidity, make up no small part of his troubles. If he placed his aims beyond the narrow circle of his outer life, if he raised his thoughts toward the infinite that is his destiny, the vicissitudes of human existence would seem to him as petty and puerile as the broken toy over the loss of which the child weeps so bitterly. He who finds his happiness only in the

satisfaction of pride and of gross material appetites, is unhappy when he cannot satisfy them; while he who asks for no superfluities is happy under circumstances that would be deemed calamitous by others.

We are now speaking of the civilized people, for the savage, having fewer wants, has not the same incitements to envy and anxiety; his way of looking at things is altogether different. In the civilized state, man reasons upon and analyzes his unhappiness, and is therefore all the more painfully affected by it; but he may also reason upon and analyze the means of consolation within his reach. This consolation is furnished him by Christianity, which gives him the hope of a better future, and by Spiritism, which gives him the certainty of that future.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PARADISE, HELL AND PURGATORY

The joys and sorrows of spirits are inherent in the degree of perfection at which they have arrived. Each spirit finds in himself the principal of his happiness or unhappiness; and, as spirits are everywhere, no enclosed or circumscribed place is set apart for either the one or the other. As for incarnated spirits, they are more or less happy or unhappy, according as the world they inhabit is more or less advanced.

"Heaven" and "Hell," as men have imagined them, have no existence; they are only symbols; there are happy and unhappy spirits everywhere. Nevertheless, as I have told you, spirits of the same order are brought together by sympathy; but, when they are perfect, they can meet together wherever they will.

The localization of rewards and punishments in fixed places exists only in man's imagination; it proceeds from his tendency to materialize and to circumscribe the things of which he cannot comprehend the essential infinitude. The word purgatory in its

true meaning refers to the physical and moral suffering of man on the earth plane, and is the period of expiation, for it is generally the rule that man is forced to undergo purgatory and to expiate his wrongdoing while in the physical body.

What men call purgatory is also a figure of speech, that should be understood as signifying, not any determinate place, but the state of imperfect spirits who have to expiate their faults until they have attained the complete purification that will raise them to the state of perfect blessedness. As this purification is effected by means of various incarnations, purgatory consists in the trials of corporeal life.

Many may ask why spirits who seem to be of high degree reply according to the commonly received ideas of those who question them, in the most serious spirit concerning hell and purgatory. The reason of this is that when the latter are too fully imbued with preconceived ideas they do not care to interrupt their convictions, for if a spirit should tell a Mussulman, without proper precaution, that Mahomet was not a true prophet, he would not be listened to with much cordiality.

Such precautions are conceivable on the part of spirits who wish to instruct us; but how is it, you may ask, that others, when questioned as to their situation, have replied that they were suffering the tortures of hell or of purgatory?

Spirits of inferior advancement, who are not yet completely dematerialized, retain a portion of their earthly ideas, and describe their impressions by means of terms that are familiar to them. They are in a state that allows of their obtaining only a very imperfect foresight of the future; for which reason it often happens that spirits in erraticity, or but recently freed from their earthly body, speak just as they would have done during their earthly life. Hell may be understood as meaning a life of extremely painful trial, with uncertainty as to the future attainment of any better state; and purgatory as a life that is also one of trial, but with the certainty of a happier future. Do you not say, when undergoing any intense physical or mental distress, that you are suffering "the tortures of the damned?" But such an expression is only a figure of speech, and is always employed as such.

There is no such a given place as Heaven as this term is understood by the western people, for do you suppose it to be a place like the Elysian Fields of the ancients, where all good spirits are crowded together pell-mell, with no other care than that of enjoying, throughout eternity, a passive felicity? No; it is universal space; it is the planets, the stars, and all the worlds of high degree, in which spirits are in the enjoyment of all their faculties, without having the tribulations of material life, or the sufferings inher-

ent in the state of inferiority. Many people ask the spirit in which Heaven it dwells because they themselves have the idea of several Heavens placed one above the other like the stories of a house, and they therefore answer you according to your question and your own ideas, but for them the different Heavens express different degrees and grades of purification of the soul and consequently different degrees and grades of happiness and purity.

It is the same when you ask a spirit whether he is in hell; if he is unhappy. He will say "yes," because, for him, hell is synonymous with suffering; but he knows very well that it is not a furnace. A Pagan would have replied that he was in Tartarus.

The same may be said in regard to other expressions of a similar character, such as "the city of flowers," "the city of the elect," the first, second, or third "sphere," etc., which are only allegorical, and employed by some spirits figuratively, by others from ignorance of the reality of things, or even of the most elementary principles of natural science.

According to the restricted idea formerly entertained in regard to the localities of rewards and punishments, and to the common belief that the earth was the center of the universe, that the sky formed a vault overhead, and that there was a specific region of stars, men placed Heaven up above, and Hell down below; hence the expressions to "ascend into

heaven," to be in "the highest heaven," to be "cast down into hell," etc. Now that astronomy having traced up the earth's history and described its constitution, has shown us that it is one of the smallest worlds that circulate in space and devoid of any special importance, that space is infinite, and that there is neither "up" nor "down" in the universe, men have been obliged to cease placing heaven above the clouds, and hell in the "lower parts of the earth." As for purgatory, no fixed place was ever assigned to it.

RESERVED FOR SPIRITISM

It was reserved for spiritism to give, in regard to all these points, an explanation which is at once, and in the highest degree, rational, sublime, and consoling, by showing us that we have in ourselves our "hell" and our "heaven," and that we find our "purgatory" in the state of incarnation, in our successive corporeal or physical lives.

Goodness will reign upon the earth when, among the spirits who come to dwell in it, the good shall be more numerous than the bad; for they will then bring in the reign of love and justice, which are the source of good and of happiness. It is through moral progress and practical conformity with the laws of God, that men will attract to the earth good spirits, who will keep bad ones away from it; but

the latter will not definitively quit the earth until its people shall be completely purified from pride and selfishness.

The transformation of the human race has been predicted from the most ancient times, and you are now approaching the period when it is destined to take place. All those among you who are laboring to advance the progress of mankind are helping to hasten this transformation, which will be effected through the incarnation, in your earth, of spirits of higher degree, who will constitute a new population, of greater moral advancement than the human races they will gradually have replaced. The spirits of the wicked people who are mowed down each day by death, and of all who endeavor to arrest the onward movement, will be excluded from the earth, and compelled to incarnate themselves elsewhere; for they would be out of place among those nobler races of human beings; whose felicity would be impaired by their presence among them. They will be sent into newer worlds, less advanced than the earth, and will therein fulfill hard and laborious missions, which will furnish them with the means of advancing, while contributing also to the advancement of their brethren of those younger worlds, less advanced than themselves. Do you not see, in this exclusion of backward spirits from the transformed and regenerated earth, the true significance of the sublime

myth of the driving out of the first pair from the garden of Eden? And do you not also see, in the advent of the human race upon the earth, under the conditions of such an exile, and bringing within itself the germs of its passions and the evidences of its primitive inferiority, the real meaning of that other myth, no less sublime, of the fall of those first parents, entailing the sinfulness of their descendants? "Original Sin," considered from this point of view, is seen to consist of the imperfection of human nature; and each of the spirits subsequently incarnated in the human race is therefore responsible only for his own imperfection and his own wrongdoing, and not for those of his forefathers.

Devote yourselves, then, with zeal and courage, to the great work of regeneration, all you who are possessed of faith and good will; you will reap a hundred fold for all the seed you sow. *"Woe to those who close their eyes against the light; for they will have condemned themselves to long ages of darkness and sorrow." "Woe to those who center their enjoyment in the pleasures of the earthly life; for they will find none to aid them in bearing the burden of their future misery."*

CHAPTER XIX.

SUICIDE

Suicide is caused by that peculiar mental state which sometimes takes possession of an individual without any assignable reason, but as a rule it is brought about through idleness and an abnormal desire to escape the trials of life; but the person who employs himself in the pursuit of some useful aim in harmony and in keeping with his natural aptitudes this exertion is not disagreeable and his life passes quickly in a congenial occupation and he bears with favor the vicissitudes of life, as he has plenty of patience and recognition, for he looks forward to the things in life and his future existence of spirit life. No person has a right to take their own life, for that right belongs to God exclusive; and he who voluntarily commits suicide contravenes the providential ordering which sent him into earth life. Those who take their own life because they are tired of living, have made a sad mistake, for if they had employed themselves in some kind of work their life would never had become a burden to them. There is only one opinion to be expressed in regard to those per-

sons who resort to suicide in order to escape from the troubles, disappointments and responsibilities of earth life, for they are weak ones who lack courage to bear up under the necessary annoyances that earth life always brings. The good spirits of the Astral Plane ever encourage and assist those who bravely bear their trials and sufferings, as well as disappointments, for the tribulation of life are trials and expirations; and happy will be those who bear them without complaint, and great will be their reward. On the contrary, miserable will be those who expect to be fortunate from what they impiously call good luck. Fortune and luck may favor man for a time, but he is made to feel it afterwards all the more bitterly. Those who have driven their unhappy fellow beings to suicide and have been the cause of their committing this great deed of despair will be held responsible for the consequence of their work and terrible indeed will be their punishment, for they will have to answer for their fellow creature's life the same as for murder. Further it is not well for a man to become disheartened in his struggle against adversity and allow himself to die of a broken heart or despair.

SELF-ABANDONMENT

Such self-abandonment is suicide; but those who had caused the crime, or might have prevented it,

would be more to blame for it than the one by whom it had been committed, and the latter would therefore be judged leniently. But, nevertheless, you must not suppose that he would be entirely absolved if he had been wanting in firmness and perseverance, or had failed to make the best use of his intelligence to help himself out of the difficulties. And it would go still harder with him if he had been one of these whose intelligence is paralyzed by pride, who would blush to earn their living by manual labor, and would rather die of starvation than derogate from what they call their "social position." Is there not a hundred fold more nobleness and true dignity in bearing up against adversity, in braving the ill natured remarks of the futile and selfish, *whose good will is for those who are in want of nothing, and who turn the cold shoulder to all who are in need of help?* To throw away one's life on account of such people is doubly absurd, seeing that they will be perfectly indifferent to the sacrifice.

Those who take their own life to escape the disgrace of having done wrong is as guilty as the one who has been prompted by despair, for their guilt and fault is not wiped out or overlooked by suicide, which, on the contrary, is a second fault added to the first one. He who has had the courage to do wrong should have the courage to bear the consequences of his wrongdoing. God is the sole judge, and

sometimes diminishes the penalty of wrongdoing in consideration of the circumstances which led to it. Neither is suicide condoned or excused when committed in order to avoid bringing disgrace upon one's parent, or when the parent commits this great deed of despair to avoid bringing disgrace on their children or family, and he who has recourse to such an expedient commits his sin. But as he may believe his actions to be for the best, God takes note of his intention, for his suicide is a self-imposed expiation; his fault is extenuated by his intention, but is none the less a fault. When you have got rid of your social prejudices and abuses, you will have no more suicides.

The person who takes his own life in order to escape the disgrace of a bad action, proves that he attaches more value to the estimation of men than to that of God, for he goes back into the spirit-world laden with iniquities, destitute of the means of atoning that for which, during his earthly life, he has thus deprived himself. God is less inexorable than men often are; He pardons those who sincerely repent, and takes account of all our efforts to repair what we have done amiss; but nothing is repaired by suicide.

He who takes his own life in the hope of arriving the quicker at a happier state of existence, commits a serious folly; for let a man do good, and he will

be much more sure of reaching this state. His suicide will delay his entrance into a better world, for he himself will ask to be allowed to come back to the earth, in order to complete the life that he has cut short in pursuit of a mistaken idea. The sanctuary of the good is never opened by a fault, no matter what may have been its motive. The sacrifice of one's life is meritorious when it is made in order to save the lives of others, or to be useful to them, and when incurred for such an end it is sublime; but such a voluntary sacrifice of life is not suicide. It is the useless sacrifice that is displeasing to God, and also that which is tarnished by pride. A sacrifice is only meritorious when disinterested; if accomplished in view of a selfish end, its value is proportionately lessened in the sight of God.

Every sacrifice of our own interest or enjoyment made for the sake of others is supremely meritorious in the sight of God, for it is the fulfilling of the law of charity. Life, being of all earthly possessions, the one to which men attach the greatest value, he who renounces it for the good of his fellow creatures does not commit a crime; he accomplishes a sacrifice. But, before accomplishing it, he should consider whether his life might not be more useful than his death.

CONSEQUENCES OF SUICIDE

The consequences of suicide vary in different cases, because the penalties it entails are always proportioned to the circumstances which, in each case, have led to its commission. The one punishment which none can escape who have committed suicide, is disappointment; the rest of their punishment depends on circumstances. Some of those who have killed themselves expiate their fault at once; others do so in a new earthly life harder to bear than the one whose course they have interrupted.

My observation has confirmed the statement that the consequences of suicide are not the same in all cases; but it has also shown me that some of those consequences, resulting from the sudden interruption of life, are the same in all cases of violent death. Foremost among these is the greater tenacity and consequent persistence of the link that unites the spirit and the body, which link, in nearly all cases, is in its full strength at the moment when it is broken; whereas, when death is the result of natural causes, that link has been gradually weakened, and is often severed before life is completely extinct. The consequences of violent death are, first, the prolongation of the mental confusion which usually follows death; next, the illusion which causes a spirit during a longer or shorter period, to believe himself to be still living in the earthly life.

The affinity which continues to exist between the spirit and the body, produces, in the case of some of those who have committed suicide, a sort of putrefication of the state of the body in the consciousness of the spirit, who is thus compelled to perceive the effects of its decomposition, and experiences therefrom a sensation of intense anguish and horror; which state may continue as long as the life which he has interrupted ought to have lasted. This state is not a necessary result of suicide, but he who has voluntarily shortened his life can never escape the consequences of his want of courageous endurance; sooner or later, and in some way or other, he is made to expiate his fault. Thus, many spirits committed suicide in their preceding existence, and that they had voluntarily submitted to new trials in order to try to bear them with more resignation. In some cases the result of suicide is a sort of connection with terrestrial matter, from which they vainly endeavor to free themselves, that they may rise to happier worlds, access to which is denied to them. In other cases it is regret for having done something useless, and from which they have reaped only disappointment.

Religion, Morality, Eastern Occultism and all systems of Philosophy, regard suicide as being contrary to the law of nature; all lay down as a principle that we have no right to voluntarily shorten our life;

but why have we not that right? Why are we not at liberty to put an end to our sufferings? It was reserved for Hindu Spiritism to show, by the example of those who have succumbed to that temptation, that suicide is not only a fault, as being an infraction of a moral law (a consideration of little weight with some persons), but is also a piece of stupidity, since no benefit is to be gained by it, but quite the contrary. *The teachings of Hindu Spiritism in regard to this subject are not merely theoretic, for it places the facts of the case before your eyes.*

A person who becomes a victim to the excessive indulgence of his passion, which he knows is a physical necessity which he is able to control, commits moral suicide; for do you not see that such a man or woman is trebly guilty? For they are guilty of a want of firmness, of a sin of bestiality and of forgetfulness of purity of mind, and such a man is more guilty than he who commits suicide or takes his life outright, for he has time to reflect on the suicidal nature of the action he is pursuing. In the case of him who commits suicide on the spur of the moment, there is sometimes a degree of bewilderment, not unallied to madness. The former will be punished much more severely than the latter; for the retributive penalties of crime are always proportioned to the consciousness of wrongdoing that accompanied its commission.

Those persons who take their own life because of the death of some loved one, in the hope of rejoining them in spirit life, commit an act that is strictly opposite of that which is hoped for and instead of being reunited to the object of their affection, those who have made this sad mistake find themselves separated, and for a very long time, from the being they hoped to rejoin; for God cannot recompense by the granting of a favor an act which is at once a proof of moral cowardice, and an insult offered to Himself in distrusting His Providence. They will pay for their folly with sorrows still greater than those they fancied they were about to shorten, and for which they will not be compensated by the satisfaction they hoped to obtain.

CHAPTER XX.

EVIL PASSIONS

Every person should understand that the Passions have their origin in man's nature, but they are not evil of themselves; for it is only by induling to excess that they become evil, for excess implies a perversion of the will. But the principal of all man's passions has been given to man for his good, and they may spur him onto the accomplishment of great things. It is only their abuse that does harm. No person should give themselves up to sensuality for the passions are like a horse that is useful when under control, but dangerous when it obtains the mastery. A passion becomes pernicious the moment when you cease to govern it, and when it causes an injury to yourselves or to others.

The passions are levers that increase man's powers tenfold, and aid him in the accomplishment of the designs of Providence; but if, instead of ruling them, he allows himself to be ruled by them, he falls into every sort of excess, and the same force which, held well in hand, would have been useful to him, falls upon and crushes him.

All the passions have their source in a natural sentiment or a natural want. They are therefore not evil in themselves, since they constitute one of the providentially-appointed conditions of our existence. What is usually meant by "passion" is the exaggeration of a need or a sentiment. But this exaggeration is the excessive action of a motive-power, and not the power itself; it is this excessive action which becomes an evil, and leads to evil consequences of every kind. Every passion that brings man nearer to the nature of the animals takes him further from the spiritual nature.

Every sentiment that raises man above the nature of the animals is evidence of the predominance of his spiritual nature over his animal nature and brings him nearer to perfection. Ordinarily a slight effort upon one's part suffices to enable him to vanquish his evil tendencies. Indeed, very slight effort is often all that is needed if man will only use his will power, but it is sad to state that very few make any serious effort whatever to vanquish his evil passion, for if he will make but slight effort he will obtain efficacious help for good spirits; or he can address a sincere prayer for such help to God and to his good genius. Good spirits will certainly come to his aid, for it is their mission to do so. The action and force of the passions are never so strong and violent that man will be unable to overcome them or be powerless to

withstand them. There are many who say "I will," but whose will is only on their lips, and who are not sorry that what they declare themselves to be an action of will does not take place. When a man is unable to vanquish his passions, it is because, through the backwardness of his spirit, he takes pleasure in yielding to them. He who controls his passions comprehends his spiritual nature; he knows that every victory over them is a triumph of his spirit over matter.

DESTRUCTIVE CALAMITIES

The reason why God visits mankind with destructive calamities is to make human souls advance more quickly, for have I not told you that destruction is necessary to the moral regeneration of spirits, who accomplish a new step of their purification in each new existence? In order to appreciate any process correctly, you must see its results. You judge merely from your personal point of view, and you therefore regard those inflictions as calamities, because of the temporary injury they cause you; but such upsettings are often needed in order to make you reach more quickly a better order of things, and to effect, in a few years, what you would otherwise have taken centuries to accomplish.

God employs many other methods besides destructive calamities for effecting the amelioration of man-

kind. Yes; and he employs them every day, for He has given to each of you the means of progressing through the knowledge of good and evil. It is because man profits so little by those other means, that it becomes necessary to chastise his pride, and to make him feel his weakness.

But the good man succumbs under the action of these scourges as does the wicked; is this just? you may ask.

During the earthly sojourn, man measures everything by the standard of his bodily life; but, after death, he judges differently and feels that the life of the body, as I have often told you, is a very small matter. A century in your world is but the length of a flash in eternity, and therefore the sufferings of what you call days, months, or years, are of no importance; let this be a lesson for your future use. Spirits are the real world, pre-existent to, and surviving, everything else; they are the children of God, and the object of all His solicitude; and bodies are only the disguises under which they make their appearances in the corporeal world. In the great calamities that decimate the human race, the sufferers are like an army that, in the course of a campaign, sees its clothing tattered, worn out, or lost. The general is more anxious about his soldiers than about their coats.

But the victims of those scourges are none the less victims, you say. If you considered an earthly life as it is in itself, and how small a thing it is in comparison with the life of infinity, you would attach to it much less importance. Those victims will find, in another existence, an ample compensation for their sufferings, if they have borne them without murmuring.

Whether our death be the result of a public calamity or of an ordinary cause, we are none the less compelled to go when the hour of our departure has struck; the only difference is that, in the former case, a greater number go away at the same time. If we could raise our thoughts sufficiently high to contemplate the human race as a whole, and to take in the whole of its destiny at a glance, the scourges that now seem so terrible would appear to us only as passing storms in the destiny of the globe.

CHAPTER XXI.

SELFISHNESS

Selfishness is considered the cardinal sin among all vices and may be regarded as the root and origin of them; for from selfishness everything evil proceeds and if you study the sins and vices of mankind you will see that selfishness is at the bottom of them all and you may combat sin and vice as you will and you will never succeed in extirpating them until, attacking the evil in its roots, you have destroyed the selfishness which is their cause. Let all your efforts tend to this end; for selfishness is the veritable social gangrene. Whoever would make, even in his earthly life, some approach towards moral excellence, must root out every selfish feeling from his heart, for selfishness is incompatible with justice, love, and charity; it neutralizes every good quality. In proportion as men become enlightened in regard to spiritual things, they attach less value to material things; and as they emancipate themselves from the thraldom of matter, they reform the human institutions by which selfishness is fostered and excited. Such should be the aim of education.

It is certain that selfishness is man's greatest evil; but it belongs to the inferiority of the spirits incarnated upon the earth, and not to the human race as such, and consequently, those spirits, in purifying themselves by successive incarnations, get rid of their selfishness as they do of their other impurities. Have you, upon the earth, none who have divested themselves of selfishness, and who practice charity? There are more of such than you think, but they are little known, for virtue does not seek to display itself in the glare of popularity. If there is one such among you, why should there not be ten, why should there not be a thousand, and so on?

The greater the development of an evil, the more hideous is it seen to be. It was necessary for selfishness to do a vast amount of harm in order that you might see the necessity of extirpating it. When men shall have divested themselves of selfishness, they will live like brothers, doing each other no harm, but mutually aiding each other from a sentiment of solidarity. The strong will then be the support, and not the oppressor, of the weak; and none will lack the necessaries of life, because the law of justice will be obeyed by all. It is of this reign of justice that spirits are now charged to prepare the advent.

SPIRITISM COMBATS SELFISHNESS

Of all human imperfections, the most difficult to root out is selfishness, because it is connected with the influence of matter, of which man, still too near his origin, has not yet been able to enfranchise himself, and which his laws, his social organization, his education, all tend to maintain. Selfishness will be gradually weakened as your moral life obtains predominance over your material life, through the knowledge which spiritism gives you of the reality of your future state, stripped of allegoric fables. Spiritism, when it comes to be rightly understood, and identified with the beliefs and habits of the human race, will transform all your customs, usages, and social relations. Selfishness is based on the importance you attribute to your own personality; spiritism, on the contrary, when rightly understood, causes you to look at everything from a point of view so elevated that the sentiment of personality is lost, so to say, in the contemplation of immensity. In destroying the sentiment of self-importance, by showing its real nature, spiritism necessarily combats selfishness.

Man is often rendered selfish by his experience of the selfishness of others, which makes him feel the need of defending himself against them. Seeing that others think of themselves and not of him he

is led to think of himself rather than of others. But let the principle of charity and fraternity become the basis of social institution, of the legal relations between nation and nation and between man and man, and each individual will think less of his own personal interests, because he will see that these have been thought by others; he will experience the moralizing influence of examples and of contact. Amidst the present overflow of selfishness, much virtue is needed to enable a man to sacrifice his own interests for the sake of others, who often feel but little gratitude for such abnegation; but it is above all to those who possess this virtue that the Kingdom of Heaven is opened, and the happiness of the elect assured; while, at the day of judgment, whoever has thought only of himself will be set aside, and left to suffer from his loneliness.

Laudable efforts are made to help forward the progress of the human race; the generous sentiments are encouraged, stimulated, honored, more than has been the case at any former epoch, and yet the devouring worm of selfishness is still the pest and torment of society. It is a social disease that affects every one, and of which every one is more or less the victim; it should therefore be combated as we combat any other epidemic. To this end we must proceed as does the physician, and begin by tracing the malady to its source. We should seek out, in

every department of the social fabric, from the relationships of the family to those of nations, from the cottage to the palace, all the causes, all the influences, patent or secret, that maintain and develop selfishness. The causes of the malady being discovered, the remedy will spontaneously present itself, and through the efforts of all, directed to a common end, the virus will gradually be extirpated. The cure may be slow, for the causes of the malady are many, but it is not impossible. It can only be effected, however, by going to the root of the evil, that is to say, by generalizing education; not the education which merely advances men in knowledge, but that which improves them morally. Education, rightly understood, is the key of moral progress. When the art of training the moral nature shall be understood as is the art of training the intellect, it will be possible to straighten a crooked nature as we straighten a crooked sapling. But this art demands much tact, much experience, and profound observation; it is a great mistake to suppose that the possession of scientific knowledge suffices to enable the teacher to exercise it with success. Whoever observes the life of a child, whether rich or poor, and notes all the pernicious influences that act upon its weakness from the moment of its birth, the ignorance and negligence of those who have charge of it, and the mischievous tendency of many of the means employed

with a view to moralize it, you will not wonder that the world should be so full of crooked sticks. But let the same skill and care be given to the training of the moral nature as to that of the intellect, and it will be seen that, even should some natures prove refractory, the greater number only need to be suitably cultivated in order to yield good fruit.

Man desires to be happy, and this desire, implanted in him by nature, prompts him to labor unceasingly to improve his condition upon the earth, and to seek the cause of the evils that afflict him, in order to remove them. When he thoroughly comprehends that selfishness is one of those causes, that it engenders the pride, ambition, cupidity, envy, hatred, jealousy, by which he is continually annoyed; that it brings trouble into all the social relations, provokes dissensions, destroys confidence, converts friends into foes, and obliges each individual to remain constantly on the defensive against his neighbor, he will see that this vice is incompatible, not only with his own felicity, but even with his own security; and the more he has suffered from it, the more keenly will he feel the necessity of fighting against it, as he fights against pestilence, dangerous animals, and every other source of disaster, for he will be compelled to do so in view of his own interest.

Selfishness is the source of all the vices, as charity

is the source of all the virtues. To destroy the one, to develop the other, should be the aim of all who desire to insure their own happiness, in the present life, as in the future.

KNOW THYSELF

The surest and most efficacious method of insuring the moral improvement of the soul's present existence, thereby resisting the influence and attraction of evil spirits, is to "Know Thyself," and this can only be accomplished by doing as every great Adept has done, for self-knowledge and the teachings of Eastern Occultism are only to be obtained by great study and meditation and any person who is in the least spiritually inclined will admit this truth. Knowledge of thyself and the development of Occult Powers are not difficult to acquire; man has only to examine his soul at the close of each day and review all that he has done and accomplished, and see whether he has failed in, or slighted any of his studies. It was in this way that every Adept has succeeded in obtaining a knowledge of himself, and in ascertaining what there was in him that needed reforming. He who, every evening, should thus recall all the actions of the day, asking himself whether he has done ill or well, and praying God and his guardian angel to enlighten him, would acquire great strength for self-

improvement, for, believe me, God would assist him. Ask yourself these questions; inquire of yourself what you have done, and what was your aim in acting in such a manner; whether you have done anything that you would be ashamed to avow. Ask yourself also this question: "If it pleased God to call me back, at this moment, into the other life, should I, on returning into the world of spirits, in which nothing is hidden, have to dread sight of any one?" Examine what you have done, first, against God; next against your neighbor; and lastly, against yourself. The answers to these questions will either give repose to your conscience, or show you some moral malady of which you will have to cure yourself.

Self-knowledge is, therefore, the key to individual improvement; but, you will ask, "How is one to judge one's self? Is not each man subject to the illusions of self-love, which diminish his faults in his own eyes and find excuses for them? The miser thinks himself to be merely practicing economy and foresight; the proud man thinks his pride to be only dignity." This is true, but you have a means of ascertainment that cannot deceive you. When you are in doubt as to the quality of any one of your actions, ask yourself what would be your judgment in regard to it if it were done by another? If you would blame it in another, it cannot be less blamable when done

by you, for God's justice has neither two weights nor two measures. Endeavor also to learn what is thought of it by others; and do not overlook the opinion of your enemies, for they have no interest in disguising the truth, and God often places them beside you as a mirror, to warn you more frankly than would be done by a friend. Let him, then, who is firmly resolved on self-improvement, examine his conscience in order to root out his evil tendencies, as he roots out the weeds from his garden; let him, every night, cast up his moral accounts for the day, as the tradesman counts up his profits and loss; he may be sure that the former will be a more profitable operation than the latter. He who, after this footing up of his day's doings, can say that the balance of the account is in his favor, may sleep in peace, and fearlessly await the moment of his awaking in the other life. Let the questions you address be clear and precise, and do not hesitate to multiply them; you may well devote a few minutes to the securing of a happiness that will last forever. Do you not labor every day with a view to insuring repose for your old age? Is not this repose the object of your desires, the aim that prompts your endurance of the fatigues and privations of the moment? But what comparison is there between a few days of rest, impaired by the infirmities of the body, and the endless rest that awaits the virtuous? And is not this

latter worth the making of a few efforts? I know that many will say, "The present is certain, and the future uncertain;" but this is precisely the error I am charged to remove from your minds, by showing you your future in such a way as to leave no doubt in your minds concerning it. This is why, having begun by producing phenomena calculated to arrest your attention through their appeal to your senses, I now give you the moral teachings that each of you is charged to spread abroad in his turn. It is to this end that I have written "THE BOOK OF DEATH."

Many of the faults you commit are passed over by you unperceived. If, following the advice I give you, you interrogated your conscience more frequently, you would see how often you have done wrong without being aware of it, because you have failed to scrutinize the nature and motive of your acts. The interrogative mode of self-examination is more precise than the mere vague admission of a standard of rectitude which you too often fail to apply in detail to your own actions. It compels you to give yourselves, in regard to the quality of those actions, categoric answers, by, "Yes and No" that leave you no room for equivocation, and that constitute so many personal arguments addressed to your innermost selves, so many returns which aid

you to compute the sum of the good and evil is in you.

ETERNAL SUFFERING

Spirits will suffer eternally if they remain eternally wicked; that is to say, if he were never to repent nor to amend, he would suffer eternally. But God has not created beings to let them remain forever a prey to evil; He created them only in a state of simplicity and ignorance, and all of them must progress, in a longer or shorter time, according to the action of their will. The determination to advance may be awakened more or less tardily, as the development of children is more or less precocious; but it will be stimulated, sooner or later, by the irresistible desire of the spirit himself to escape from his state of inferiority, and to be happy. The law which regulates the duration of a spirit's sufferings is, therefore, eminently wise and beneficient, since it makes that duration to depend on his own efforts; he is never deprived of his free will, but, if he makes a bad use of it, he will have to bear the consequences of his errors. The duration of the punishment of the human soul depends upon its own free will, although said punishment may be imposed upon it for a fixed time, but the Great Creator wills only the good of man's soul, and always welcomes his repentance and

the desire to amend his ways, and the inflictions and penalties imposed upon the soul in spirit life are never eternal as many suppose. Those who believe this to be a fact, should interrogate their common sense and reason, and ask themselves whether an eternal condemnation for a few moments of error would not be the negation of the goodness of God? What, in fact, is the duration of a human life, even though prolonged to a hundred years, in comparison with eternity? "Eternity;" do you rightly comprehend the word? Sufferings, tortures without end, without hope, for a few faults. Does not your judgment reject such an idea? That the ancients should have seen, in the Master of the Universe, a terrible, jealous, vindicitive God of the Christians, who places love, charity, pity, the forgetfulness of offenses, in the foremost rank of virtues, and who could not lack the qualities which He has made it the duty of His creatures to possess. Is it not a contradiction to attribute to Him infinite love and infinite vengeance? You say that God's justice is infinite, transcending the limited understanding of mankind; but justice does not exclude kindness, and God would not be kind if He condemned the greater number of His creatures to horrible and unending punishment. Could He make it obligatory on His children to be just, if His own action towards them did not give them the most perfect standard of justice? And is it

not the very sublimity of justice and of kindness to make the duration of punishment to depend on the efforts of the guilty one to amend, and to mete out the appropriate recompense, both for good and for evil, to each, according to his works?

Set yourselves, by every means in your power, to combat and to annihilate the idea of eternal punishment, which is a blasphemy against the justice and goodness of God, and the principal source of the skepticism, materialism, and indifferentism that have invaded the masses since their intelligence has begun to be developed. When once a mind has received enlightenment, in however slight a degree, the monstrous injustice of such an idea is immediately perceived; reason rejects it, and rarely fails to confound, in the same ostracism, the penalty against which it revolts and the God to whom that penalty is attributed. Hence the numberless ills which have burst upon you, and for which we come to bring you a remedy. This task we point out to you will be all the easier because the defenders of this belief have avoided giving a positive opinion in regard to it; neither the Councils nor the Fathers of the Church have definitely settled this weighty question. If Christ, according to the Evangelists and the literal interpretation of His allegorical utterances, threatens the guilty with a fire that is unquenchable, there is absolutely nothing in those utterances to

prove that they are condemned to remain in that fire eternally.

Hapless sheep that have gone astray, behold, advancing towards you, the Good Shepherd, who, so far from intending to drive you forever from His presence, comes Himself to seek you, that He may lead you back to the fold. Prodigal children, renounce your voluntary exile, and turn your steps towards the parental dwelling. Your Father, with arms ready open to receive you, is waiting to welcome you back to your home.

"ETERNAL PUNISHMENTS"

"Wars of words, wars of words," has not enough blood been already shed for words, and must the fires of the stake be rekindled for them? Men dispute about the words "eternal punishments," "everlasting burnings;" but do you know that what you now understand by eternity was not understood in the same way by the ancients? Let the theologian consult the sources of his faith, and he, like the rest of you, will see that in the Hebrew text, the words which the Greeks, the Latins, and the moderns, have translated as endless and irremissible punishment, has not the same meaning. Eternity of punishment corresponds to eternity of evil. Yes, so long as evil continues to exist among you, so long will punishment continue to exist; it is in this relative sense

that the sacred texts should be interpreted. The eternity of punishments, therefore, is not absolute, but relative. Let a day come when all men shall have donned, through repentance, the robe of innocence, and, on that day there will be no more weeping, wailing, or gnashing of teeth. Your human reason is, in truth, of narrow scope; but, such as it is, it is a gift of God, and there is no man of right feeling who, with the aid of that reason, can understand the eternity of punishment in any other sense. If we admit the eternity of punishment, we must also admit that evil will be eternal; but God alone is eternal, and He could not have created an eternal evil, without plucking from his attributes the most magnificent of them all, viz.: His sovereign powers; for he who creates an element destructive of his works is not sovereignly powerful. Plunge no more thy mournful glance, O human race, into the entrails of the earth, in search of chastisements. Weep, but hope; expiate, but take comfort in the thought of God who is entirely loving, absolutely powerful, essentially just.

Union with the Divine Being is the aim of human existence. To the attainment of this aim three things are necessary—knowledge, love, justice; three things are contrary to this aim—ignorance, hatred, injustice. You are false to these fundamental principles when you falsify the idea of God

by exaggerating His severity, thus suggesting to the mind of the creature that there is in it more clemency, long-suffering, love, and true justice, than you attribute to the Creator. You destroy the very idea of retribution by rendering it as inadmissible, by your minds, as is, by your hearts, the policy of the Middle Ages, with its hideous array of tortures, executioneers, and the stake.

BOILING CALDRONS

When the principle of indiscriminate retaliation has been banished forever from human legislation, can you hope to make men believe that principle to be the rule of the Divine Government? Believe me, brothers in God and Jesus Christ, you must either resign yourselves to let all your dogmas perish in your hands rather than modify them. The idea of a hell full of glowing furnaces and boiling caldrons might be credible to an age of iron; in the twentieth century it can be nothing more than an empty phantom, capable, at the utmost, of frightening little children, and by which the children themselves will no longer be frightened when they are a little bigger. By your persistence in upholding mythic terrors, you engender incredulity, source of every sort of social disorganization; and I tremble at beholding the very foundations of social order shaken and crumbling into dust for want of an authoritative code of penal-

ity. Let all those who are animated by a living and ardent faith, heralds of the coming day, unite their efforts, not to keep up antiquated fables now fallen into disrepute, but to resuscitate and revivify the true idea of penality, under forms in harmony with the usages, sentiments, and enlightenment of your epoch.

What, in fact, is a sinner? One who, by the deviation from the right road, by a false movement of the soul, has swerved from the true aim of his creation, which consists in the harmonious worship of the Beautiful, the Good, as embodied in the archetype of humanity, the Divine Exemplar, Jesus Christ.

What is chastisement? The natural, derivative consequence of that false movement; the amount of pain necessary to disgust the sinner with his departure from rectitude, by his experience of the suffering caused by that departure. Chastisement is the goad which, by the smarting it occasions, decides the soul to cut short its wanderings, and to return into the right road. The sole aim of chastisement is rehabilitation and, therefore, to assume the eternity of chastisement is to deprive it of all reason for existing.

Cease, I beseech you, the attempt to establish a parallelism of duration between good, essences of the Creator, and evil, essence of the creature; for, in so

doing, you establish a standard of penality that is utterly without justification. Affirm, on the contrary, the gradual diminution of imperfections and of chastisements through successsive existences, and you consecrate the doctrine of the union of the creature with the Creator by the reconciliation of justice with mercy.

It is desired to stimulate men to the acquisition of virtue, and to turn them from vice, by the hope of reward and the fear of punishment; but, if the threatened punishment is represented under conditions repugnant to reason, not only will it fail of its aim, but it will lead men, in rejecting those conditions, to reject the very idea of punishment itself. But let the idea of future rewards and punishments be presented to their mind under a reasonable form, and they will not reject it. This reasonable explanation of the subject is given by the teachings of Hindu Spiritism.

TERRIFIC TORTURES

The doctrine of eternal punishment makes an implacable God of the Supreme Being. Would it be reasonable to say of a sovereign that he is very kind, very benevolent, very indulgent, that he only desires the happiness of all around him, but that he is, at the same time, jealous, vindictive, inflexibly severe, and that he punishes three-quarters of his

subjects with the most terrific tortures, for any offense, or any infraction of his laws, even when their imputed fault has resulted simply from their ignorance of the laws they have transgressed? Would there not be an evident contradiction in such a statement of the sovereign's character? And can God's action be less consistent than that of a man?

The doctrine in question presents another contradiction. Since God foreknows all things, He must have known, in creating a soul, that it would transgress His laws, and it must therefore have been, from its very formation, predestined by Him to eternal misery; but is such an assumption reasonable or admissible? The doctrine of punishment proportioned to wrongdoing is, on the contrary, entirely consonant with reason and justice. God undoubtedly foresaw, in creating a given soul, that, in its ignorance, it would do wrong; but He has ordained that its very faults themselves shall furnish it with the means of becoming enlightened, through its experience of the painful effects of its wrong-doing; He will compel it to expiate that wrongdoing, but only in order that it may thereby be more firmly fixed in goodness; thus the door of hope is never closed against it, and the moment of its deliverance from suffering is made to depend on the amount of effort it puts forth to achieve its purification. If the doctrine of future punishment had always been

presented under this aspect, very few would ever have doubted its truth.

The word eternal is often figuratively employed, in common parlance, to designate any long period of duration of which the end is not foreseen, although it is known that it will come in course of time. We speak, for instance, of "the Eternal Snows" of mountain-peaks and polar regions, although we know, on the one hand, that our globe will come to an end, and, on the other hand, that the state of those regions may be changed by the normal displacement of the earth's axis, or by some cataclysm. The word eternal, therefore, in this case, does not mean infinitely perpetual. We say, in the suffering of some long illness, that our days present the same "eternal round" of weariness. Is it strange, then, that spirits who have suffered for years, centuries, thousands of ages even, should express themselves in the same way? Moreover, we must not forget that their state of backwardness prevents them from seeing the other end of the road, and that they therefore believe themselves to be destined to suffer forever; a belief which is itself a part of their punishment.

The doctrine of Material Fire, of furnaces, and tortures, borrowed from the pagan Tartarus, is completely given up by many of the most eminent theologians of the present day, who admit that the word

"fire" is employed figuratively in the Bible, and is to be understood as meaning moral fire. Those who, like ourselves, have observed the incidents of the life beyond the grave, as presented to our view by the communications of spirits, have had ample proof that its sufferings are none the less excruciating for not being of material nature. And even as regards the duration of those sufferings, many theologians are beginning to admit the restriction indicated above, and to consider that the word eternal may be considered as referring to the principle of penality in itself, as the consequence of an immutable law, and not to its application to each individual. When religious teaching shall only admit this interpretation, it will bring back to a belief in God and in a future life many who are now losing themselves in the mazes of materialism.

CHAPTER XXII.

REINCARNATION

The writer does not wish to be understood as meaning that Reincarnation or Eastern Spiritism doctrine is of modern invention; on the contrary, as the intercommunication of spirits with men occurs in virtue of natural law, it has existed from the beginning of time, and the Hindus can prove that traces of this inter-communication are to be found in the earliest annals of antiquity. Pythagoras, as is well known, was not the author of the system of metempsychosis; he borrowed it from the Hindu Adepts of Hindoostan and of Egypt, by whom it has been held from time immemorial. The idea of the transmigration of souls was, therefore, in the earliest ages of the world, a general belief, equally admitted by the common people and by the most eminent thinkers of the period. By what road did this idea come to them? Did it reach them through revelation or through intuition? In regard to this point you know nothing; but it may be safely assumed that no idea could thus have traversed the successive ages of the world, and have

commanded the assent of the highest intellects of the human race, if it had not been based on some solid ground of truth and reason. The antiquity of this doctrine should therefore be considered as an argument in its favor, rather than as an objection. But, at the same time, it must not be forgotten that there is, between the antique doctrine of metempsychosis and the modern doctrine of reincarnation, this capital difference, viz.: that the spirits who inculcate the latter reject absolutely the idea that the human soul can pass into an animal, and vice versa.

The spirits therefore who now proclaim the truth of the plurality of our corporeal existence reassert a doctrine which has its birth in the earliest ages of the world, and which has maintained its footing to the present day in the convictions of many minds; but at present this truth is under an aspect which is more rational, more conformable with the natural laws of progress, and more in harmony with the wisdom of the Creator, throughout the stripping away of accessories added to it by superstition.

It may here be asked, why is it that the statements of all spirits are not in unison in regard to this subject? To this question I shall recur elsewhere.

Let us, for the present, examine the matter from another point of view, entirely irrespective of any assumed declarations of spirits in regard to it. Let us put the latter entirely aside for the moment; let

us suppose them to have made no statement whatever in regard to it; let us even suppose the very existence of spirits not to have been surmised. Placing ourselves for a moment on neutral ground, and admitting as equally possible, the hypothesis of the plurality and of the unity of corporeal existences, let us see which of these hypotheses is most in harmony with the dictates of reason and with the requirements of our own interest.

There are persons who reject the idea of reincarnation simply because they do not like it, declaring that their present existence has been quite enough for them, and that they have no wish to recommence a similar one. Of such persons I would merely inquire whether they suppose that God has consulted their wishes and opinions in regulating the universe? Either the law of reincarnation exists, or it does not exist. If it exists, no matter how displeasing it may be to them, they will be compelled to submit in it; for God will not ask their permission to enforce it. It is as though a sick man should say, "I have suffered enough today; I do not choose to suffer tomorrow." No matter what may be his unwillingness to suffer, he will nevertheless be obliged to go on suffering, not only on the morrow, but day after day, until he is cured. In like manner, if it be their destiny to live again corporeally, they will thus live again, they will be reincarnated. In vain will

they rebel against necessity like a child refusing to go to school, or a condemned criminal refusing to go to prison. They will be compelled to submit to their fate, no matter how unwilling they may be to do so. Such objections are too puerile to deserve a more serious examination. Let us say, however, for the consolation of those who urge them, that the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation is by no means so terrible as they imagine it to be; that the conditions of their next existence depends on themselves, and will be happy or unhappy according to the deeds done by them in this present life; and that they may even by their action in this life, raise themselves above the danger of falling again into the mire of expiation.

FUTURE AFTER DEATH

I take it for granted that those whom I am addressing believe in some sort of future after death and that they do not look forward either to annihilation or to a drowning of their soul in a universal whole, without individuality like so many drops of rain in the ocean; which comes to much the same thing. But, if you believe in a future state of existence, you probably do not suppose that it will be the same for all; for in that case, where would be the utility of doing right? Why should men place any restraint upon themselves? Why should they not satisfy all

their passions, all their desires, even at the expense of the rest of the world, if the result is to be the same in all cases? On the contrary, you no doubt believe that your future will be more or less happy according to what you have done in your present life; and you have doubtless the desire to be as happy as possible in the future to which you look forward since it will be for all eternity. Do you, perchance, consider yourself to be one of the most excellent of those who have ever existed upon the earth, and therefore entitled to supreme felicity? No. You admit, then, that there are some who are better than you, and who have consequently a right to a higher place, although you do not deserve to be classed among the reprobate. Place yourself, then, in thought, for a moment, in the medium condition which, according to your own admission, will properly be yours, and suppose that some one comes to you and says, "you suffer; you are not so happy as you might be; and meanwhile you see others in the enjoyment of unmixed happiness. Would you like to exchange your position for theirs?" "Undoubtedly, I should," you reply; "what must I do to bring about such a result?" "Something very simple; you have only to begin again what you have done badly and try to do it better." Would you hesitate to accept the offer, even at the cost of several existences of trial?

Let us take another illustration, still more prosaic.

Suppose that some one comes to a man who, though not in a state of absolute destitution, has to endure many privations through the smallness of his means, and say to him, "here is an immense fortune of which you may have the enjoyment, on condition that you work hard during one minute." The laziest of men, in response to such an offer, would say, without hesitation, "I am ready to work for one minute, for two minutes, for an hour, for a whole day if necessary. What is a day's labor in comparison with the certainty of ease and plenty for all the rest of my life?"

But what is the duration of a corporeal life in comparison with eternity? Less than a minute, less than a moment.

We sometimes hear people bring forward the following argument: "God, who is sovereignly good, cannot impose upon man the hard necessity of recommencing a series of sorrows and tribulations." But would there be more kindness in condemning a man to perpetual suffering for a few moments of error than in giving him the means of repairing his faults?

HINDU PHILOSOPHER

Two manufacturers had each a workman who might hope to become some day the partner of his employer. But it happened that both these workmen

made so very bad a use of their time that they merited dismissal. One of the manufacturers drove away his unfaithful workman, despite his supplications; and this workman, being unable to obtain any other employment, died of want. The other said to his workman—"You have wasted a day; you owe me compensation for the loss you have thus caused me. You have done your work badly; you owe me reparation for it. I give you leave to begin it over again. Try to do well, and I will keep you in my employ, and you may still aspire to the superior position which I had promised you."

Need we ask which of the manufacturers has shown himself to be the most humane? And would God, who is clemency itself, be more inexorable than a just and compassionate man? The idea that our fate is decided forever by a few years of trial, and notwithstanding the fact that is was not in our power to attain to perfection while we remained upon the earth, fills the mind with anguish; while the contrary idea is eminently consoling, for it leaves us hope. Thus, without pronouncing for or against the plurality of existence, without admitting either hypothesis in preference to the other, I assert that, if the matter were left to your choice, there is no one who would prefer incurring a sentence against which there should be no appeal. A Hindu philosopher has said that "If God did not exist, it would be necessary

to invent Him for the happiness of the human race;" the same might be said in regard to the plurality of existence. But, as I have already remarked, God does not ask your permission in the establishment of providential ordering; He does not consult your preference in the matter. Either the law of reincarnation exists, or it does not exist; let us see on which side is the balance of probabilities, considering the matter from another point of view, but still leaving out of sight all idea of any statements that have been made by the spirits in regard to it, and examining the question merely as a matter of philosophic inquiry. If the law of reincarnation does not exist, we can have but one corporeal existence; and if our present corporeal life be our only one, the soul of each individual must have been created at the same time as his body; unless, indeed, we assume interiority of the soul, in which case we should have to inquire what was the state of the soul before its union with the body, and whether this state did not constitute an existence of some kind or other. There is no middle ground. Either the soul existed before its union with the body, or it did not. If it existed, what was its condition? Was it possessed of self-consciousness? If not, its state must have been nearly equivalent to non-existence. If possessed of individuality, it must have been either progressive or stationary; in either case, what was its degree of advancement on

uniting itself to the body? If, on the contrary, it be assumed, according to the general belief, that the soul is born into existence at the same time as the body—or that, previous to the birth of the body, it possesses only negative faculties—we have to propose the following questions:

1. Why do the souls manifest so great a diversity of aptitudes independently of the ideas acquired by education?

2. Whence comes the extra-normal aptitude for certain arts and sciences displayed by many children while still very young, although others remain in a state of inferiority, or of mediocrity, all their life?

3. Whence do some individuals derive the innate or intuitive ideas that are lacking in others?

4. Whence do some children derive the precocious instincts of vice or virtue, the innate sentiments of dignity or of baseness, which often contrast so strikingly with the situation into which they are born?

5. Why is it that some men, independently of education, are more advanced than others?

6. Why is it that among the races which people the globe some are savage and others civilized? If you took a Hottentot baby from its mother's breast, and brought it up in our most renowned schools, could you succeed in making of it a Moses or a Shakespeare?

What is the philosophy or the theosophy that can solve these problems? Either the souls of men are equal at their birth, or they are unequal. If they are equal, why these inequalities of aptitude. Will it be said that these inequalities depend on the corporeal organization of each child? But such a doctrine would be the most monstrous and the most immoral of hypothesis; for, in that case, man would be a mere machine, the sport of matter; he would not be responsible for his actions, but would have the right to throw all the blame of his wrong-doing on the imperfections of his physical frame. If, on the other hand, souls are created unequal, God must have created them so; but, in that case, why is this innate superiority accorded to some and denied to others? And would such partiality be consistent with the justice of God, and the equal love He bears to all His children?

Admit, on the contrary, a succession of existences, and everything is explained. Men bring with them, at their birth in flesh, the amount of intuition they have previously acquired. They are more or less advanced, according to the number of existences they have previously accomplished, according as they are nearer to or farther from the common starting-point; exactly as, in a company made up of individuals of different ages, each will possess a degree of development proportionate to the number of years he has

already lived; the succession of years being to the life of the body what the succession of existences is to the life of the soul. Bring together in the same place, at the same time a thousand individuals of all ages, from the new-born babe to the patriarch of eighty. Suppose that a veil is thrown over their past, and that you, in your ignorance of that past, imagine them all to have been born on the same day. You would naturally wonder how it is that some are big and others little; that some are wrinkled and others fresh; that some are learned and others ignorant; but if the cloud which hid their past were dispersed, and you discovered that some had lived longer than others, all these differences would be explained. God, in His justice, could not create souls more or less perfect. But granting the plurality of our corporeal existences, there is nothing in the differences of quality that we see around us in any way inconsistent with the most rigorous equity; for what we see around us is then perceived to have its roots, not in the present, but in the past.

Is this argument based on any pre-conceived system or gratuitous supposition? No. I start from a fact that is patent and incontestable—viz, the inequality of natural aptitudes and of intellectual and moral development; and I find this a fact to be inexplicable by any of the theories in vogue, while the explanation of this fact afforded by the Hindu doctrine

of Reincarnation is at once simple, natural, and rational. Is it reasonable to prefer a theory which does not explain this fact to one which does?

In regard to the sixth question, it will doubtless be replied that the Hottentot is of an inferior race; in which case I beg to inquire whether a Hottentot is or is not a man? If he is not a man, why try to make him a Christian? If he be a man, why has God refused to him and to his race the privileges accorded to the Caucasian race? Hindu philosophy is too broad to admit the existence of different species of men; it recognizes only men whose spiritual part is more or less backward, but who are all capable of the same progress. Is not this view of the human race more conformable with the justice of God?

We have been considering the soul in regard to its past and its present; if we consider it in regard to the future, we are met by difficulties which the theories in vogue are equally unable to explain.

If our future destiny is to be decided solely by our present existence, what will be in the future the respective positions of the savage and of the civilized man? Will they be on the same level, or will there be a difference in the sum of their eternal felicity?

Will the man who has labored diligently all his life to advance his moral and itellectual improvement be placed in the same rank with the man who, not through his own fault, but because he has neither

the time nor the opportunity for advancing, has remained at a lower point of moral and intellectual improvement?

Can the man who has done wrong because the means of enlightenment have been denied him be justly punished for wrong-doing which has not been the result of his own choice?

ADEPT AND CHRISTIAN

The true Adept and Christian endeavors to enlighten, moralize, and civilize mankind; but for one whom he is able to enlighten, there are millions who die every year without the light having reached them. What is to be the fate of these milions? Are they to be treated as reprobates? and, if they are not to be so treated, how have they deserved to be placed in the category with those who have become enlightened and moralized?

What is to be the fate of children who die before they have been able to do good or evil? If they are to be received among the supremely happy, why should this favor be granted to them without their having done anything to deserve it? And in virtue of what privilege are they exempted from undegoing the tribulations of the earthly life?

Which of the doctrines hitherto propounded can solve these problems? But, if we admit the fact of our consecutive existences, all these problems are

solved in conformity with the divine justice. What we are not able to do in this existence we do in another. None are exempted from the action of the law of progress; everyone is rewarded progressively, according to his deserts, but no one is excluded from the eventual attainment of the highest felicity, no matter what may be the obstacles he has to encounter on the road.

The questions growing out of the subject we are considering might be multiplied indefinitely, for the psychological and moral problems which can only find their solution in the plurality of existence are innumerable. In the present considerations I have restricted my inquiry to those which are most general in their nature. But it may still be urged by some objectors, "whatever may be the arguments in its favor, the doctrine of reincarnation is not admitted by the church; its acceptance would therefore be the overthrow of religion."

It is not my intention to treat the question, in this place, under the special aspect suggested by the foregoing objection; it is sufficient for the present purpose to have shown the eminently moral and rational character of the doctrine we are considering. But it may be confidently asserted, that a doctrine which is both moral and rational cannot be antagonistic to a religion which proclaims the Divine Being to be the most perfect goodness and the highest reason. What,

may we ask in our turn, would have become of the church, if, in opposition to the convictions of mankind and the testimony of science, it had persisted in rejecting overwhelming evidence, and had cast out from its bosom all who did not believe in the movement of the Sun or in the six days of creation? What would be the credit or authority possessed among enlightened nations by a religious system that should inculcate manifest errors as articles of belief? Whenever any matter of evidence has been established, the Church has wisely sided with the evidence. If it be proved that the facts of human life are irreconcilable, on any other supposition, with a belief in the justice of God—if various points of the Christian dogma can only be explained with the aid of this doctrine, the Church will be compelled to admit its truth, and to acknowledge that apparent antagonism between them is only apparent. Religion has no more to fear from the acceptance of this doctrine than from the discovery of the motion of the earth and of the periods of geological formation, which, at first sight, appears to contradict the statement of the Bible. *Moreover, the principle of reincarnation is implied in many passages of Holy Writ, and is explicitly formulated in the Gospel.*

When they came down from the mountain (after the transfiguration), Jesus gave this commandment, and said to them—"*Speak to no one of what you*

have just seen, until the Son of Man shall have been resuscitated from among the dead."

His disciples thereupon began to question Him, and inquired, "Why, then, do the Scribes say that Elias must first come?" But Jesus replied to them, "It is true that Elias must come, and that he will re-establish all things. But I declare to you that Elias has already come, and they did not know him, but have made him suffer as they listed. It is thus that they will put to death the Son of Man." Then His disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist. (St. Matthew, chap. XVII.)

Since John the Baptist is declared by Christ to have been Elias, it follows that the spirit or soul of Elias must have been reincarnated in the body of John the Baptist.

But whatever may be your opinion in regard to re-incarnation, whether you accept it or whether you reject it, it is certain that you shall have to undergo it, if it really exists, notwithstanding any belief of yours to the contrary. The point which I here desire to establish is this, viz, that the teaching of the spirits who proclaim it is eminently Christian, that it is founded on the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, of future rewards and punishments, of the justice of God, of human free-will, and the moral code of Christ; and that, therefore, it cannot be anti-religious.

I have written this knowledge, as I remarked above, without reference to statements made by spirits; such statements being, for many minds, without authority. If I, and so many others, have adopted the hypothesis of the plurality of existence, I have done so not merely because it has been proclaimed by spirits, but because it has been revealed to me to be eminently true, and because it solves problems that are insoluble by the opposite hypothesis. Had it been suggested to me by a mere mortal, I should, therefore, have adopted it with equal confidence, renouncing, with equal promptitude, my preconceived opinions on the subject; for when an opinion has been shown to the erroneous, even self-love has more to lose than gain by persisting in holding it. In like manner, I should have rejected the doctrine of reincarnation, even though proclaimed by spirits, if it had appeared to me to be contrary to reason, as, indeed, I have rejected many other ideas which spirits have sought to inculcate, for I know, by experience, *that I can no more give a blind acceptance to ideas put forth by spirits than I can to those put forth by men.*

The principal merit of the doctrine of reincarnation is, then, to our minds, that it is supremely rational. But it has also in its favor the confirmation of facts—facts positive and, so to say, material, which is apparent to all who study the question with

patience and perseverance, and in presence of which all doubt as to the reality of the law in question is impossible. When the appreciation of these facts shall have become popularized, like those which have revealed to us the formation and rotation of the earth, they who oppose this doctrine will be compelled to renounce their opposition.

To sum up: I assert that the doctrine of the plurality of existence is the only one that explains what, without this doctrine, is inexplicable; that it is at once eminently consolatory and strictly conformable with the most rigorous justice; and that it is the anchor of safety which God in His Mercy has provided for mankind.

The words of Jesus Himself are explicit as to the truth of this last assertion; for we read in the third chapter of the gospel according to St. John that Jesus came replying to Nicodemus and thus expressed himself: "Verily, verily, I tell thee that, if a man be not born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." And when Nicodemus inquires, "how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter again into his mother's womb and be born a second time?" Jesus replies, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the spirit is spirit. Be not amazed at what I have told thee; you must be born again."

CHAPTER XXIII.

LESSONS IN HINDU SPIRITISM AND MAGIC

Whoso should wish to recount all the Arts and Operations which in these times be reputed and preached abroad as Wisdom and Magical Secrets; he should as well undertake to count the waves and the sands of the Sea; seeing that the matter hath come to such a pass that every trick of a buffoon is believed to be Magic, that all the abominations of impious Enchanters, all Diabolical Illusions, all Pagan Idolatries, all Superstitions, Fascinations, Diabolical Pacts, and lastly all that the gross blindness of the World can touch with its hands and feet is reckoned as Wisdom and Magic: The Physician, the Astrologer, the Enchanter, the Sorceress, the Idolater, and the Sacrilegious, is called by common people a Magician: Also he who draweth his Magic whether from the Sun, whether from the moon, whether from the Evil Spirits, whether from Stones, Herbs, Animals, Brutes, or lastly from thousand divers sources, so that the Spirits are

astonished thereat. There be certain ones who draw their Magic from Air, from Earth, from Fire, from Water, from Physiognomy, from the Land, from Mirrors, from Glasses, from Birds, from Bread, from Wine, and even from the very excrements themselves; and yet, however, all this is reputed as Magic.

I exhort you, ye who read, to have the fear of God, and to study Justice, because infallibly unto you shall be opened the Gate of the True Wisdom which the Hindu Priests and Adepts gave unto their Disciples and unto their descendants. It is this Wisdom and Magical Knowledge that delivers man from the torments of his soul and Evil Spirits, and it has been taught to every true Disciple who desires to learn this ancient mystery of Magical Rites of Hindu Spirit Art and East Indian Occultism. I, Dr. L. W. de Laurence (upon whom has fallen the solemn duty of writing and arranging this volume) am considered the only person who has the legitimate right to teach these mysteries in this country, as all who will say that have read and studied "The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and East Indian Occultism," by Dr. L. W. de Laurence, that the same is a most excellent work, teaching in full all the Imprecations, Benedictions, Conjurations; as well as the solemn Rites of Initiation in the Temples and Lamaseries of India, Arabia, China and other East-

ern and Oriental lands, therefore I am certainly well qualified to teach and advance an opinion on Art Magic and the greatest mystery known to man, which is "Death."

Therefore, let everyone know that this, which I now teach unto you, and that which I have taught is the True Wisdom and Magic, and which is in this same "Book of Magical Art," and independent of any other Science, or Wisdom, or Magic, soever. It is, however, certainly true that these miraclous operations have much in common with the Hindu Spiritism; it is also true that there be other Arts which have some stamp of Wisdom; which alone would be worth nothing were they not mingled with the foundation of the Sacred Wisdom of the Hindus, whence later arose the Mixed Qabalah.

THE GENUINE SYSTEM AND METHOD OF HINDU SPIRITISM

The genuine System and Method of Hindu Magic, and Spirit Invocation advocated and given in the following pages of "THE BOOK OF DEATH" is the Hindu manner of Teaching Invocations, which of course, makes it ancient and unique. In OCCULTISM, that is to say the Science, Power and Knowledge of the Secret of the control of the Spiritual Forces of the Astral World, there has always been two great schools, the one Great in Good, the other in Evil, as referred to in the beginning of this Volume. The former depends on the Knowledge and Invocation of the Good and Powerful Spirits; the latter on the peculiar method of Invocation of the Evil Spirits. The former is termed Sacred or True Spiritism, as opposed to the latter, or Black Art. The Invocation of Good and Friendly Spirits is the system taught by the true Adept, as also are the Ceremonies of Pact with Evil Spirits for their submission. However, the system of Hindu Teachings, taught in "THE BOOK OF DEATH AND HINDU SPIRITISM" is based on the following laws and conception: (1) That the Good Spirits, Angelic Forces and Rulers of the Astral World are far superior in power to the Evil Forces which are the fallen spirits of Darkness. (2) That these latter as a means of their redemption must be reincarnated again. (This idea is to be found also in True Occultism or as it is frequently and perhaps more correctly written, Zabino.) (3) As a consequence of this doctrine, all ordinary material effects and phenomena are produced by the labor of the Lower Spirits under the command usually of the Good. (4) That consequently whenever the Evil Spirits can escape from the control of the Good, there is no evil that they will not work by way of vengence. (5) That therefore, sooner than obey man, they will try to make him their servant, by inducing him to conclude Pacts and Agreements with them. (6) That to further this project they will use every means that offers to obsess him. (7) That in order to become an Adept, therefore, and dominate them, *the greatest possible firmness of will, purity of soul and intent, and power of self-control is necessary.* (8) That this is only to be attained by self-abnegation on every plane. (9) That man therefore is the middle nature and natural controller between the Good and the Evil Spirits and that, therefore, to each man is attached naturally both by a Guadrian Angel and a Malevolent Spirit, and also certain Spirits that may become Familiar, so that with him it rests to give the victory unto which he will. (10) That, therefore, in order to control and make service of the Lower and Evil, the knowledge of the Higher and Good is requisite (i. e. in the language of the Theosophy of the present day, the knowledge of the Higher Self).

From this it results that the teachings propounded in this work is by purity and self-denial to obtain the knowledge of and conversation with one's Guardian Angel, so that thereby and thereafter we may obtain the power of suppressing the Evil Spirits whenever they desire to do us injury.

This, then, is the system of Hindu Spiritism as taught by the Hindu Adept to his Disciple and elaborated down to the smallest points.

A Good Spirit, if attracted into an assembly of good persons would endeavor to excite their ideas toward good, while an Evil Spirit attracted among evil-minded persons would incite them mentally to crime. Among how many criminals is not their only excuse that *"they thought they kept hearing something telling them to commit the crime."* Yet these suggestions would not always arise from Elementals alone, but frequently from the depraved Astral remnants of deceased evil persons, or Earth-bound Spirits.

Evil Spirits, on the other hand, are far more powerful than Elementals, for their action for Evil is parallel to that of the Good Spirits for Good; and their malignancy is far more terrible than that of the Evil Elementals, for not being, like them, subjected to the limits of certain currents, their sphere of operation extends over a far greater area; while the Evil they commit is never irrational or mechanical, but worked with full consciousness and intent.

The necessity of the invocation of the Divine and Angelic Forces or Good Spirits to control the Evil Spirits is invariably insisted upon in the operation of Invocations described and taught in all my published works. So that it is not so much, as I have said before, this circumstance, as the mode of its de-

velopment by our study and preparation, which is not unusual; while again the thorough and complete classification of the Spirits with their officers, and of the effects to be produced by their services, is not to be found elsewhere.

CONFIDENCE

Of all hindrances to Magical action, the very greatest and most fatal is *unbelief*, for its checks and stops the action of the Will. Even in the commonest natural operations we see this. No child could learn to walk, no student could assimilate the formulas of any science, were *doubt* and the impracticability and impossibility of so doing is the first thing in his mind. Therefore it is that all Adepts and Great Teachers of Religion and of Magic have invariably insisted on the necessity of faith.

The writer could never understand, what many think an imperative necessity, for them to study and interest themselves in the many different methods and teachings of Occultism, for every student should select some good Adept's Teachings, which he must first decide for himself to be good, then follow them closely and earnestly, showing a marked intolerance for other teachings differing from the ones he has selected.

Further, I must say that it has been my experience to find that it is rather the abuse through ignorance of their meaning, which causes some hasty one to decry the worthlessness of certain teachings, than their intelligent and properly regulated use, for if the Disciple be pure in mind, and have developed the clairvoyant faculty which is latent in every human being, and which is based on the utilization of the thought-vision, he will succeed. This soul sight, spoken of in the Scriptures as the "Inner or Spiritual Sight," is exercised almost unconsciously by every one in thinking of either a place, person or a thing, which they know well; immediately, coincident with the thought, the image springs before the mental sight; and it is but the conscious and voluntary development of this which is the basis of what is commonly called clairvoyance. Among the Highlanders of Scotland, this faculty, as is well known, is of common manifestation; and by the English is usually spoken of as "Second Sight."

"PENTACLES AND SYMBOLS"

Pentacles and Symbols are valuable as an equilibrated and fitting basis for the reception of Magical force; but unless the Operator can really attract that force to them, they are nothing but so many dead, and to him worthless, diagrams. But used by the Initiate or Adept who fully comprehends their meaning they become to him a powerful protection and aid, seconding and focussing the working of his Will, as well as the Power of the Spirits he has invoked.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion I desire it to be known and understood that there are many who will fail to understand why the following system and methods of Hindu Invocation have found to be fitting and suitable in a volume of this kind. Regarding this, let all mankind know that this has been customary in all ages of man. However, he who does not care to take up the exercises need not do so, let him study the volume in its forepart, *he will be more than recompensed for his time and trouble.*

Further "The Book of Death and Hindu Spiritism" has been written sorely as a help to the genuine Occult student and those faithful souls who desire Knowledge and Wisdom; and that for the opinion of the ordinary literary critic who neither understands nor believes in Spiritism or Occultism. I care nothing.

Dr. de Laurence.

CHAPTER XXIV.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE INVOCATION AND CONVOCATION OF SPIRITS

Occult Treasures,Occult Powers and Instructions in Sacred Magic have been buried and concealed under the centuries of the eternal past, far from the reach of the dizzy and unsteady hand of the Materialist, who has been wandering in the blind blank faith of Materialism; who is neither able to grasp the seal of Eastern Magic or the great power that lives within his own self. This wisdom and certain Indian Teachings are laid before him in this volume of Death and Hindu Spiritism. These teachings are more valuable to mankind than gold or precious stones and are given with a free hand, including all such advice and admonition as are necessary for the Disciple and Student to safely enter the great Sacred Temple of Magic. The veil which has been closed for centuries is here drawn aside and if the student is sincere and wise he will profit by these Mysteries and Occult Teachings which may themselves seem strange and weird as he advances in the teachings, mysteries and Rites of Hindu Magic. A new world

and existence will be open to him and the more he learns of Spirits of the Astral Plane the more he will realize and learn to know himself. The teachings of Indian Occultism are different from the teachings of Physiology and Materialism. Materialistic teachings make a man impotent and a thing that is driven and tossed as a wave of the sea by the storm. Materialism will have man think that he is an animal. The knowledge of Eastern Wisdom proves to him that he is a power within himself and, that the invisible powers and forces are the stronger and predominate and that when he develops this power he will become invested with a force that will enable him to control his destiny and protect himself and family as they should be protected by a true father and Master. Materialism teaches man that Life is not Eternal and that he is to live but a few short years and then be condemned to Eternal Fire. Hindu Spiritism shows him that he is a part of the great Universe and that he has always existed and shall always continue to exist.

SACRED MAGIC

Sacred Magic teaches him the true nature of his soul and that his earthly existence is merely an experience in his Eternal Life and career. The Occult Spirit Powers of the soul which are potentially contained in every man, but

understood and developed by few, are in a sense strange and unknown to the Materialistic Scientists of the Western countries and who appoints himself the guardian and officer of modern civilization. The learning of these guardians is far from the teachings of true Wisdom. Their intellect seeking the small materialistic powers around them cannot perceive the Occult and Astral Powers above them, nor realize their existence. Yet, Ancient Wisdom is as old as the mountains of India and has been known and taught by all prophets and by every great philosopher that has ever lived and inhabited the earth. The fundamental and cardinal principle as found in ancient Hindu Sanscrit and in the Scriptures of the Holy Book form the principle and essence of the power that Christ taught and revealed unto his Disciples.

In ancient times they were revealed unto those who were found worthy of being initiated into the Temples of Ancient and Mystic India. The disclosure of Sacred Magic in these times as in the present to the vulgar was forbidden. These teachings are not to be confounded with Diabolical Art; for the Arts that are taught by the western imposter are like the flickering light of the candle in the face of the Holy Sun. True Magic is only possessed by those who have developed Spirit Power. This has been verified by every true and practical Occult Student who has power of intellect and firmness, so

as to enable him to learn and understand these great mysteries which are hidden and concealed from the unworthy. The above teachings do not merely point out to him the theories of true knowledge but render him wise and strong in Occult forces. The true student which studies these teachings and Magical Rites by nature, becomes a part of this light that serves to illuminate and drive out the worms from the deep dark caverns of the Materialist's mind and soul. What the Hindu Adept and Master teaches has been verified and amplified by all of the immortal minds of the past and the Western student has names to look up to which are famous and which are engraved upon the monumental steps of the stairway of the past. As written above, this Art in the past as in the future will, when once unfolded, teach the secrets to those who will become purified and faithful in their souls and, as man's Occult Powers become illuminated, the darkness around him (Materialism) will disappear and in its place will come the true light of Wisdom and knowledge; for once man's soul has been invested with Occult Powers it becomes free in its action and movements and he is no longer bound by the cruel bands and cords of Materialism for the soul then becomes powerful and can and will instruct itself while at the same time it will be assisted, guided and instructed by Astral Spirits. When this grand state of Occult Powers becomes developed it becomes its

guide. The soul is then no longer subject to the conditions of time, or materialistic laws. Its existence is eternal and for a soul to desire a thing is already to possess it. Man's ability to advance in these powers will be in proportion to his desires. Desire will raise the curtain and will let Spiritual light penetrate into his soul that it may be able to see and realize things around him in the Spirit world, the same as if they were Material and External objects. Man's soul, once it has developed Spirit Power, becomes one with the spirit. Man is then able to communicate and converse mentally with mankind and with the spirits of the Astral Plane same as if they were living in the physical body. Man is also able to perform great and mysterious things, for there is a certain kind of Spirit and Occult Magic which has its existence in the Astral World.

These forces and powers are placed within and not without the soul of man and he has within himself the power of entering in communication with these forces by the law and principle of realization. However, it is a fact that these Invisible Forces (Evil Spirits) can control a man and break him down with perfect ease, unless he understands the Magical Teachings and how to overcome and dispel their power. He is then able to dominate instead of

being dominated and he can control them so that they will obey him and understand certain signs.

A man who is not properly developed should understand and always bear in mind that in trying to demonstrate and work these things for himself, that he is working with a powerful and unseen force and unless he has the true teachings his efforts will be a curse unto him and he would far better be dead than to try these things for the gratification of his own personal curiosity. Again he will understand this great power from out of his soul, for the curse that hangs around the neck of the Western man is a deficiency of knowledge of himself, because when a man does not know himself he does not know and understand the things of the Occult and Invisible world; for how could he, when he himself is a part of this world and if he has no knowledge of himself how could he understand the Spirit World, because man must develop the Spirit Power that lies within himself and it is then and only then that he begins to get the knowledge and realization of the power and forces of the Invisible world.

SPIRITUAL POWER

Each man is the essence of Spiritual Power and he should know that he possesses Spiritual Power as well as the Physical force; that he possesses one kind of knowledge as well as another and if he

does not find these powers by not applying himself he must not think that he does not possess them, for he has not proved himself capable or deserving of their being developed within him. Every soul should bear strictly in mind that the growth or capacity of his soul lies in the extent to which it developes Astral truth and power and not by basing every conclusion upon External teachings, for as stated in these writings, Materialistic things are an illusion. The writer in this volume has spoken of many things such as Spirits, Dreams and other secret things. He has also given valuable knowledge for the soul who believes or has some sort of belief in a future continuation of their soul. The other person, the writer cares nothing about, as it is not his idea to convert any man against his will, for he is as welcome to his belief and thoughts as he is to the air he breathes as far as he is concerned, because they harm no one but himself and the true student of Occultism and the true soul who desires to become a recipient of Divine Light and Sacred teachings pays no attention to the remarks or dictates of the Materialist because the same are oracle and dogmatic. If this rare Volume and its teachings of wisdom make no impression upon their mind it is only because they fail to recognize the *true* light when it shines in their eyes, for True wisdom and absolute truth can only come to any man by a clear and positive knowledge of them

for he cannot receive it and accept it through Materialistic theories or arguments.

FAMILIAR SPIRITS

Though it should be an easy matter for you to employ Familiar Spirits to annoy your neighbor, seek to abstain therefrom, unless it were to repress the insolence of such as might attempt aught against you personally. Never keep the Familiar Spirits around you for curiosity, and should you wish to give one over unto any person, see that such person be distinguished and meritorious, for they love not to serve those of base and common condition. But should such person unto whom you give them have made some express Pact (with Spirits) in such case Familiar Spirits will fly in haste to serve him.

LICENSING A SPIRIT TO DEPART

In our teachings of Art Magic great stress is laid on the importance of licensing a Spirit invoked on the Operation being completed to depart, and if he be unwilling, of even compelling him against his will to return to his place. It must remembered here, in these Operations of Magic that not only your Oratory but your bed-chamber also be kept pure and consecrated, and therefore it would be next to impossible for an Evil Spirit to break through to attach you. But in all Magical Evocations by the Circle, the

Chela (Disciple) should never quit the same, without having licensed and even forced the Evil Spirits to depart; as cases are on record of the Operator experiencing sudden death. I, myself, was present in India on an occasion when in the Evocation by the Circle, the *Chela* incautiously having stooped forward and outward just over the limit of the Circle, received a shock like that from a powerful electric battery (the same being Astral Fluid Projected by Spirits) which nearly threw him down, struck the Magical Sword from his hand, and sent him staggering back to the center of the Circle. Compare also with this advice any Adept's experience in these strange operations when his hand accidentally goes beyond the limits of the Circle when he is replenishing his candles during an Evocation.

GAMING

Also you shall shun gaming as you would the plague, because it ever is an occasion of Blasphemy. Also during these studies and instructions prayer and the study of the Sacred Books of Scripture should take the place of the gaming with you.

All this advice, and much more which every Occultist will be certain to receive from Astral Spirits, I have here set down, so that by observing the same perfectly, without failing in the slightest particular,

you shall at the end of the Operation find the value thereof. I am now, therefore, about to give you distinct and sufficient information how to employ Occult Powers, and how to proceed if you wish to acquire others.

You are then to understand that once he who operateth hath the power it is not necessary (in all cases) to use written symbols, but it may suffice to name aloud the Name of the Spirit, and the form in which you wish him to appear visibly, because once they have taken Oath this sufficeth. These Symbols, then, be made for you to avail yourself of them when you be in the company of other persons; also you must have them upon you, so that in touching or handling them simply they may represent your wish. Immediately then he unto whom the Symbol appertaineth will serve you punctually, but if you should desire something special which is in no way connected with or named in the Symbol it will be necessary to signify the same at least by showing your desire by two or three words. And here it is well to observe that if you use prudence you can often reason with those persons who be with you in such a manner that the Spirits, having, however, been beforehand invoked by you, will understand what they are to do; but it is necessary to discover your intent unto them by words, for they be of such great intelligence that from a single word

or a single motive they can draw the construction of the whole matter, and although they cannot at all times penetrate into the inmost parts of the human mind, yet nevertheless by their astuteness and subtlety they are so adroit that they comprehend by perceptible signs the wish of the person in question.

But when it is a grave and important matter you should retire into a secret place apart, provided it be appropriate, for any place is good to invoke the Spirits proper unto the Operation. There give them their commission regarding that which you wish them to perform, which they will either execute then or in the days following. But always give them the signal by word of mouth, or in any other manner that may be pleasing unto you whenever you wish them to begin to operate. But in all of these Arts, which be conjoined and mingled together with the Sacred Hindu Magic, both he who maketh use of these same, either alone, or mingled with some other things which be in way from Spiritism, and he who seeketh to exercise himself in performing other operations without these Arts, is alike liable to be deceived by Evil Spirits, seeing that of themselves they possess no other virtue than a natural power, and they can produce no other thing than Astral effects and they have absolute power in spiritual and Astral things; but if, how-

ever, on certain occasions they cause you to behold any extraordinary effect, such is only produced by impious and diabolical Pacts and Conjurations, which form of Science ought to be called Sorcery.

In these you will see how one should constrain the Spirits, and what one should ask of them; also how to dismiss them without hurt, and how one should make answer unto their demands and presentiments.

SPIRIT MAGIC

All that I am about to say unto you now is not superfluous, because it is certain that any one who shall have observed with a true heart and firm resolution the advice which I have given regarding Spirit Magic will be instructed with so much thoroughness and clearness by his Astral Guides that no doubtful point will present itself which he will not be able easily to clear up of himself.

The student will also be sufficiently shown how on every or any occasion he who operateth should comport himself as regardeth the Spirits; that is to say, as their Lord and not as their Servitor; neither should you be unreasonable or mean, seeing that you are not treating with men but with Spirits, of whom each one knoweth more than you all together.

Now if you shall make some demand unto a Spirit and he shall refuse to execute it, first well

and carefully examine and consider whether it be in the power and nature of the Spirit to whom you make such demand to fulfill same. For one Spirit knoweth not all things, and that which appertaineth unto the one another knoweth not. For this reason see that ye will take heed before endeavoring to force them to perform a matter. Yet if, however, the Inferior Spirits be disobedient you shall call their Superiors and remind them of the oaths which they have taken unto you and of the chastisement which awaiteth the breaking of such vows.

And immediately, on beholding your steadfastness, they will obey you; but should they not you ought then to invoke your Guardian Spirit, whose chastisement they will quickly feel. Yet, notwithstanding, you should never employ harsh means in order to have that which you can obtain by gentleness and courtesy.

CONSECRATED WAND

In order to make a consecrated Wand, procure unto thyself a piece of birdseye maple wood the length of 14 inches. The same should be shaved and polished down until it is about five-eighths of an inch in diameter, the same being nearly or perfectly round.

Next procure unto thyself four waxen candles, and on the night of Wednesday at the hour of ten,

set these candles upon a table, two at each end of this piece of maple wood. Light them and let them burn until they are entirely or about burned out. The piece of maple wood the while lying on the table between them.

Next procure unto thyself one-half ounce of pure oil of the olive, pour the same unto a small woolen cloth and varnish and rub the oil into this piece of maple wood, rubbing and polishing the same until it is entirely smooth. This Wand should be placed under thy pillow for five successive nights.

Next procure unto thyself a piece of purple cloth, preferably velvet, and when not using this Wand keep the same rolled therein and do not allow strange hands to handle it, neither should thee expose or reveal it to unworthy or unscrupulous persons; but the same should be revealed only to faithful, discreet and chosen friends. All of thy operations and knowledge of Occult things should be kept from prating companions whose misbelief and unworthiness hinders and disturbs the effects and result of every Magical operation for it is the desire of Astral Spirits that ye seek not the companionship of him who is unworthy of thy trust and faith, and I do here admonish and caution thee to be discreet and secret and neither manifest nor teach to any person thy work, or place, or time, nor desire, or will, except it be to a Master or Companion, who must like-

wise be Silent, Faithful, Discreet, and dignified by nature and education.

INVOCATION

If during the Invocation they should appear with tumult and insolence fear nothing; neither give way to anger, but appear to make no account thereof. Only show them the Consecrated Wand, and if they continue to make a disturbance smite upon the Altar twice or thrice therewith and all will be still.

It should be noted that after you shall have licensed them to depart, and they shall have disappeared you shall take a small tray or plate and put perfume therein, place it in the room wherein the Spirits shall have appeared, and you shall perfume the place all around, for otherwise the Spirits might work some evil unto persons entering by chance therein.

You shall the day after take away all the Ashes from the tray and cast it into a secret place; but above all thinks take care not to throw it either into a river or into the navigable sea.

But should you desire to procure for yourself various other Magical Secrets leave the Ashes and all things in place, as I shall also describe more particularly later in this chapter.

Also, should you wish it, you can retain your arrangements in place, and keep the room where

you carry on your meditation and study proper and clean, as well as the table, which latter you may place in a corner, should it incommode you in the center of the room. For in this Apartment, if it be not contaminated nor profaned, you may every Saturday enjoy the presence of your Guardian Spirit, which is one of the most sublime things which you can desire in this Sacred Art.

The good Spirits may be invocated of us, or by us, divers ways, and they in sundry shapes and manners offer themselves to us, for they openly speak to those that watch, and do offer themselves to our sight or do inform us by dreams and by oracle of those things which we have a great desire to know. Whoever therefore would call any good Spirit to speak or appear in sight he must particularly observe two things, one whereof is about the disposition of the invocant, the other concerning those things which are outwardly to be adhered to in the invocation for the conformitv of the Spirit to be called.

It is necessary therefore that the invocant religiously dispose himself for the space of two days to such a mystery, and to conserve himself during the time, chasten, abstinent and to abstract himself as much as he can from all manner of foreign and secular business; likewise he should observe fasting, as much as shall seem convenient to him, and let

him daily, between sun rising and setting, being clothed in clean linen, seven times call upon God, and make a deprecation unto the Spirits to be called and invocated, according to the rule which I will teach you. The number of days of fasting and preparation is commonly from one to two days.

Now, concerning the place; it must be chosen clean, pure, close, quiet, free from all manner of noise and not subject to any stranger's presence. This place must first of all be exorcised and consecrated, and let there be a Table or Altar placed therein, covered with a clean white linen cloth and set towards the east, and on each side thereof place two consecrated wax-light burning candles, the flame thereof ought not to go out during your operation. In the middle of the Altar thereof let there be placed clean writing paper, covered with fine linen cloth, which is not to be raised until the end of the operation. Then set a censer or small tray on the head of the Altar, wherein you shall kindle a holy fire by burning tincture of benzoin or wood alcohol one teaspoonful, and make a precious perfume of rose petals every day that you pray.

Now for your habit; you shall have a long garment of white linen, close before and behind, which may come down quite over the feet, and gird yourself about the loins with a girdle. You shall likewise have a small stand cover of pure white linen

on which must be wrote in a Purple Ink the name Zetragrazzation; all of which things are to be consecrated and sanctified in order by prayer. But you must not go into this holy place till it be first aired and then you may enter, and when you enter therein you shall make a perfume upon the altar, and then on your knees pray before the altar as I shall have directed you.

Now when the time is come for you to invoke spirits, you shall fast more strictly, and fasting on the day following, at the rising of the sun, enter the holy place, using the ceremonies before you shall make a cross with olive oil on the forehead and anoint your eyes, using prayer in all these consecrations. You shall next pray before the Altar upon your knees, and then an invocation may be made as follows:

"In the name of the Blessed and Holy Adepts, I do desire ye, strong and mighty Spirits (here name the Spirit or Spirits you would have appear), that if it be the Divine Will of Him Who is called Zetragrazzation, etc., the Holy Spirit, the Father, that ye take upon ye some shape as best becometh your Astral nature and appear to me visibly here in this place and answer my demands, in as far as I shall not transgress the bounds of the Divine mercy and goodness, by requesting unlawful knowledge, but

that thou wilt graciously show me what things are most profitable for me to know and do, to the glory and honor of His Divine Majesty, who liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen."

"Lord, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven; make clean my heart within me, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. O Lord, by Thy Name I have called them, suffer them to administer unto me. And that all things may work together for Thy Honor and Glory, to Whom with Thee thy Son and blessed Spirit, be ascribed all might, majesty and dominion, world without end. Amen."

The Invocation being properly made the Good Spirits will appear unto you which you desire, which you shall entertain with a chaste communication and license them to depart.

Now the Seal which is used to invoke any Good Spirit must be made after the following manner: Either in metal conformable or in new wax mixed with convenient spices, or it may be made with pure white paper, and the outward form of it must be square and not circular nor triangular, or of the like sort, according to the rule of the Hindus, on which there must be written the names of the Astral Spirits you wish to invoke. And in the center of the Seal draw a character of six corners. In the middle thereof write the Name and Character of the Spirit, also your name, to whom the Good Spirit that is to

be called into subject to your wishes. And about this character let there be placed numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, as the Spirits you would call, many come together at once. But if you should call only one, nevertheless there must be made four numbers wherein the name of the Spirit or Spirits with their characters are to be written. Now this seal ought to be composed on those days and hours when the Moon is in her increase, and if you take fortunate months, which are May, January and July, therewith, it will be better for the producing of the effect, which seal being rightly made in the manner I have fully described must be consecrated according to the rules above delivered.

And this is the way of making the general seal and invocation of all Spirits whatever, the form whereof you may see in seals and plates. I will yet declare unto you another rite more easy to perform this thing: Let the Man who wishes to receive an oracle from a Spirit be chaste, pure and sanctified; then choose a place being pure, clean and covered not with dust or filth, and on the Lord's day in the new of the Moon let him enter into the place clothed with clothing that is clean; let him exorcise the place, bless it and make a circle therein with a piece of tailor's chalk, let there be written in the outer part of the Circle the Names of the Astral Spirits he wishes to have appear, in the inner part thereof

write the name of Mjura. Have the vessels for the perfumes ready and burning. You must now pray towards the East this whole Psalm:

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, etc." (Psalm cix.) Then make a fumigation and deprecate the Spirits by their Names that they will appear unto you and reveal or discover that which you so earnestly desire, and do this continually for one-half hour. Next enter the Circle, perfume it, and anoint thyself with the Oil of the Olive upon the forehead, eyes and in the palms of both hands and upon the feet, then with bended knees say the Psalm aforesaid, with Divine and Angelical Names. Which being said arise and walk around the Circle from East to West until thou shalt receive a communication or impression to sit like a Hindu, legs crossed, down in the Circle, where thou mayest rest, and thou wilt be wrapped up in an ecstacy, and a Spirit will appear and inform thee of all things necessary to be known. You must observe also that in the Circle there ought to be four waxen candles burning at the Four Parts of the World, which ought not to want light for the space of your operation.

And the manner of eating is this, to abstain from all things having a life of the wild animal, and from those which do proceed from them, drink only pure running water; neither is there any food or wine to be taken for two hours before this operation. Let

the perfume and the Oil of the Olive be made as is set forth in Exodus and other holy books of the Bible. It is also to be observed that as often as you enter the Circle have in your right hand a seal as described above, upon which must be written the name Zetragrazzation, in the manner I have before mentioned. Other directions for invoking Astral Spirits are as follows:

Make a small book containing the names of the days of the week when you intend to have your operations; the names of the Astral Spirits you desire to invoke; a seal as above described, which being done thou shalt consecrate the same unto God and unto the pure Spirits in the manner following:

Thou shalt set in the destined place a small table covered with a white cloth, whereon thou shalt lay the Book opened at the seal, which should be drawn on the first leaf of the said Book, and having kindled a candle, which should be placed in the center of the table, thou shalt surround the said table with a circle, clothe thyself in the proper vestments, as directed above, and holding the Book open repeat upon thy knees the following prayer with great humility:

THE PRAYER

"Adonai, Elohim, El, Eheieh Asher Eheieh, Prince of Princes, Existence of Existences, have

mercy upon me, and cast Thine eyes upon Thy servant (here call your own name) who invoketh Thee most devoutly, and supplicateth Thee by Thy Holy and tremendous Name, Zetragrazzation, to be propitious and to order Thine Astral Spirits to come and take up their abode in this place; O, ye Angels and Spirits of the Stars; O, all ye Angels and Elementary Spirits; O, all ye Spirits present before the Face of God, I, the Minister and faithful Servant of the Most High, conjure ye, let God Himself, the Existence of Existences, conjure ye to come and be present at this Operation, I, the Servant of God, most humbly entreat ye. Amen."

After which thou shalt burn incense for fifteen full minutes, and thou shalt replace the Book on the aforesaid table, taking heed that the Fire on the candles be kept up continually during the operation and keeping thy eyes closed when praying. Repeat the same Ceremony for seven days, beginning with Saturday, and perfuming the Book each day with the Incense proper at the same hour and taking heed that the candle shall burn on the day and hour of your operation, after which thou shalt shut up the Book in a small drawer under the table, made expressly for it, until thou shalt have occasion to use it, and every time that thou wishest to use it clothe thyself with thy vestments, kindle the candles and

repeat upon thy knees the aforesaid prayer, "Adonai, Elohim," etc.

It is necessary also in the Consecration of the Book to summon all the Spirits whose names are written therein, which thou shalt do with devotion; and even if the Spirits appear not in the Consecration of the Book be not thou astonished thereat, seeing that they are of a pure nature and consequently have much difficulty in familiarizing themselves with men who are inconstant and impure, but the Ceremonies and Characters being correctly carried out, devoutly and with perseverance, they will be constrained to come, and it will at length happen that at thy first invocation thou wilt not be able to see and communicate with them. But I advise thee to undertake nothing unclean or impure, for then thy importunity, far from attracting them will only serve to keep them from thee; and it will be thereafter exceedingly difficult for thee to attract them for use for pure ends.

CHAPTER XXV.

SACRED MAGIC

1. Take heed before all things to perform no Magical Operation whatsoever, or Invocations of the Spirits unless necessary on the Sabbath Day, during the whole period of your life, seeing that that day is consecrated unto God, and is the day on which you should repose and sanctify yourself and you should solemnize it by prayers.

2. Keep yourself as you would from the Eternal Fire, from manifesting unto any living being that which your Guardian Spirit shall have confided unto you, excepting unto him who hath given unto you the Operation, unto whom you have, as it were, a greater obligation than unto your own father.

3. As far as lieth in your power take heed in no way to make use of this Art against your neighbor, except for a just Vengeance; although I counsel you even in this particular to imitate God, who pardoneth even you yourself, and there is not in the world a more meritorious action than to pardon.

4. In the case of your Astral Guide dissuading you from some Operation, and forbidding you to do

the same, keep well from becoming obstinate therein, for you would in such a case ever repent it.

5. Fly all kinds of (Evil) Science, Magic and Enchantment, because they be all Diabolical Inventions; also put no trust in books which teach them, though in appearance they may seem reliable to you, for these be nets which the perfidious and evil stretcheth out to take you.

"The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." (Lev. xx. 6.)

"A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them." (Lev. xx. 27.)

6. In conversing with Spirits, Good or Evil, never employ words which you do not understand, because even so will you have shame and hurt.

7. You will never demand of your Astral Guide any Symbol wherewith to operate for an Evil end, seeing that you would grieve him. You will find only too many persons who will beseech you to do thus; *see that you do it not.*

8. Accustom yourself as much as possible to purity of body and cleanliness of raiment, seeing that this is very necessary; for the good Spirits love purity.

9. As far as possible shun the employment of your Magical Powers for others in evil things, but first well consider him to whom you would render a service; because it often happeneth that in doing service unto another one worketh evil for oneself.

10. In no way attempt to procure the Operation of the Higher Grade of Astral Spirits unless you have extreme need thereof, seeing that these spirits be so far above you that it is useless for you to wish to compare yourself unto them, you being nothing in comparison of them who are the Angels of God.

11. If the Operations can be performed by the Astral Spirits it is not necessary to employ others therein.

12. Though it should be an easy matter for you to employ your Familiars to annoy your neighbors, seek to abstain therefrom, unless it were to repress the insolence of such as might attempt aught against you personally. Never keep the Familiar Spirits in idleness, and should you wish to give one over unto any person, see that such person be distinguished and meritorious, for they love not to serve those of base and common condition. But should such person unto whom you give them have made some express Pact (with Spirits) in such case the Familiar Spirits will fly in haste to serve him.

13. These instructions of this present Operation ought to be read and reread an infinitude number

of times so that in the space of two weeks before commencing he who operateth should be fully instructed and informed therein; and if he be not a Jew he should further be conversant with many of the customs and ceremonies which this Operation demandeth, so as to become accustomed unto that retirement which is so necessary and useful.

14. Should he who performeth this Operation during the Six Months or Moons commit voluntarily any mortal sin prohibited by the Tables of the Law be certain that he will never receive this Wisdom.

15. Sleep in the daytime is entirely forbidden, unless absolutely requisite, owing to some infirmity, or to old age, or to debility of constitution, for God is always willing to employ mercy towards mankind because of their infirmities.

16. If you have not the fixed intention of continuing the Operation I counsel you on no account to commence it, because the Lord doth not care to be mocked, and He chastiseth with corporeal maladies those who make a mock of Him. Howbeit, he who is hindered from continuing through some unforeseen accident, sinneth in no way.

17. It is possible for him who hath passed seventy years of age to undertake this Operation. Thus also was it the custom in the true and ancient

Hindu law concerning the Priesthood. Also he should not be less than twenty years old.

18. You shall not permit the Astral Spirits to familiarize themselves too much with you, through your disputing and arguing with them; because they will propound so many affairs and things at once as to confound and trouble the mind.

19. With the Astral Spirits you should not make use of the Symbols, but if you desire anything command them aloud to perform it. Never commence many Operations at once and in the same time, but when you have finished one then begin another, until you are perfect in the practice; for an Apprentice Artist doth not become a Master suddenly, but little by little.

20. Without reasons of the very last importance the Four Princes or the Eight Sub-Princes should never be summoned, because we must make a great distinction between these and the others, who are inferior to them.

21. In operating, as rarely as possible insist upon the Spirits appearing visibly, and thus you will work all the better, for it should suffice you for them to say and do what you wish.

22. All prayers, Orations, Invocations and Conjurations, and in fact everything you have to say, should be pronounced aloud and clearly, without,

however, shouting like a madman, but speaking clearly and naturally and pronouncing distinctly.

23. During the Moons you shall sweep the Oratory every Sabbath eve, and keep it strictly clean, for it is a place dedicated unto the Holy and Pure Spirits.

24. Take heed that you commence no Operation at night if it be important, unless the need be very pressing.

25. Your only object during your whole life should be to shun as far as possible an ill-regulated life, and especially the vices of debauchery, gluttony and drunkenness.

26. Having completed the Operation, and being now the Disciple of the True Wisdom, you shall fast one day before commencing to put any operation into practice.

27. Every year you should make a commemoration of the Signal benefit which the Lord conferred upon you. At such time fasting, praying and honoring your Guardian Spirit that day with your whole strength.

28. During the Days on which you constrain the Spirits you shall fast, for this is essential, so that when you are working you may find yourself freer and more tranquil both in body and mind.

29. Note that the facts are to be understood as being given to the true Disciple and not otherwise.

30. Keep as an indubitable precept never to give this Operation unto a Monarch, because Solomon was the first who abused it; and if you should do the contrary both you and your successors would alike lose the Grace hereof. With regard to this command, I myself having been sought by the rich man, gave him willingly the best Astral Spirit which I had, but I steadily refused to give him the Operation, and it should not be given unto Emperors, Kings or other Sovereigns unless they are sincere.

31. You may assuredly give, but it is not permissible to sell this Operation for great profit, for this would be to abuse the Grace of the Lord who hath given unto you, and should you act contrariwise unto this you would lose its control.

32. Should you perform this Operation in a town you should take a house which is not at all overlooked by any one; seeing that in this present day curiosity is so strong that you ought to be upon your guard, and there ought to be a garden (adjoining the house) wherein you can take exercise.

33. Take well heed during the Moons or Months to lose no blood from your body, except that which the expulsive virtue in you may expel naturally of its own accord.

34. Finally, during the whole time, you shall touch no dead body of an animal of any description soever.