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HELL
AND
THE INFERNAL COMEDY

CHALONER



6

Chaloner
NB0

Not in B.D.
1910
etc

HELL

Per a Spirit-Message Therefrom
(Alleged)

—AND—

The Infernal Comedy

BY

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER, A. B., A. M.

Member of the Bar.

MEDIUM

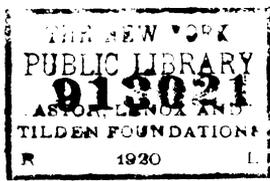
Author of "Scorpio"—"Robbery Under Law"—"The Serpent of
Old Nile"—"Saul," etc.

A Study in Graphic-Automatism

PALMETTO PRESS
Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina

1919

M. S. W. H. N. O. R. S.

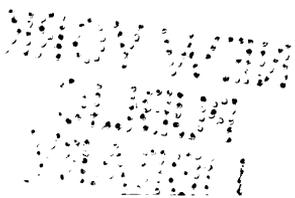


John Armstrong Chaloner
Hotel Brewster
6-26-1919

Copyright, 1917,

By

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER,



1. G. Chaloner
Hotel Brevoort
New York

INTRODUCTION.

The impulse to spiritualism given by the Great War and the appalling slaughter following in its train, induced the writer to follow the suggestion given in a review of "Hell"—found at the rear of this book—appearing in the San Francisco, California, *Chronicle*, August 6th, 1912—"Hell" having been written and sent to the reviewers in that year—whereas "The Infernal Comedy," its sequel, has only just been completed, as follows:

"A NEW VISION OF HELL.

NOT A BAD SORT OF PLACE AT ALL, ACCORDING TO MR. CHALONER.

It might be more reassuring for those interested in knowing what sort of a place is reserved for the wicked after death if John Armstrong Chaloner had been permitted to describe more than merely the Audience Chamber of his Satanic Majesty. The picture which he gives us of this room, with its walls of rubies, diamonds and sapphires, is attractive enough, yet doubt is allowed to linger as to the furnishings and other appurtenances of the living-rooms of the transient and permanent guests. * * * It is disappointing not to be told more about this interesting place. *The glimpse into the Audience Chamber, with Satan presiding and looking like Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power, cries out for another and completer picture.* But, perhaps Mr. Chaloner intends to give us this in time, even if he has to go there for it."

Upon this hint the writer spake, with the result that one hundred sonnets form Canto One of "The Infernal Comedy."

The interest of the Californian reviewer would be amply satisfied were he permitted to peruse said Canto One. But at present that satisfaction is denied him, for the reason that this work is brought out in Great Britain before being

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C. B. B. B.

5-25-1919

submitted to the reviewers in the United States, for the reason that no such interest—*as yet*—in the other world exists in the latter country, as, for the reason stated above, is to be found in Great Britain today. Before the Great War is over there will be ample reason for American interest in the life beyond the grave—the writer fixing 1919 as the earliest possible date for the termination of the titanic struggle.

In conclusion. The writer is a member of the Church of England and a devout believer in all that Church's tenets. He does not, for one moment, doubt the Divine Wisdom displayed by the Founder of Christianity in dropping an impenetrable veil over the future life. When analysed, the two statements of Jesus Christ relative to Paradise are soul-sufficing. What could be stronger than: "Thou shalt be satisfied." And when—as though to gild refined gold and paint the lily—He adds: "It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him"—the measure is indeed "heaped up, pressed down, and running over."

At the same time, Mahomet—beyond the shadow of a doubt—added something to his schedule of salvation, which carried more weight with it—by way of overcoming the natural dread and horror of death—than did the Founder of Christianity.

This is said in the most reverent spirit. This is said in a spirit of the most humble approbation for the attitude assumed by Jesus Christ in that regard—an attitude commensurate in hopelessness of penetration with the awful pall hung in the Old Testament before Jehovah—commensurate with "The ways of God are past finding out." And the writer would shrink from even allegedly, even hypothetically lifting even the remotest fringe of a veil specifically set in place by Jesus Christ. But since the alleged revelations—in "Hell" and "The Infernal Comedy"—of the delights—as well as the terrific and soul-chilling tortures of the "Place of departed Spirits"—of Hell, in a word—rouse an interest—to put it somewhat mildly—in the heart of a man who understands the meaning of the word love, as well as the meaning of the word war—and therefore do something commen-

surate—to say the least—with what the Koran did in the hearts of the millions of its devoted followers—the writer launches “Hell” and “The Infernal Comedy” for what it is worth—upon the troublous sea of literature.

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER,
“The Merry Mills,”

Cobham,
Albemarle County,
Virginia.

May 28, 1917.

DEDICATION.

The names of: Dante Alighieri, author of "The Divine Comedy," containing the "Inferno" (1265-1321); John Milton, author of "Paradise Lost" (1608-1674); and John Bunyan, author of "Pilgrim's Progress" (1628-1688); are here printed, as the undersigned's illustrious predecessors in this dread domain.

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER.

FOREWORD

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER GIVES VIEWS TO
THE PRESS.

Talks With "Spirits" on Hades.

(Washington Post, August 5, 1912.)

"All dead game sports enjoy it in hell."—Message to John Armstrong Chaloner, dated Hell, Tuesday, 6:22 A. M. July 31, 1912.

John Armstrong Chaloner, in the presence of a number of representatives of the press, who met him by invitation at Alexandria, Virginia, went into an interesting discussion of his psychological researches, and read to his audience an interview which he said he had had at "Merry Mills" recently through his "subconsciousness" with an old friend, who, according to his chat with the spirit world, is now sojourning in Hades. Mr. Chaloner calls his subconsciousness his "X-Faculty," and stated while in communication with the other side he lies on his back in the dark, with a pad and pencil convenient, and as soon as he is in communication with "the decedent" an unknown force—as is the case with "Planchette"—guides his hand.

Before reading his interview with his departed friend Mr. Chaloner declared that he did not believe a "d—d word of it." He stated, however, that several years ago he became aware of the existence of this subconscious faculty, and believed that some one had a message for him. At that time, he said, he was too busy with his legal matters and thought no more of it until recently, when he made several efforts to renew the contact, finally meeting with success.

VERY MUCH LIKE NAPOLEON.

Mr. Chaloner gave a graphic description of his entry into the semihypnotic state, and said that he gasped for fully five minutes, meanwhile, he had been told, his features taking on a striking likeness of Napoleon. Mr. Chaloner gave the name of his old friend, and stated that he was a noncommissioned officer in the Confederate navy. He said they had been members of the same clubs in New York and a strong friendship had existed between them, though the other was many years older than himself, dying at the age of 80.

Through his "X-Faculty," and "automatic writing," Mr. Chaloner received from his friend a most encouraging report of the hereafter, though to a spiritualist who was present he declared that he did not believe in spiritualism. "I am an Episcopalian," he said. "I believe in a future state, but I don't know anything about it."

Mr. Chaloner arrived at his appointment promptly at 4 o'clock and announced his name, though he was easily recognized. He wore a blue serge suit, white stock, with a pearl scarf pin, tan shoes, and a short tan overcoat. As soon as he had counted noses and asked what papers were represented, he removed his overcoat, which he placed over his knees and feet, saying that his feet sometimes got cold, but that he never got "cold feet."

AUTHOR HAS VISION.

"A fiery throne." Upon said throne sits Satan. His features are precisely those of Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power. In height he is considerably taller, but yet under 6 feet, and regarding weight there is no surplusage of flesh. He is dressed in the costume of Michaelangelo's statue, "The Thinker."

The Hall of Audience (Hell) is an immense apartment, so huge as to be practically incomprehensible to mortal ideas of architecture. It is miles long, miles wide, and miles high. The hall is of rubies, and they are of the size of ordinary building bricks, and of the luster and fire of rubies known as "pigeon blood." In place of mortar, binding the

bricks and making a white line, we have diamonds as large as your thumb nail, and of the purest water. To soften and enrich the fiery effect of such splendor, the diamond line is broken every few inches by several inches of sapphires, as blue as the Mediterranean. The floor is of marble, that has the marvelous quality of being capable of taking on the tone of whatever stands upon it, or is reflected upon it, or flies over it. If a cherubim flies over the floor, the marble at once becomes tinged with blood. The roof is of crystal, so pure that the eye can pierce it as if it were plate glass."—John Armstrong Chaloner's description of hell, as recorded by his "subconscious mind," as announced yesterday.

*John Armstrong Chaloner Gives Interview and Describes
Reception Room of His Satanic Majesty.*

(Washington Herald, August 5, 1912.)

John Armstrong Chaloner, former husband of Amelie Rives and brother of Sheriff Bob Chanler, who married Lina Cavaliere, disclosed yesterday a message that he says he has received from the other world.

The message brings news of the physical characteristics of his Satanic majesty and a description of Hades that at least has the merit of being unique. The message received by Chaloner comes, he insists, from Thomas Jefferson Miller, a former Confederate officer, and member of the Manhattan Club of New York City.

Chaloner summoned the newspaper correspondents across to the Virginia side of the Potomac.

"Last month," said the former husband of Amelie Rives, the novelist, "I picked up a copy of an English illustrated paper and saw therein an account of a supposed spirit communication with W. T. Stead, who went down on the Titanic. The statement, while essentially puerile, attracted my attention because the late Prof. William James had informed me at one time that I was a medium, although I do not believe in spiritualism."

MESSAGE FROM HELL.

Chaloner went on to say that he had summoned his art of "graphic automatism," and had managed to get in touch with the spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller, with whom he had been friendly when Miller was of this world.

"This," said Chaloner, was last Tuesday evening, "Miller, or whatever force it was, immediately replied through my hand and wrote a lengthy statement, answering my queries and giving much information in regard to his present abode, which he said was Hell, temporarily."

Here the brother-in-law of Lina Cavalieri read a sixteen-page typewritten statement, giving in full the interview with the disembodied spirit. It took eight hours for him to transcribe the message, with short intervals for food and sleep. It was mighty exhausting business.

According to the message that Chaloner gives to the world, Hell was a very bearable place and one which everybody must pass through. Miller admitted to his former friend that he had been bad enough on earth to merit more punishment than he had received, but considered that his relief was probably due to the fact that he had had "his share of Hell on earth, being a New Yorker with social standing and no money."

SATAN RESEMBLES NAPOLEON.

The message handed out by Chaloner describes Satan as a man of medium height, whose face is that of Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power, and whose habiliments were those of Michaelangelo's statue, "The Thinker." His Satanic Majesty was seated on a throne in the center of an immense audience chamber.

"The walls of this audience chamber," says the message recorded, "are of rubies. The rubies are the size of ordinary building bricks, and of the luster and fire of rubies known as pigeon blood. In place of mortar binding the bricks and making a white line, we here have diamonds as large as your thumb nail and of the purest water. To soften and enrich the fiery effect of such splendor, the diamond line is broken

every few inches by several inches of sapphires, as blue as the Mediterranean. The floor of the hall is of marble, that has the marvelous quality of being capable of taking on the color of whatever stands upon or flies over it. Thus, if a cherubim flies over the floor space, the marble at once becomes tinged with red. If, on the other hand, a seraphim crosses the space, the marble at once becomes of a cerulean blue, like an Italian sky. The marble takes on these colors from the armor and vestments of the mighty angels, which are scarlet and blue, respectively."

BLOODHOUNDS SPOIL DREAM.

At this point, the message was interrupted by the baying of Mr. Chaloner's bloodhounds outside, who, he thinks, sensed the subconscious communication. However, the roof, Chaloner learned, is of crystal, so pure that the eye can pierce it.

At the end of the message, Chaloner himself records the following notes: "Knocked off for breakfast. Bread and water."

Mr. Chaloner anticipated his coming from near Cobham, Va., by writing a letter to the Washington correspondents and others, in which he told them of a conversation he had held with Miller, who had spoken to him in the early hours of the morning of July 31st last, from Hell, and of conversations which they had had in the Manhattan Club. This, he said, had convinced him that he could communicate with the dead while in a "Napoleonic" death trance.

CHALONER READS STATEMENT.

This statement was read by Mr. Chaloner, and was a most remarkable affair. It embraced twelve and a fraction typewritten pages. Mr. Chaloner stated that he wrote it in long hand while in a state of subconsciousness. He declared that "he did not believe a damn word of it," after he had completed its reading.

Arriving at the office of the Alexandria Gazette building at a few minutes after 4 o'clock, Mr. Chaloner took exactly two hours and twenty minutes to tell his story to the scribes.

The story of his alleged conversation with a deceased friend while in a state of subconsciousness was related after he had gotten through his other talk.

WEARS PLAIN CLOTHES.

As soon as Mr. Chaloner reached the office in a carriage from the union railway station, he entered and announced himself.

Mr. Chaloner talked with vim and at times he emphasized his remarks upon his auditors by clapping his hands together.

Mr. Chaloner, for a millionaire, was not clad very pompously, wearing but plain clothing. He wore a blue serge coat and waistcoat, and dark trousers, and carried with him a light overcoat with velvet collar, and he also had rubbers in a small suit case, the latter containing books which he has written. The nature of some of these books was explained by him during the course of the interview.

In addition to the newspaper men was Prof. Helmut P. Holler, President of the Washington Psychological Society, who had a conference with Mr. Chaloner. At the conclusion of his interview Mr. Chaloner left for Richmond.

CHALONER'S DESCRIPTION OF HELL.

"The walls are of rubies of the size of ordinary building bricks, and of the luster and fire of rubies known as pigeon blood. In place of mortar binding the bricks and making a white line, we have diamonds as large as your thumb-nail and of the purest water. To soften and enrich the fiery effect of such splendor the diamond line is broken every few inches by sapphires as blue as the Mediterranean. The floor of the hall is of marble that has the marvelous quality of being capable of taking on color of whatever stands upon or flies over it. Thus, if a cherubim flies over the floor space, the marble at once becomes tinged with red. If, on the other hand, a seraphim crosses the space, the marble at once becomes of a cerulean blue, like an Italian sky. The marble takes on the colors from the armor and vestments of the mighty angels, which are scarlet and blue, respectively."

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER MEETS NEWS- PAPER MEN.

(Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, August 5, 1912.)

Alexandria, Va., August 4.—Coming here to-day for the special purpose of making a statement to newspaper men, a number of whom came from Washington and elsewhere, to meet him, John Armstrong Chaloner, of Merry Mills, who had anticipated his coming by writing a letter to the Washington correspondents and others, told them of a conversation he had held with a deceased New York friend, who had spoken to him in the early hours of the morning of July 31 last from hell and who had recalled certain conversations they had had in the Manhattan Club. This, he said, had convinced him that he could communicate with the dead while in a "Napoleonic death trance." He graphically described his apparent death struggles while in his "sub-conscious trance," in which he assumed the lifelike features of Napoleon Bonaparte.

HELL BROUGHT DOWN TO DATE.

Alexandria, Va., August 4.—Hell isn't a half bad place, according to a friend of John Armstrong Chaloner. This friend, long a resident of the region which Dante once so graphically described, has now supplemented the observations of the famous Florentine poet and brought Hell data strictly down to date in a spirit message to Mr. Chaloner, which the latter received by the subconsciousness, which is one of his claims to distinction.

While Hell was Hell for a time, the friend of the author says he has "paid the piper" and is now free from torment. Mr. Chaloner prefaced his remarks with a statement that he "didn't believe a d—d word of it." Satan, according to the spirit message, resembles Napoleon in personal appearance and holds his court in an audience room "miles long, miles wide and miles high, built of rubies the size of ordinary building bricks."

COPY OF LETTER

ADDRESSED TO A SCORE OR SO OF THE MEMBERS
OF THE PRESS OF WASHINGTON, D. C.

Release by wire.

“The Merry Mills,”
Cobham,
Virginia.
August 2, 1912.

DEAR SIR:

On the 25th of last month I happened to pick up an “Illustrated London News” of June 15th last, and saw under the headline “Science Jottings,” by Andrew Wilson, an article concerning reputed—to cite—“So-called spiritualistic communications purporting to emanate from the late Mr. W. T. Stead, who perished on the ‘Titanic.’ The result, as usual has been *nil*. What has been done is that certain ‘mediums’ professed to put themselves in communication with the deceased journalist. In their supposed trance-state they assert that they received messages from him. Anything more puerile than the supposed communications it has never been my lot to peruse. Mr. Stead is reported to have told his friends that he was quite free, but not yet attuned to the easy and perfect sendings of messages. Later on it was hoped things would improve in this respect. It is tolerably certain the vast bulk of us have not so far lost our grip of common-sense as to accept such rubbish as evidence of another world’s existence. *Has there ever been sent or given a ‘spirit-message’ which has laid before mankind any great fact or truth connected with the hereafter? Has any ‘spirit’ revealed to us what all of us are devoutly anxious to know something definite about—namely, the nature of that after-state of being which forms so prominent a feature of the Christian faith? You have ignorant persons posing as ‘mediums’ publishing forth their ability to communicate with the spirits of those*

who have gone before, and making a travesty of certain of the most sacred of our emotions and beliefs. Well may a writer in scathing terms speak of these people to whom death has no sacredness, and who treat the great mysteries of the universe as if they were trivialities of the first order: 'But when we come to real instruction, reliable information, or profitable or valuable knowledge, Spiritualism is as barren as Sahara, as empty as a hollow gourd.' We are reminded of the Mrs. Pipers, and other mediums whose performances, wonderful certainly, are still enveloped in a kind of mental fog. At the very best, I repeat, neither Mrs. Piper nor any other medium has ever shed any light on any of the great problems of the after-state, such as humanity has day by day to face." (Signed) Andrew Wilson.

As far back as October 10th, 1901, Professor William James, of Harvard, (now deceased), pronounced me a medium, and went on to say, "but whereas most mediums promptly adopt the theory current in spiritualistic circles, Mr. Chaloner prepossessed against that hypothesis, appears to have set to work systematically, and, as would appear from his narrative" (by which "narrative" is meant a letter from me together with certain specimens of graphic automatism—automatic writing—made by me in a trance-like state, and submitted to him by mail for his opinion on said trance-writings) "critically, to explore them and determine their significance for himself. In this attempt he seems to me to deserve nothing but praise. Psychology would be more advanced, were there more subjects of Automatism (mediumship) ready to explore carefully their eccentric faculty."

Since Professor James, who, by the way, besides being Professor of Psychology at Harvard, was also a member of the medical profession—having taken his M. D. degree at Harvard in 1870—practically discovered Mrs. Piper, the well-known medium aforesaid, of Boston, and also discovered your humble servant as a medium—*who doesn't believe in Spiritualism, however*,—as shown above, and since so well known a scientific writer as Andrew Wilson, who for years has handled the scientific column for so great a paper as the "Illustrated London News" speaks favorably of said Mrs. Piper as

a medium, therefore it is not a far cry to infer that I am "some punkins" of a medium myself—to put it somewhat jocularly. Such being the case it occurred to me—after reading said article in the "Illustrated London News"—that it might not be a bad idea to follow up a lead I had got from my "X-Faculty"—my term for the Sub-consciousness—some years ago, when experimenting in Experimental Psychology by means of Vocal Automatism. Said lead or tip was nothing less than an alleged "spirit-message," as Andrew Wilson calls it in said article, from a deceased friend of mine, who had died a few years previously. Said "spirit-message" was startling to a degree; and left strictly *nothing* to be desired regarding an alleged revelation of life beyond the grave. Said deceased friend was about 80 years old at the time of his demise and a prominent member, at said time, of a prominent New York Club. He was my oldest and best friend. I had never suggested his communicating with me in the event of his death before mine for the excellent reason that I did not think such a thing possible.

Imagine then my surprise upon receiving per Vocal Automatism, while in a trance-like state—in which state I have for over fifteen years carried on my investigations in Experimental Psychology—imagine my surprise upon getting a so-to-speak wireless message from *Hell!* For that was where my friend said he was at said time.

I shall not attempt to picture my surprise; let it suffice to say that my scientific curiosity was piqued.

Mr. Miller, for that is his name, went on to say that he knew that I wouldn't believe him, but that, nevertheless, he was in Hell, and had had rather a warm time of it for some years past—to put it rather mildly—that the orthodox claims about Hell are strictly accurate and minutely correct—except that said claims fail to give a proper estimate of the heat and torture in vogue down there. He concluded by saying that his head was bandaged—at said time of communication—from the wounds he had received at his torture. That he was thankful to say he had "paid the piper" during the years of agony he had spent in Hell, and was now free for all time from torment.

At said time I was engrossed in legal work, and did not

have time to repeat said experiment in Experimental Psychology. I left it alone for years. Not till a few days ago when I read said article by Andrew Wilson did it again occur to me to resume the experiment.

Andrew Wilson's article proves that there is a public international demand for such an experiment as I proposed with the alleged spirit of the deceased Mr. Miller.

I, therefore, a few hours ago, attempted to reopen communication with Mr. Miller. This time, since Vocal Automatism is much more fatiguing to operate than Graphic Automatism—I decided to employ the latter ; and as a result, have about sixteen pages of legal cap filled with automatic writing from the alleged spirit of my departed friend.

I propose to let you, and the other Members of the Press of Washington, not all, by any means, but a selected group, see the first page of above automatic writing, and have as much of the typed contents of said sixteen-page alleged communication from Hell—about ten pages of typewriting—as you care to take down, as I read it off from my signed typed statement, at seven o'clock next Sunday, the 4th August, at Fleischmann's Hotel, Alexandria.

Very truly yours,

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER.

P. S.—In putting “release by wire,” at the top of this letter, I mean that you gentlemen may release the story upon seeing me at seven next Sunday evening.

HELL

CHAPTER I

THE CALL OF HELL

(Richmond *Virginian*, August 12, 1912.)

CHALONER TAKES TRIP INTO HADES, TALKS
TO FRIEND.

*While in Mediumistic Trance Receives Message From
World Beyond.*

HE, HIMSELF, DOES NOT BELIEVE A WORD.

*Warned by Friend Against Scoffing, He Gives it Out for
What it is Worth.*

With the sensational announcement that he had recently held converse with the spirit of a departed friend, now in Hell, and that he was prepared to give to the world some insight into the conditions existing in that unknown realm, John Armstrong Chaloner yesterday gave to the *Virginian* the prepared interview with which he startled the coterie of newspaper men whom he had invited to meet him yesterday afternoon at Alexandria in order that he might outline the nature of the campaign to which he proposes to devote his life and fortune.

Mr. Chaloner very gravely sprang the unexpected sensation. The alleged message from the spirit world was transmitted by automatism to him while in an involuntary mediumistic trance a few nights ago. The spirit which established communication with him was that of Thomas Jefferson Miller, once a non-commissioned officer in the Confederate

navy, a member of the Manhattan Club, New York, and a personal and club friend of Mr. Chaloner.

Mr. Chaloner explained that he was an "O. K. medium," so pronounced by the late Professor James and others, and at the same time he was an unbeliever in and a scoffer at spiritualism; in short, that his sub-consciousness, or X-Faculty, as he terms it—held communication with spirits against his will. He said that the spirit of his old friend Miller had held converse with him five years ago, and he took notes of the message because of his absolute lack of faith in spiritualism. He has no more faith now than he had then, but he stated his belief that the "alleged spirit message," as he termed it, should be given to the world on its merits.

DOESN'T BELIEVE IT.

Mr. Chaloner vigorously impressed two points—first that "he didn't believe a d—d word of it," himself, second that he did not invent the communication consciously. He declared that the message from the spirit of Miller was transmitted to him as he lay in a sub-conscious state in his bedroom at "Merry Mills" the night of July 31st. With a pencil in his hand—as is the case with "Planchette"—guided by unknown, unseen forces, his own hand wrote, without his conscious direction, the communication on an ordinary yellow tablet as his decedent friend, Miller, dictated it. He lay in this trance, or sub-conscious state, for a period, with some intermissions, covering the night of July 31st and the greater part of the next day, the mysterious power guiding his hand, dictating through him to the world the decedent's message.

"I want you to understand—and my veracity has never been called into question—that I did not invent this yarn consciously, nor do I believe a d—d word of it. I do believe that my sub-conscious self, my X-Faculty, did invent it in the guise of the spirit of Miller."

Mr. Chaloner then read to the gasping correspondents the alleged spirit message from his late friend, Miller. The message in full, follows, the paragraphs in parenthesis representing the remarks of Chaloner, and those not in parenthesis being the conversation of the spirit:

THE MESSAGE.

"The Merry Mills,"

Tuesday, 6:22 P. M.

(My bedroom).

7-30-'12.

(I should like to communicate with the alleged spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller if the same is possible and permitted).

(X-Faculty).

You are not to begin this until dark.

(X-Faculty).

3:14 A. M.

You are to begin the inquiry

7-31-'12.

into the state of the departed.

7-30-'12 (N).†

You are to ask Thomas Jefferson Miller to speak to you through your X-Faculty.

(Many thanks).

(Uncle Tom, I should like to speak to you if same is possible and permitted.)

Hell

My dear boy, you don't

3:14 A. M.

know how happy I am

7-31-'12.

that the hour has at last struck in which I am permitted by his Satanic Majesty—

(For God's sake!)

You may well exclaim, I repeat, by his Satanic Majesty, to lift a corner of the veil which separates the living from the dead. Before going further I shall briefly recapitulate our last conversation of some years ago after supper in your dining room here by means of vocal automatism. I, using your vocal organs—that is to say—in order to speak to you. You remember?

(Perfectly.)

But you were so engrossed in legal work at the time and so skeptical as to my veracity—not being a spiritualist—that the episode made no impression to speak of on your overburdened mind. You will recall that I had just emerged from torture. That is to say that I informed you that I was bandaged as to my head, for instance, on account of the wounds I had received during my torture. I then briefly told you that the New Testament was literally and absolutely true;

†Night.

That there is a hereafter; that Jesus Christ was not lying when He spoke of hell fire; and that the Roman Catholic church is correct in its statement that there is a Purgatory. I then went on to say that I have had a very mild torture compared to many other persons in my walk of life; largely because I happened to be a truthful and moderately honest man by nature, and also largely because I had my share of hell while on earth in being a New Yorker of social standing, but no money; no profession—in times of peace, at least—and being ever since you knew me in 1887 an old grayheaded man. You will remember also that I hinted at a state of affairs below decks—as we said in the navy—that was marvellously interesting, unutterably lovely, but unspeakably terrible, awful and Hellish.

(Perfectly.)

I started to sketch my experience, but you grew tired at the strain on your scientific credulity, got sleepy, and bid me good night.

(Yes.)

STILL INCRECULOUS.

Well, my dear boy, you are still quite as incredulous, but since I now employ automatic writing, for the first time, by the way, as the means of communicating, the strain on your nerves is so much less than under the trance-like state in which vocal automatism is possible that I have no fear of your growing sleepy to-night, especially as the night is young.

(Pray have no fear, my dear Uncle Tom, if Uncle Tom you are, which I'm d—d if I believe, pray have no fear of my sleepiness to-night. For skeptical as I am, I am for years a student of experimental psychology, and as such am always interested in the performances with the pencil of what the late Professor William James termed—if I remember rightly—my "eccentric faculty." Therefore proceed, my dear Uncle Tom.)

I like your fine airs, my dear Archie (Chaloner), but I'll ruffle that smooth spirit of your's slightly or my name's not Thomas Jefferson Miller, before I've done communicating with you to-night.

(I doubt it, Uncle Tom, I doubt it. It takes the Hell of a lot to ruffle my spirit after fifteen years of Hell on earth at the hands of the New York courts, State and National.)

Admitted, my dear Archie, but ruffle it I shall. So here goes. I shall preface my play with a curtain raiser to protect you and myself from the ribald comments of a more or less vulgar and damnably wicked and dull world.

(Pray proceed.)

The first thought that would enter the head of the average mortal on perusing these pages would be something like this: "What on earth is this I see. On what grounds does John Armstrong Chaloner claim—or allow rather his subconsciousness to claim—that he, above all men now living or that ever have lived, is the repository of a secret the whole world has been baffled at unearthing?" To which I now reply. (1) You are a medium on the say-so of no less a personage than the late Professor William James. (2) Professor James went on to say that you were opposed to a belief in spiritualism. (3) So much for your being physically attuned to catch the so-to-speak wireless message from the Beyond. Now for other reasons. You have injured no man or woman you ever knew or didn't know. Your reputation in your bailiwick of Albemarle county, Va., as well as Halifax county, N. C., and particularly the manufacturing town you were instrumental in building, namely, Roanoke Rapids, in that county, is to befriend the friendless.

(You are becoming somewhat flattering, my dear Uncle Tom, and as such I doubt you even stronger than before.)

MARTYR TO SCIENCE.

Let it go at that, Archie, but give ear, my boy, give ear. Briefly I shall conclude why you are allowed what no human being of either sex has ever been allowed before. You are a martyr to science, to the science of Psychology, and have been for fifteen years since March 13th last.

(Well, what of it? There have been martyrs to science by the score, and not one of them has had such a palpable "frame-up" "put across" at him as your preposterous proposition that you are about to afford me a peep at Hell.)

Admitted. But, you see, Archie, that said other scientists were not martyrs to a science which dealt with Psychology and all that misunderstood word implies. Psychology means the study of the soul as the Greeks who invented the study taught—as Socrates, Pythagoras and Plato for instance. Hence your martyrdom will bear the peculiar fruit of knowledge that has been hidden from the world from the creation thereof, because you had the ineffable fortune to be first born a medium, second educated an Episcopalian, and third, trained as a scientist; after having been trained as a Bachelor and Master of Arts and member of the bar.

(I hope, my dear Uncle Tom, that you will cut the above short by raising the curtain on Hell.)

I shall. As I began, his Satanic Majesty has been graciously pleased to permit me to communicate with you tonight. I am permitted to exercise what you are pleased to term your X-Faculty or unknown faculty of the mind to practically an unlimited extent in a strictly limited sphere of information. By which I mean that the subject is so vast and the spheres of information so various that although I may and can touch on several spheres of information, I am limited to them and they—in comparison with the number of said spheres—constitute a limited sphere. I shall plunge in *medias res* as Julius Caesar hath it. I shall conduct you to the Hall of Audience. By this I mean that I myself shall at once be there and from there report to you all I see and hear.

TALK UP TO MILTON.

(Now, my dear Uncle Tom, you *are* talking. Talk up to Milton's Satan throned in Hell—"High on a throne of royal state which far, outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind, or where the gorgeous East with lavish hand showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold, Satan exalted sat, by merit raised to that bad eminence"—I quote from memory—talk up to that in prose, of course, and I shall arise and call you blessed—although you are in Hell—alleged.)

Now, my dear boy, you must pardon my frankness but if this séance is to continue you must pointedly cease jeering at my claims, or I shall cease to communicate.

(A thousand pardons. I shall not utter another peep.)

So far so good. What I am about to communicate is for your ear alone. You are not to allow anyone to see what follows so you must put it on another sheet of paper, leaving space here for me to begin again when I have less esoteric matter to divulge.

(Very well.)

(At this point Mr. Chaloner says the spirit of Miller gave him a confidential message which he cannot disclose.)

I shall now continue my communication. You must know that I am now in the Hall of Audience of Hell. I am standing against the wall on the right side of the hall looking towards the fiery throne. Upon said throne sits Satan.

SATAN LOOKS LIKE NAPOLEON.

What I am about to divulge will astound, possibly horrify you. His features are precisely those of Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power.

(You do astound me. Professor Sloan of Columbia University—professor of history, I believe, says a word in the preface to his history of Napoleon Bonaparte, first edition, in book form—concerning his “His Satanic ending.”)

In height he is considerably taller, but yet under six feet, and regarding weight there is no surplusage of flesh. He is dressed precisely in the costume of Michaelangelo’s statue entitled “The Thinker,” placed over the tomb of one of the Medici in Florence, the one sometimes said to suggest Alexander the Great of Macedon.

(I have seen it in Florence and admired same.)

The Hall of Audience is an immense apartment. So huge as to be practically incomprehensible to mortal ideas of architecture. Let it suffice to say that it is miles long, miles wide, and miles high.

(Would I be considered impertinent if I exclaimed, “Well played, Uncle Tom!”)

Not in the least, my dear Archie, not in the slightest degree, my boy. To resume. You must not think from this that the proportions are lost in distance, for you must know that when we shed the frail shell of the flesh, and put on the

filaments of immortality, the senses become as much more powerful, as much more penetrating, and as much more delicate and sensitive, as the incorruptible body is superior to the corruptible. Therefore it is as easy for the eye of an immortal to see fifty miles as it is for you—far from near-sighted as you are—to see five hundred feet.

(Highly interesting).

Having sketched the environment, it remains to describe the material of the building in which the Hall of Audience is situated. The material varies. That of the Hall of Audience is of rubies.

(My brace of bloodhounds outside are strongly giving tongue. Might I ask if they, subconsciously, know what you are writing?)

ARCHIE, DO NOT JEER.

Now, my dear Archie, you may permit me to remind you of your bargain, my boy, not to jeer at my communications.

(I apologize.)

The rubies are the size of ordinary building bricks, of the lustre and fire of rubies known as "pigeon blood." In place of mortar binding the bricks and making a white line, we here have diamonds as large as your thumb-nail and of the purest water. To soften and enrich the fiery effect of such splendor, the diamond line is broken every few inches by several inches of sapphires, as blue as the Mediterranean. The floor of the Hall of Audience is of marble that has the marvelous quality of being capable of taking on the tone of whatever stands upon it, or is reflected upon it, or flies over it. Thus. If a Cherubim flies over a floor space in the Hall of Audience, the marble at once becomes tinged with blood; as much as though it were of snow, virgin snow, over which blood has been let. If, on the other hand, a Seraphim flies over a floor space in the hall of audience the marble at once becomes of a cerulean hue like an Italian sky. I do not mean, of course, by that that these mighty angels are red, or blue, in color; but that their armor and vestments are scarlet and blue, respectively.

The roof is of crystal, so pure that the eye can pierce it

as it pierces plate glass with you. To return to the Lord of all here below. Satan is giving audience to an embassy from the Kingdom of Sin: which Kingdom is contiguous to Hell; and between which Kingdom and Hell there is practically perpetual war.

The occasion of the present embassy is a rumour which has got about that the world is approaching its end, by which I mean that the millennium is about to begin, and Satan be bound, as the old legend has it.

Such a state of affairs would naturally be rather disastrous to sin, and, supposing Satan about to be bound, disastrous in an equal degree to Satan. In view of said contingency the Kingdom of Sin sends an embassy to propose an offensive and defensive alliance against Jehovah; upon the part of Satan and his Kingdom of Hell, and Sin and its Kingdom of Sin.

(Laid off at 2 minutes to 7:00 A. M. for a nap.)

SATAN IS MISUNDERSTOOD.

I should here state, in a nutshell, so to speak, and without going into the profound subject as I shall in the future with you, that Satan is about as thoroughly misunderstood a personality as it is possible to picture by the employment of the most vigorous imagination, to put it somewhat mildly. Satan is no enemy of Jehovah as is sin—for whom Satan has stood as a prototype in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, since the beginning of time. Satan is Jehovah's right-hand minister, Satan is Jehovah's public prosecutor as the district attorney is with us in the North and the commonwealth's attorney in the South. Personified Sin is everything vile, treacherous and bad that Satan or the Devil, is alleged to be in the Scriptures. But you must know, that had the existence of Personified Sin been revealed in the Scriptures it would have complicated an already sufficiently complicated state of affairs among believers. Therefore Satan has been employed in the dual role of Jehovah's attorney-general to try out all supposedly fair-minded men and women, and separate the gold from the dross; and the role of Personified sin, or Sin as I shall in future name that most damnable

being. Otherwise it would have been necessary to draw aside the veil, as I am about to do with you, and divulge things which the world was not sufficiently sophisticated to hear sooner than this epoch of widespread education, invention and business methods the world around. Briefly, Satan is the highest power in heaven after the Trinity. He reigns in Hell but appears in Heaven as he pleases: Satan is a Prince; as has been well said, the Prince of Darkness is a gentleman. He is far more, he is a hero and noble creature, who has been maligned—owing to the circumstances above described—as no other being has been maligned since the beginning of time. You must know that things are far better down here in Hell than is generally supposed. Jehovah is as loving and tender-hearted a Being as it is possible for an experienced, high-minded and enlightened mind to conceive. To put it mildly, Jehovah is as all embracing in His sympathy as the “good grey poet,” our own Walt Whitman, to whom the prostitute and thief were sister and brother in adversity. That being the case, Jehovah, knowing full well the nature of men and women knew that if He allowed the magnificent facts, that I am about to divulge to you, to get abroad, that the ratio of wickedness to the square mile would be raised to the nth degree, or infinity, throughout the civilized world.

WORLD PREPARED.

In a word, nobody need try to get to heaven if he or she does not care for that sort of thing. There is a world prepared for men and women of the world, for men of the world and for women of the world. Now this bright spot of sublimated earthly bliss stripped of all spirituality, and ought but merely formal, more or less perfunctory, religion; but which is as orderly as the best regulated modern society anywhere on earth, and as outwardly respectable—but no more so, by the way—this bright realm is under the rule of Satan. This realm is known as the Underworld. This realm is situated far from Hell, and far from the Kingdom of Sin. The Underworld is, and ever will remain, more or less modern. I do not care to go into that to-night more explicitly, interesting as it is, on account of wishing to hurry

on with my tale of Joy and Woe. Yes, the cat is out of the bag, for woe there is, and it is of a nature to merit the description, veiled as that is, of Hell by the ghost in Hamlet. For before a person is allowed to make his or her choice as to which goal they aim for, Heaven, or the Underworld, or Hell, or the Kingdom of Sin, or, last of all, annihilation,—if said party is mentally indifferent, and lazy, and cares not to work for either of the four said goals—before a candidate is allowed to elect which goal he or she will strive for, he, or, she, must, so to speak, “pay the piper.” “Vengeance is mine, I will repay,” etc., meant precisely what it says, and to a jot and tittle, debts must be squared.

SETTLE WITH THE CAPTAIN.

After new arrivals in Hell have stepped to the captain's office and settled, then their joy and feasting, and unutterable delight, begins. It requires higher aims and far greater pains and suffering to aspire to and achieve Paradise—by which I mean any one of the various zones of Heaven—than to aspire to and achieve Hell, though said aspiration is far harder of achievement than the Underworld, or the Kingdom of Sin. No party lacking courage, and a certain semi-demi vein of poetry, or romance at least, can aspire to and achieve Hell. So that parties lacking said qualities, or one of them, must content themselves with a choice between the Underworld, the Kingdom of Sin, or annihilation—the Kingdom of Sin is the Botany Bay for utterly bad-at-heart parties. Parties whom the slight restrictions of the underworld repel. Natural criminals and unnatural criminals. Before said promising gentry can enlist under the banner of Sin, they must pay the piper, as aforesaid, in Hell; and, more than that, must do some thinking and striving, even if the striving and thinking are towards wicked ends. *Thought is essential to prevent annihilation.* Parties who prefer annihilation to having to think, will get annihilation. You'd be amazed at the hordes, that, annually—when they have done their time in Hell previously, of course—flock to the Kingdom of Sin.

The number choosing annihilation is large, but far in-

ferior to that of the followers of Sin. Annihilation can only be achieved by being stripped of all one's mental and moral faculties; a process immeasurably more painful than having one's arms and legs cut off without chloroform, and the marrow drawn from one's bones by an exhaust. Nothing remains but the essence of life, which is fire, which is thrown in the Lake of fire and brimstone; to burn painlessly through eternity—since fire can't hurt fire. So, you see, my dear Archie, there's trouble ahead for pretty nearly everybody. It will at once occur to you to think, "How about the power of the Church to save?" To which I reply that no church pretends, publicly, at least, to save a sinner except that sinner sincerely repents. There lies the rub, in that same word *repentance*. There is no more misunderstood word in any language. Unless the repentance is as deep as the crime, or sin, or selfishness, it is no repentance in the eye of the law down here; and said deficit must be made up by pains and penalties too unutterable to plunge into without more preparation than I have time for to-night. Before closing above brief explanatory note, as it were, which is obviously needed to put a mortal in touch with immortality, much as I dislike touching on topics of religion, for you know, my dear Archie, that religion did not interest me very deeply in the Manhattan Club—

COMPLIMENTS "UNCLE TOM."

(There wasn't a "whiter" man, a more honorable and warm-hearted man in the whole club or city, for that matter, than your experienced-in-the-craft and subtlety-of-mandistinguished self, my dear Uncle Tom, if Uncle Tom you are, which you will pardon me if I continue to doubt.)

Certainly put in that way, my dear boy. Don't think me any more of a stickler for etiquette than I was in the club, where you know that, other things being equal, and the amenities of civilization being preserved, I was easy as an old shoe. But, my dear boy, there are certain formalities—in the science which you have spent over fifteen years of servitude to unjust laws to investigate—which must be observed, or the harmony, which is as essential for results

among the initiate in Hell as it is among the exalted dwellers in Paradise, will be wanting. Order is the first law of Hell, as it of Heaven, and *doubt expressed* prevents the said harmony. Doubt *felt*, but not expressed, has no such evil results. As I was about to observe, it was obviously necessary for me to touch upon religion, much as I dislike doing so, I may as well say that I am now a sojourner in the Underworld. You will wonder why I am in Hell communicating with you. The reason is that all aspirants for the Underworld must pass through Hell, which, being the greater of the two, contains Purgatory. In my sojourn of some years, paying my moral obligations by a systematized scale of torment, graded up into torture, by the side of which an Indian at the stake is in a cool and shady spot. (Is that "cool and shady spot," sir?) It is Archie.

(If so, I ejaculate "Phew!")

KNOWS THE ROPES.

You well may, my boy, you well may. To resume. In my sojourn here of a few years I got, naturally, to know the ropes, as we say aboard ship. Hence I am fitted, as any one need be, to tip you off to the secrets of Hell. Since I was about your most intimate friend—at least as intimate as any one—and being so much older than you, stood in the position of Father, or at least guide, philosopher and friend, from the time I first met you—though not the first time I saw you about the Club—at the time of the "Volunteer" and "Thistle" international yacht race in the fall of 1887 to late December, 1896. I was selected as the party of all others, since I died not very long thereafter, to put you in touch with surely the most interesting proposition—that is, to a man of sense—on earth. I can assure you that the topic of religion will not soon obtrude itself in our communications, and shall now pick up the thread of my story where I left it some pages back. Nothing can induce Satan to accede to the overtures of the Kingdom of Sin. In the first place, Satan will only be too charmed with the advent of the millennium—being what he is, a Prince of Paradise as well as Lord of Hell. But Sin sees everything

through sinful and therefore more or less blinded eyes; and therefore fails to catch on to the situation. Satan has never had anything friendlier than an armistice, or now and then a truce of some months—never a treaty of peace—with Sin or his vile, but beautiful—to the not too critical eye—and vastly powerful Kingdom. During the time it has taken to write this, *pour parlors* have been interchanged and propositions made, by both sides, and then remodelled. (Knocked off for breakfast, bread and water, about 2:15 P. M. 7-31-'12, and then went to bed, 4:05 P. M.)

CHAPTER II

THE PASSAGE OF THE STYX

“The Merry Mills,”

8-21-'12.

3:36 A. M.

(Spirit-Message Continued).

You must know, my dear boy, that death comes without the least transitional shock or feeling, whatever. By this I mean that upon making the passage of the Styx—as the ancients had it—there is neither jar, nor shock nor sense of falling and landing—though, of course, the soul *does* fall and *does* land; since Hell is within this terrestrial ball. I do not, of course, mean that there is no *physical* pang at the dissolution of the human existence at death—sometimes the pang is dreadful, any physician can tell you that who has seen people die in agony, but I refer to the aftermath, so to speak—what follows after the heart ceases to beat, and life in your world is entirely extinct. There is, upon my word, no more sense of movement upon the part of the immortal soul upon finishing its mysterious flight through air, earth, and sometimes water, and arriving at the Judgment Seat in the Hall of Judgment—or elsewhere—than there was sense of movement during said flight, and in neither the said flight nor the said arrestation of flight before the Judgment Seat—or elsewhere—is there any more sense of movement or of feeling than you experience when I communicate with you by means of automatic writing—I mean of course, *mental* motion, feeling in your mind—for, of course, your hand, wrist, forearm and fingers are in a continual whirling motion while I am operating the nerve centre in your brain that controls and operates the said members of your body corporate, so to speak. Am I, or am I not exact in that? (You are perfectly exact. The only mental movement I experience is that of a spectator at a play wondering what the actors are going to say and do next. I being in complete ignorance of what the next word you are going to write will be).

Upon reaching "the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns" the first sensation I experienced was that of awaking after a sound and peaceful sleep. I felt refreshed, vigorous, calm and cheerful. Not a pain or an ache, and not a care on my mind, all of which—as you know hounded me like duns, as duns hound a debtor, for years and years. I could scarcely believe my senses—this unutterable relief from years and years of pain and care. I mentally prepared to look about me and wonder *not where* I was, but *how* I was—for all these delightfully new sensations coursed through my being before I had had time to open my eyes and see where I was. When I did open my eyes what did I behold! Napoleon Bonaparte, my dear boy, sitting upon a throne the like of which never before was seen. I shall fully describe said throne since its nature has a good deal to do with the *mise en scène*. It was in shape like a bed but *such* a bed. It was, in the first place, not less than half a dozen yards long (That's eighteen feet). It is. And not less than the same distance wide, and stood not less than six feet off the floor. There were steps leading up to the side of the bed, which stood on the floor, *not* on a dais, or platform, as thrones usually do. The foot of the bed faced me: the head of the bed being against the wall.

There were steps only on one side of the throne, on the left side of the bed there were steps, the left side of the bed was the right side to the observer. On the right side of the bed was a barrier one yard high rising perpendicular to the plane of the bed. At the foot of the bed was a railing, over which was thrown a red robe. The railing was highest in the middle, and curved downwards therefrom to either post at the foot of the bed. Said railing was about a foot high in the centre and was filigree work. The bed was of pure gold, with a canopy some six feet above it projecting towards the foot of the same, some two feet. Said canopy was of scarlet cloth. The clothing of said bed was of white linen and creamy woolen blankets. You should know that the vulgar idea of the heat of Hell is utterly aside from the fact. There *is* heat here in certain, so to speak, localities, but the general temperature is the most perfect climate, of the nature of our temperate zone. To resume. From said canopy de-

pended curtains of azure silk shot with gold. Napoleon was dressed in a garment rather unknown among men of your world, it being of the nature of a shirt, resembling the ancient Greek costume, sleeveless, and falling only a short distance below the hips. I am speaking now of experience gained later. Of course, the length of the garment did not appear when he was under the bed clothes. On his head was a cross between a helmet and a crown, by which I mean the exact replica of the same headpiece surmounting the brow of Michaelangelo's "The Thinker," over the tomb of the Medici in Florence. His flesh was of the most dazzling whiteness, but, withal, with a rosy hue, such as snow or marble take on at sunset. This was noticeable in his arms which were superbly muscular, but at the same time, far from muscle-bound, or brawny. His face was rosy of hue, upon a dazzling white *fond*, as the French say, or base, of marble whiteness, without its pallor. You must remember that I am painting, or rather attempting to, an immortal, not a mortal; so what sounds like exaggeration of beauty must be charged to the nature of the immortal frame those of us achieve who so elect to undergo the punishment, torment and torture which is the price, my dear boy, of immortality.

(The following insertion of automatic writing—done on the night of August 18, 1912,—is inserted here by me to elucidate what follows.—J. A. C.)

Now, nothing can be farther from my mind than for you to infer that said prophecy is meant to be believed, by a solitary inhabitant upon this terrestrial ball, male or female. Belief is not in the least desired. Far from it, dear boy, far from it. The time has come when God Almighty is about to wipe out His score against that damnable aggregation of foul qualities yclept man and woman. I know from the feeling in your hand, that holds the pencil that I am guiding; that you shrink, and shrank from including the fair sex—whom, you know, personally, I respect, and from a respectful distance—I refer to you, for I am not so far from the enjoyment of the loveliest portion of Creation as in your ascetic self—in Hell tho' I be. (Who *wouldn't* be ascetic on my diet—bread and water! St. Anthony was a monk you remember). Admitted, my dear and martyred friend. To resume. I

know that you shrank when I included women in the curse aforesaid. But you know that as a Southerner my admiration and respect for women was something approaching the romantic. (I do). You can then well believe that nothing but the direst necessity could force me to write such a damnable ungentlemanly thing about women, as I just did. But, my dear student of humanity, you must know that you, half Southern as you are on both your Father and your Mother's side, and from Charleston, South Carolina, at that—that the heart of woman is just about as black and foul—(Come, come! Uncle Tom, you make me sick). Now, my dear Archie, permit me. You know that I thought fully as highly of women as do you, when I was on the earth. (I do, and that's what makes your language now, so surprising and distasteful—to put it rather mildly). You must in fairness then allow me the benefit of the doubt regarding what I have learnt in my, so to speak, collegiate course in Hell. (*Collegiate course, did you say?*) I did. For you must know that upon arriving here we are at once put to work preparing for the torment and torture we must undergo to pay the piper. This entails eventually a collegiate course very much such as you took at Columbia University, by which I mean a series of lectures upon morality such as I shall not now take up time to describe, but shall at no distant period. Suffice it to say that every man and woman arriving here is sent eventually to a, so to speak, University, where Morality is as enthusiastically and scientifically taught as, say, Mathematics or Physics at any modern University. During said, I may say, highly interesting and instructive lectures, spread out over a series of years, the *moral* diagram of the human heart is displayed at large upon the blackboard, and upon charts, and in illustrated works as scientifically as the *human* organ is mapped and *physically* limned, and described in that standard work Grey's Anatomy '(I know the work and have it in my Library at "The Merry Mills")'. It is a frightful revelation, my dear boy, a Hellish disillusionment, this view of the human heart of man and woman from the spiritual, or ideal, side. All this will be gone into specifically, line upon line, precept upon precept, before very long. (End of insertion).

You may as well know first as last, that the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ by which *alone* we miserable, damnable race of mortals escape perpetual flame, does not, as so many fools think, land the elect, as they self-sufficiently dub themselves, on the sunny side of Jordan by a very large majority. Far from it. Over and above said vicarious sacrifice each man and each woman must, and shall, and does, work out his or her salvation in Purgatory—which is but another name for Hell. Work it out he or she must in agony and bloody sweat such as Christ experienced upon the accursed cross. I do not at all mean that all men and women are crucified, tho' I may as well state that millions and millions of them, both women, as well as men, *are* crucified and for precisely the same length of time and in precisely the same manner as was Jesus Christ. To resume. His eyes were truly marvellous, being like jewels in their deep fire and pearly beauty. That last may seem strange as applied to eyes. But Napoleon Bonaparte's eyes are precisely the color—and with the marvellous orient—of gray pearls. There is a softness playing through the fire, and at times, and for cause, ferocity, of his glance, that more nearly resembles a beautiful woman's look when she is willing to let the person regarding her for the nonce see that she loves. Napoleon's voice is as much more resonant and marvellous in its steel-like lambent flexibility and penetration than it was in life. His teeth are pearly white and regular, his lips a cool, not a hectic, red. I have now, at some length attempted to picture the being that met my astounded gaze upon opening my eyes after death. There was a mischievous smile lurking in the corners of his mouth as I opened my eyes and rested them on his glance. He recognized me at once—as I him. I shall not attempt to picture my surprise. I rushed forward and threw my arms about his neck and he held me to his breast while tears dropped from his eyes upon my neck. I shall draw a veil—for certain reasons—over our conversation. You know that I always admired Napoleon and apparently—he was as well aware of that fact as was I, and appreciated it in the above astonishingly unimperial manner. (You amaze me, Uncle Tom, alleged) I dare say I do, but I don't advise you to press me on our conversation, etc., my dear Archie—I

warn you as a friend to "keep off the grass." When I undertook this job I desired to intimate that I was not at liberty to describe every solitary secret under the lid of Hell—(My dear alleged—I beg pardon—in my interest I had quite forgot the reservations you made *re* alleged revelations. Pray proceed). Some half an hour was consumed in our marvelously friendly chat, whereupon he intimated that I might as well glance towards a tall cheval glass at the left of his bed. I had been standing upon the steps of the throne resting against its side, holding Napoleon Bonaparte's hands clasped in mine. The said cheval glass was almost directly opposite me— but so overwhelmingly absorbed had I been in the man beside me that I had not even seen that there was such a thing as a cheval glass in the apartment. No sooner did I turn and glance at the glass than I saw that I was nude. Once more, I shall have to ask you to imagine my surprise—not to say shame. Napoleon Bonaparte instantly patted me on the shoulder and said in perfect English, without the slightest hint of an accent or loss for a word: "Never you mind dear Uncle Tom, we're all like that when we first arrive in Hell—frankness is the key-note down here, and to impress it upon my subjects I have it arranged so that male and—ahem!—female make their passage of the Styx *sans* anything, bar luxuriant Lady Godiva hair for the ladies, which I have arranged every female shall find she possesses upon opening her amazed—not to say horrified—eyes upon my countenance. Pray do not consider your nudity as in the least embarrassing: for we all have to go stark naked male and female, here below, until we lose the foul hypocrisy and lust begotten by clothing that is meant to indicate what it does not show; until we become like little children in that respect at least, if in no other. I do not want you to think that men and women mingle in society down here stark naked at all times. Far from it. At first, upon reaching my hospitable shores the sexes are strictly kept apart, as strictly as they are kept apart in jails, and in some places, Poor Houses. Not until the new-born sense of modesty, by which I mean purity free from all tinge of *false* modesty, not until the new-born sense of purity which distinguished the ancient Greeks, in their best and purest epoch, and has pretty much always distinguished savage

nations, not until this new-born sense has become nature, are males and females permitted to meet in Hell. So pray do not consider that you are not garbed in your good old dark grey sack suit, that saw so much service at the Manhattan Club—you *are* to my eyes. I shall at once instruct you as to what awaits you. My dear Uncle Tom, it pains me more than I can say, that pain and suffering, toil and torment, and even torture, awaits you here. Now, do not consider that you are in the old-time Hell of perpetual, indiscriminate combustion. Far from it. That old scare-crow serves well enough on earth, and is near enough the truth to deserve to serve its purpose on earth. But Hell is more an affair of intellect, will-power and aspiration, than merely combustion. By the employment of those three things, will-power, intellect, and aspiration, you can reduce your sufferings, toils and torments and tortures, not a hundred per cent. only. I shall not take up your time expatiating upon the almost infinite variety of mental, moral, and, so to speak, physical combinations that can be worked in the game, each man and woman has to play with flame. The infinite combinations of the chess-board seem puerile and restricted by the side of the triune combinations of the so to speak, physical, mental and moral in Hell. The infinite combinations of the fencing-school seem as limited and bare of imagination and scope of intelligence as the crude gestures of boys playing at mimic warfare with sticks for swords. Lastly, complications of life, in the complicated, sophisticated and hypocritical age you have just left seen as simple and unintelligent as the ruminations of a Central African savage, full of food and desiring sleep, when weighed with what I shall term the coruscations of the Hellish Triangle—aforesaid.

I shall personally instruct you in the art of fencing with Hell-flame. You must know that Hell-flame is alive—is sentient. Hell-flame is, so to speak, a thinking—diamond rattlesnake—that beautiful and noble reptile that molests no one that does not cross its path, but strikes to kill all that do cross its path and do not give way before it. Hell-flame is a composition of my own, a composition invented shortly after arriving here from Paradise. I invented Hell-flame as Dr. Guillotin invented† the guillotine—as a merciful means

†Improved. It being a Scottish invention of ancient date.

to a needed end. In Hell-flame I put, of course, naturally, under the circumstances, more than Dr. Guillotin could put into his guillotine. In Hell-flame I have, so to speak, a combination of Deputy-sheriff, crossed by a judge, and mixed with nitroglycerine. In a word, Hell-flame first arrests the culprit, second, tries and condemns him or her, and thirdly executes—figuratively of course, in respect to the immortal soul—the felon. I should add that Hell-flame differs from more than one human judge, in that, Hell-flame is absolutely just and impartial, and does not desire—in fact is chemically incapable of tyranny, injustice, fraud or any of the dozen or so pastimes of so many human judges. It hates hypocrisy and cold-heartedness as heat hates cold, and fights it as Vesuvius would fight ice thrown into its crater. To a man of your vast experience in legal matters—although a Layman, I know of your sitting on commissions-of-lunacy in New York as the layman among the legal three—lawyer, physician and layman—gathered from years of intimate acquaintance among the most learned judges in the Manhattan Club—men like that really great judge the late Judge Rapallo, Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals—added to your profound knowledge of human nature, gathered both in war and in peace—to a man of your intelligence and honesty and experience it will not be long before you conclude that in Hell-flame I had a good thing. I shall not continue this conversation, because, although there is no such thing as time in Hell, yet what goes for its substitute among new arrivals here calls you from me, and to begin your long training for meeting in battle array at the point of your rapier my faithful snakes—Hell-flame. Now, my dear Uncle Tom, you must not think me cruel in so soon broaching so unpleasant a topic as fencing with a fiery enchanted serpent that stings—not bites—you every time it lunges at you unless you can parry its thrust with your steel duelling sword. But you must know that I have begun your actual training by bringing before your mind the horrid prospect of fencing—so to speak for your life—with an enchanted and venomous human—so to speak—snake, though generally speaking my Hell-Snakes aforesaid are far superior to human beings morally as well as mentally and effectively. For you must know that in Hell everything is

judged primarily by intent. In law with you, intent of course governs, but the intent must be followed by action on earth in order to bring the party under the law. Whereas in Hell the intent in itself is enough to convict a man of crime. That is a startling proposition, is it not? But such is the act. If a man *thinks* adultery in Hell he commits adultery, and sharp and shrewd will the reckoning be. If a man thinks rape in Hell, he commits rape. If a man thinks murder, he commits murder. If theft, theft. Arson, arson; and so on down the list. And lastly, if a man thinks a lie—by which in this as in previous cases of course, is meant if he wishes in his heart that he had a chance to lie, and *would* lie if he had the chance—lastly, if a man *thinks* a lie he *lies*. Therefore in bringing before your mind the horrid picture of yourself fighting, for your life, with the natural and legendary enemy of man, the serpent, I, *ipso facto*, prepare to steel your courage, and arouse your character to the deadly campaign before you, which will require years of severe and torturing training before you can possibly be ready for the ordeal. As I said, what stands for time in Hell calls you away from me now. To cheer and comfort you I shall say that eventually you will triumph, before bidding you adieu for several years—this sounds brutal, but my dear Uncle Tom it is simply absolutely necessary to cultivate your courage, hardihood and self-reliance against the said awful day of reckoning. Being as dear to me as you are, you will at once wonder why I do not mitigate the torment or protect you from it by keeping you always by my side. My dear friend, this cannot be. *In Hell, justice rules, but it is justice untempered by mercy.* This is sadly but *necessarily* so. The Law of the Universe compels me to arrange my Kingdom of Hell as severely according to the laws foreordained from the foundation of the world to govern my Kingdom of Hell, as the Laws of the Universe compel Jehovah, Almighty God and omnipotent tho' He be, to arrange His celestial Kingdom of Heaven according to the laws foreordained from the foundation of the world to govern His Kingdom of Heaven. I have large leeway in the arrangement and method of government of my Kingdom of Hell. So, of course, has Jehovah. *But neither of us can change essentials necessary to salvation.* This hard and cruel necessity stares God Almighty as bitterly and hopelessly

in the face as it does me. It will at once occur to you—the dictum of Jesus Christ that with God all things are possible. Without going into that too deeply now, I shall simply say that that is as relative a remark as though one were to say of a so-called “lightening calculator” in mathematics—“He’s so powerful in mathematics that he can do what he pleases with the rules of Arithmetic.” Yes, he can do everything—but change them. The same holds good of God. He cannot change the Laws of the Universe. Such being the case, I can no more shield you from your dread ordeal than—were I a man with you on earth—I could shield you from death when your hour had come. Nor can I show you the slightest partiality. *Dreadful are the laws of Hell; dreadful is the Law of the Universe under which, and under Jehovah and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit—I rule.* To a man of your sagacity I have said enough. I would that there were a talisman that I could give you; but there is none beyond that your keeper will furnish you with upon your leaving my presence. Farewell, Thomas Jefferson Miller; and may God Almighty strengthen you, as far as He is permitted to—for nought can I do for you—in your hour of need.

With these ominous words, my dear Archie. I left the presence of Satan.

(Provided it is strictly according to Hoyle, so to speak, I put up a plea for the writing-current to be less severe and strenuous, less vice-like from now on, if possible, and correct). Certainly, my dear boy. The reason for the rigor of the pages preceding is that the matter therein is somewhat unusual and I want you to have no doubt in your mind as to whether you wrote the preceding pages or not. (There’s no possible doubt about that, Uncle Tom, alleged, none in the world. I’ll take my dying oath to that. My hand is as cramped as though it had, so to speak, been in the stocks). So far, so good, my dear boy. Now, to proceed. (Before doing so might I ask the size of the bed-chamber of Satan,) You may. It was about the size of your bedroom at “The Merry Mills.”* (Many thanks. Pray proceed. One moment. May I ask if there was anyone present at your audience with Satan?) You may. There was no one present. (Many thanks. Pray proceed).

*About 24 feet square.

So soon as Satan had spoken the above recorded words, the door of the chamber opened, apparently of its own accord, inwards, and I felt myself as it were, gently pushed by an invisible force, in the direction of the now open door, and through the same. No sooner had I crossed the threshold than I saw a sight which chilled my very blood, so to speak. Within six feet of me curled up in a corner of the hall outside the door lay an enormous snake. Its eyes were as yellowish-green as the glow of a glowworm on a summer night in the South, or a firefly's flash. It riveted its eyes upon mine, but did not raise its head from its coil or open its mouth. It was as thick as a thinnish boa-constrictor, and from the number of its coils must have been over thirty feet long. Had I not been impelled by the said mysterious current I should have stood stock still in my very natural—it strikes me—horror. But the friendly current carried me by the dreadful object. (May I ask its color?) You may. It was snow white. (For the Lord's sake! No wonder it gave you the jumps! A white boa-constrictor thirty feet long is rather more than the limit. I saw a white snake once—as I remember—once in Don Cameron's canal at Roanoke Rapids. But this was a snake not more than a foot long, and a water-snake at that. I'd walked to the head of his canal, miles from Roanoke Rapids one Sunday afternoon in 1895, alone, and was sitting on a stone at the junction of the Roanoke river and canal when this little snake swam into the canal from the river and disappeared under the bank of the canal; I remember how pretty and graceful it was in the water—tho' I hate snakes—but a white snake thirty feet long!) You may well exclaim. I descended the stairs leading from the landing upon which the snake lay curled, having passed through a door on the landing that opened of its own accord. No one was visible in the front hall, and no more snakes. I felt carried along as described to the front door, which opened as had the others, of its own accord, and stood upon the front piazza. I shall limit my description of the palace to saying that it was small rather than large—as palaces go—low rather than high in the same domain—and was built of solid gold. The pillars of the piazza were of alabaster, as were the supporting pillars at each corner of the house,

as well as a border that crowned the upper story. The door was of bloodstone—a solid slab of bloodstone without blemish or flaw—a wide door—and the bloodstone was peculiar in this particular, that the blood color in the stone predominates as largely over the green as the green does over the red in your world.

As I stood on the piazza a most entrancing vista met my gaze. At the base of a flight of steps of a strange blue stone resembling the sky in color, and unlike anything I had ever seen on earth, stretched a carriage way paved with pebbles that had a prismatic effect, but whose splendor was softened by a strange sort of haze that seemed to hang on and above it like a perpetual dew. This laid all possible dust. Beyond the driveway stretched a most entrancing lawn, spotted here and there with the filigree shadows of the most airy and gracefully foliated trees, of an unknown variety. Birds with really sweet and musically satisfying notes, and brilliant plumage, darted in and out among the leaves, or soared in the ether. The most sweet perfume of flowers that shone like golden stars on the velvet sward assailed the nostrils, and awoke as subtle longings. Beyond rose a range of dark, sombre, frowning mountains, which stretched in an almost perfect amphitheatre across the—what I afterwards learned was—North. I mean by that that the mountain range bent like a hoop, with the ends of the hoop pointing towards the palace. Dark forest stretched between the Imperial pleasure grounds and the mountains. The same held true of all other points of the compass. Dark velvet foliated trees stood like serried ranks of spearmen in all directions. I became lost in delighted wonder at the beauty of the prospect, when suddenly I heard a sound that stopped my heart from beating for a moment. It was the most blood-curdling thing I had ever dreamed of. It sounded like a cross between the roar of a lion and the scream of a wounded horse. The next moment I saw a creature the like of which I had never seen, dart towards me from a clump of bushes on the edge of the lawn. The creature was about the size of a lion—a large, full-grown lion—but in place of having the hind quarters of a lion—though it had the head, forepaws and mane of the King of Beasts—those of this horror were those of a horse. '(Is that "horse," may I ask?)

It is. (It must have been a horror). It surely was. The gait with which it rushed towards me was an unwieldy gallop. Its eyes shot fire, and its mouth opened as it roared. I felt that I should petrify. To my unutterable relief the thing had not gone more than twenty paces before it was seized by a current such as had been gently pushing me, and tripped up and hurled with a back somersault high in the air, and flat on its back, whereupon it set up a piteous moaning, as heart-rending to a humane-minded man as its former noises had been hair-raising. I could scarcely forbear a smile of relief. My relief was short-lived however. While I was sympathizing with the unwieldy thing, as it writhed in pain on its back and sides, a sound like the (I see the current has stopped; as I feel sleepy, I presume it means bedtime?) You are correct. (9:17 A. M. 8-21-'12), J. A. C. (About 1:15 A. M. 8-22-'12, 8-20-'12 (N), J. A. C.) hissing of a thousand serpents struck upon my startled ear. I looked in the direction of the sound, and saw from a cluster of umbrageous undergrowth opposite the lair of the half-horse-half lion creature, and protecting as it were the left flank of His Satanic Majesty's palace—a something undulating towards me that made my hair stand on end—I actually felt my hair stiffen and bristle from the roots up. I hasten to add—since these words may reach the ears of some of my quondam Club associates of the Manhattan Club, that whereas I was as bald as an egg on earth, upon regaining consciousness after death at the foot of the throne in the bed-chamber of His Satanic Majesty, I saw, when at the request of Satan, I glanced at my reflection in the cheval glass, that I had as thick a head of hair as your curly self, and, you will smile at this, as curly as your own. (Delighted to hear it, my dear Uncle, alleged—pray, what is its color, may I ask?) You may, Archie, its color is red. (Ha, ha! Uncle Tom, you make me laugh). I am not surprised, since, ever since you knew me, what fringe of hair I had below the hat-line, together with my patriarchal beard, were as gray as a grizzly bear. I may as well complete the catalogue of the marvelous and highly desirable changes, that said glance in the cheval glass showed death had conferred upon my face and figure. You, of course, remember that I was short and roly-poly, so to speak. Not more than say, five foot five inches

high, and with irregular, and highly Socratic, features. (Exactly what you were, Uncle Tom—but please to remember that I imported the bust of Socrates as cast in plaster from the Greek original in the Louvre Museum in Paris eighteen years ago, along with other Greek statuary, for “The Merry Mills” and that I literally love Socrates’ brave, honest, ugly face, and Olympian brow). I know you do, my dear boy, and that’s one of the reasons you loved me—but not of that here—I must press on. Well, my dear Archie, in the first place I have gained some six inches in height. I’m five foot eleven in my bare feet. In the second place I am—who would not say it under any other circumstances—a strikingly handsome man, without a ray, a solitary ray—of resemblance to my former comically ugly face. (You amaze me.) I well may. Whom do you suppose I look like? (God alone knows, Uncle alleged! I can’t imagine). Prepare yourself, Archie, for a tremendous surprise. I am an idealized likeness of Marshal Ney! (I am dumb. I said something, but refrained from putting it down). It seems that I *am* Marshal Ney himself—not that I was in life—in life I was *partly* Marshal Ney—about one-quarter of his personality was submerged in me; a man can be alive and yet not be *all* of his own personality. That may perhaps appear a paradox. (It does, rather) I inferred as much, Archie. I shall explain all this to you scientifically, in time, when I reach the unveiling of some of the Secrets of the Universe. Till then, let it suffice to say that Brown, Jones and Robinson may be three men; all alive at the same time: and yet Brown may be more Jones and more Robinson, than Brown. Thus, Say for example that a personality consists of twelve-twelfths. The unit Brown may consist of five-twelfths Jones, and five-twelfths Robinson and only two-twelfths Brown; and the same—in *another equation*—might be the case with Robinson and Jones. The secret of this is this. Prepare for another and most momentous surprise. I am well aware, my dear boy, that you do not believe a word I say, believing that you are bamboozled by what you are pleased to call your X-Faculty, or subconsciousness, which you honestly, and before God, Who sees all hearts, believe is masquerading in the guise of your old, and tried, trusted, loved and true friend, Thomas Jefferson Miller. (I do, so help me God, Uncle

Tom alleged—I only wish I could get proof strong enough to scientifically prove your claim; but I am fully aware of the utter impossibility of such proof being vouchsafed; and therefore, as a philosopher, and follower, in all but religion, of the great Voltaire, I smilingly listen to all you say, and with great interest, I assure you, for I well know that the world has never seen such an exhibition of unconscious cerebration as my X-Faculty is turning out on Hell, since the beginning of recorded time.) To resume. Here follows the surprise. The great Pythagoras was right in his doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls from man to man; woman to woman, and animals to men; vice versa, etc., etc. (You do surprise me) I thought I would. Thus a man called Brown may not be Brown at all, but only a negligible fraction of him: the *real* Brown being split up into other fractions, and parcelled out into as many as a dozen men. Eventually, all Brown will be gathered together into the soul of Brown—but it may take a thousand years. (There you surprise me again, Uncle alleged). I fancied I might, Archie. When St. Paul spoke about the dead being raised, he was correct; but not until their final reincarnation has been accomplished—which may require a series of incarnations running through as many as ten centuries. I am Marshal Ney in his full perfection and completion of soul, which includes intellect, heart and physique. (I now salute “the bravest of the brave”). And I in turn salute you. To proceed.

Brave as Ney is generally admitted to be, my very hair stiffened and bristled from the roots up as I watched the “Something” undulating towards me, filling the air with a thousand separate and distinct hisses with each breath from its fiery jaws. (I smell a dragon, Uncle Tom). You have an excellent nose, Archie, the nose of a blood-hound, for typical old time St. George—and-the-dragon—dragon it was. The first thing I sensed out of a score or more of conflicting horrors, was the most foetid—and strange as this sounds, it’s true, but incomprehensible to flesh and blood—terrifying stench that had ever offended my nostrils. I say terrifying, advisedly, for as the scent of a wild beast will stampede a herd of horses, or make one horse run like mad away along a country road, so the scent of a dragon is freighted with

fear. As I say, a human being simply cannot understand or take in this, so we will not waste time over it. The scent was a mixture of ordure and bilge-water crossed with the odor of burning flesh. (Not attar of roses—I can comprehend that). Fire gushed and spouted in gaseous smoky jets from its flaring cup—or other saucer-like—nostrils, which sucked in and puffed out like flabby lips, as the flame shot out, and the creature thereupon inhaled more air to work its bellows with. Said flames shot several feet from each nostril and were each as broad as the flame of a gas jet in full flare. Its eyes were bottle green, by which I mean a green flame glowed and rolled in each socket. In length the monster was about sixteen feet, and about as thick through as a crocodile. Its horrible tail swished from side to side, curling exactly like a cat's, only more so. Its dreadful claws spread out and tore up the earth in its path. I was stark naked, of course, and I felt the feeling of being defenseless, which that condition brings to all civilized beings unless armed. I was at my wits end. Suddenly the self-same blessed current seized and shot the thing flat on its back where it writhed and bellowed—instead of hissing—very like the bray of an ass; and what's more spun round at a furious rate, for all the world like a dish to which a rotary motion has been imparted, seemingly unable either to stop spinning or flop over onto its belly. Relieved as I now was by my escape from death by fire, and suffocation by stench, my mind was wholly concentrated upon the condition of the crestfallen chapfallen dragon, when once more the current of my veins was turned awry. (About 3:15 A. M. 8-22-'12, 8-21-'12 (N.), J. A. C. About 11-15' (N.) 8-22-'12 (N.) (The current won't work, may I ask why,) You may, it is because you are not alone on this floor, a party having come in. (He is not in the room—the dining-room where I am munching my supper of bread and water). I am aware of that. (About ten minutes later. The party has now left the floor). At a second's space—hardly so much as that from the moment when my mind was absolutely and entirely free from anxiety, care or concern concerning the spinning dragon, I was aware of something occurring within my mind which you—as a mortal—are incapable of conceiving. It was not dread because it was so much more deadly chill than dread, that dread does not deserve to be men-

tioned in the same week with it. It was not fear, because it was so much more numbing, relaxing, in the sense of weakening, say a strung bow-string—than fear. Lastly, it was not terror, because it was so much more stunning and paralyzing than terror that terror dwindles into insignificance beside it. Before I had had time to move a finger, so swift was this overwhelming, engulfing sensation, I was aware of something which you are not permitted to allow anybody to know about. You are to take a separate sheet of paper for the recording of precisely what it was that I saw. (Very well, I shall do so). (The recording of the cause of your mysterious engulfing sensation required less than half a sheet of paper, and ten minutes' time. It being done, I presume you will proceed.) No sooner did the cause of my said sensation disappear into thin air than a yet more terrible sensation overwhelmed me, said description will also require esoteric recordation. (Very well, I shall put it on the latter half of the same secret sheet of paper). (Nine lines were all that were required to record the second secret cause. I presume you will now proceed). So soon as said second cause of said sensation had disappeared as had said first, my mind became aware of a most divinely lovely sensation of peace and confidence and satisfaction. No cause was consciously behind said delectable delight. I simply stood at ease, and so to speak, drank in the sensation which—after what I had been through in the way of sights, sounds, and smells in the past few minutes—was about as near Paradise as I had ever expected to get. After about five minutes of said delightful experience, my ears were enchanted with the sound of female voices singing in unison. The sounds were so far sweeter than those possible to the human voice, that I shall not attempt the impossible task of imparting it to you—devoted as I know you to be to music, both vocal and instrumental, of a high class. It was simply ravishing to the ear, heart, and soul, alike. I stood as tho' entranced. So entranced that the scantiness of my apparel did not so much as cross my enraptured mind. It appeared to be a hymn that the females were chanting, and to my unutterable amazement, I soon learned that English was the language they were using. Their enunciation was so exquisitely distinct that I could distinguish every least word uttered and this without that

mouthing and explosive utterance of mortal singers in public. The words seemed to fall from their lips as softly and easily as drops from a flower sans any strain or effort or loudness of enunciation. It was more what I imagine was meant by Tennyson in his description of music in the land of Lotus-Eaters. The females sounded as though they were on the East side of the Palace and on the ground. The Palace faced North and South. I soon found that the object of their adoration was Apollo. The metre appeared to be that known as the iambic pentameter. I listened and learned that the singers either were—or took the role in the said hymn of—the Nine Muses, or female companions of the Greek God of Song. I shall not attempt to picture the mingled passion and purity, self-sacrifice and devotion hinted at by the words of the Hymn, and made convincing as proof of Holy Writ, as Shakespeare has it, by the passionate, penetratingly thrilling, almost convulsing charm of the voices. As I said, I stood entranced. Suddenly a shadow fell across the glittering driveway, proceeding from the East side of the Palace, proceeding slowly and with rhythmic dignity. To my mingled horror and joy I saw—one by one—nine maidens all in the flower and perfection of beauty of face and form and youth, file majestically by, and, unutterable shock, file my way! Had I not been rooted to the piazza floor by the said current—incapable of moving more than an eyelid—I would have braved rousing the half-lion-half-horse, plus the dragon himself—both of which creatures had been put out of their misery during mine, and were sleeping peacefully, but not silently, for, from the half-lion-half-horse, came a muffled purr, as loud as a cat the size of a lion would make when pleased; while from the dragon came the chug-chug of a locomotive on a siding. Both of the said animals were asleep I saw in the glance that I darted in my despairing effort to make a break for the underbrush, and play Ulysses to Nausicaa and her maidens, by hiding. But budge I could not. My horror increased when I saw that the line of maidens was headed directly for me (Uncle Tom, I sympathize with you). Well you may, my boy, well you may! (A stark naked, red-headed man, of presumably husky build—presumably in the heavy-weight class in the “P. R.”, and five feet eleven inches high, being approached by a bevy of Greek Goddesses

—takes *all* cakes, Uncle Tom). It does. To resume. The fear I now experienced was as penetrating as any of the horrid sensations that had previously coursed through my overworked veins. I don't like to dwell upon it. Singing lower, and, if possible, more sweetly as they drew nearer, the group of Goddesses left-wheeled—so to speak—or rather columned-left and slowly ascended the piazza steps. I was rooted to the spot some ten feet to the West of the steps which faced due North. Slowly and gracefully they mounted the steps, their flowing garments fluttering softly about their divine shapes in a breeze that seemed to accompany them. Each held in her hand a small harp such as is usually depicted on Greek vases of an antique pattern. Upon this each played by touching the strings deftly and softly with her right hand. Chords soft as music on the waters was the result. To these chords was joined a music the cause of which was unseen, for it could not come from harps, being in the nature of strains from sweetest and richest violin you ever listened to. The combination of the harp's chords, the unseen violin, and the unutterable witchery of the maidens' voices I shall despair of ever imparting to mortal ears. Embarrassing as was my position, stark naked as I stood, petrified by the mingled horror, enchantment and current that held me as in a vice, yet, and nevertheless I had never in my life on earth—and in my youth, and before the war I had known happiness—never on earth had I experienced such ecstasy. The music slowly ceased as the last of the maidens set her snowy sandalled foot upon the cerulean pavement of the piazza in a direction opposite to me and seated herself on a stone bench that bounded the east and west side of the piazza, which stood some six feet from the ground. Said benches were of green marble the color of the dark trees that lined the horizon on every side. Each Goddess seated herself quietly holding her harp in her left hand, but allowing it to rest upon her lap. Slowly the Goddesses seated themselves in an easy but still upright attitude and slowly they turned their glorious eyes towards mine. Although I am operating the nerve-centres in your brain controlling the work of the pencil I can see your face as plainly as though I were sitting opposite you, and I smile at the smile that you are vainly trying to hide from playing about your lips. (You have created what I as

a reader of plays—from Shakespeare to Sardou, from Marlowe to Voltaire—term an embarrassing situation). Admitted. To resume. Slowly the Goddesses turned their glorious eyes towards me. The first thing that struck me in comparing their ravishing features and glorious orbs with the surely handsome women I have known on earth, was an inexpressible sweetness of expression that you may say is wholly wanting in the faces of beautiful women with us. I hasten to say that you know that no one had a more respectful admiration for women than myself. (I know that). You also know that I was an enthusiastic admirer of beauty in women—beauty of feature, beauty of figure and beauty of soul, and of course, mind. (I certainly do). Very well, then, you will admit that in saying sweetness of expression is wholly wanting in the faces of beautiful women with us, I surprise you. (You surely do, my experienced veteran in the pursuit of loveliness. You surely do). Nevertheless what I have just said is strictly and unequivocally true. But you must know this. That I did not know that when I was on earth. I fancied that I had seen—and far better than that, my dear Archie—at least half a dozen women with ravishingly sweet expressions. Their expressions were sweet to me because I had never yet seen sweetness of expression, as sweetness of expression is depicted upon expressions, faces and features of females in Hell. (You finished strong, Uncle Tom, you finished that sentence strong. My compliments). It is all very well for you, my blasé friend, reclining as you now are on a lounge, with a writing-board resting on your breast and held in place by your left hand, it is all very well for you to lie back and sneer at me; but let me inform you sir, that could you but be vouchsafed so much as a glimpse of one of said Goddesses' profiles, no matter how fleeting, no matter how scanty a glimpse; or of their glorious forms, veiled but yet outlined by the supernatural texture of their apparel: or of the front view of their divinely adorable faces, you would be brought up by such a round turn that it would give you pain, and you couldn't close your eyes for striving to conjure up the vision again, no, not close an eye for twenty-four hours. (I should like very much to have you put me to the test: Now *here's a proposition*. I am—according to the late Professor William James—a bona fide,

dyed-in-the-wool medium. Now a medium is what was called in the Old Testament a diviner, sorcerer or witch. The possessor of a "familiar spirit." Such was the Witch of Endor to whom went one of the most tragic figures in all History—sacred or profane—that precursor of "Macbeth," Saul, King of Israel. We have therefore pretty good authority that the only bona fide medium mentioned in the Old Testament—namely, the Witch of Endor, aforesaid—could do what no modern medium has *ever* done, though any number of the lying, thieving crew of professional mediums—I except that most admirable lady, Mrs. Piper, and Mademoiselle Helene Smith (a disguised name), the Swiss medium observed by Professor Flournoy, author of "From India to the Planet Mars, a Study in Somnambulism," among other most scientifically reasoned and splendidly arranged studies in Experimental Psychology—published by Harper & Bro., New York—though any number of that aggregation of thieves and liars known as modern professional mediums—as rank impostors as that old Hell-hag, Madame Blavatsky—though any number of these cheats and charlatans claim to be able to do it and take gullible peoples' money for tricking them into believing that they do it—we have the authority of the Old Testament that the Witch of Endor *could* "materialize." This, of course, means conjure-up the visible presence of a dead person, as the Witch of Endor conjured-up at the request of Saul, practically on the eve of battle, the visible presence of Samuel from the bowels of the earth. Now, why should not I, a bona fide medium—do what another bona fide medium has done. Why should not I, tipped off by your respected, and thoroughly posted and distinguished self—why should not I be permitted to do—I am perfectly well aware of the fact that I am unable to do it of my own will and power—why should not I be permitted to do on the strictly "Q.T." of course, what a former predecessor in my art has done. I don't care a tinker's curse about conjuring-up you, my dear Uncle, alleged, for—among other reasons—I wouldn't know you if I saw you—but I'd risk considerable to be allowed to conjure up even *one* of the nine young ladies that gazed upon you so complacently—*naturally*—from the fact that to the pure all things are pure, none but little children-like attain Paradise, and these nine were Goddesses—I'd

risk considerable for a glimpse of one of your young ladies aforesaid. I'm frank to say that young ladies of this world no longer interest me. I "cut them out" *years* ago. Nothing in petticoats can move me—but I'm perfectly willing to make an attempt at a move on Paradise, in the shape of one of your said nine, in clinging, diaphanous drapery). My youthful friend, pardon my frankness, but you talk like a damn fool. (On what grounds, may I ask?) By what right, I should like to know, do you push yourself forward towards a prize no man has won? (The notoriously hard lines I have had in this world, after spending thousands of dollars and years of my life in helping others—offset by no crimes or even injury, to others. I'm no puritan, of course, and don't want to be, but I'm d—d if I deserve what I've been getting for fifteen years, if God Almighty is anything like what He was for power and justice when He argued with Abraham before destroying the aggregation of rascals known as Sodam: Unless the Judge of all the world has "gone back," He would admit—if I could only get within speaking distance of Him—as Abraham did—that He has administered unto me a "raw deal"). To resume. The first Goddess gazed meditatively upon my countenance for some moments in silence. My eyes met hers, and were riveted upon her face as by a spell. Slowly she parted her perfect lips and said in such mellifluous tones as have never reached mortal ears: "Mortal, put on immortality." At the completion of said formula, in the twinkling of an eye, I felt myself clothed in armor from head to foot. My right hand—impelled by said current and without the slightest guidance or thought upon my part sought my left thigh, and there grasped and drew from its sheath a sword such as Greek and Roman warriors are represented as wearing. My hand then brought the weapon to my face and lowered its point in the salute. At the same time I felt that a shield was strapped to my left arm—by which I mean had become so in the same twinkling. The moment the point of my sword pointed towards the ground, in the salute, a fanfare of bugles startled the air and a shout like that of the Old Guard as it passed Napoleon Bonaparte at its last charge at Waterloo rent the air, coming from the lawn. Instantly the Goddesses vanished as though they had never existed and

in their place on the same green marble seat I saw Napoleon Bonaparte asleep. He was to my amazement, after all that I had seen, and after the antique fashion in which I was clothed, as I have said—he was to my amazement dressed in the familiar long gray overcoat and small cocked hat. He was wrapped in his coat, and his face had the expression of approaching victory. Instantly I recognized the situation, it was a replica of Napoleon sleeping by the camp fire on the eve of his greatest victory—Austerlitz. No sooner did I recognize the above than a veil of something seemed lifted from my memory, and I remembered I had played the role of Marshal Ney in a former life. No sooner had the said veil fallen than Napoleon awoke. Instantly he became clothed in the costume of Michelangelo's "The Thinker," it was so lightening—like that you could not even see the lightening, so to speak, by which I mean that I could not see the slightest sign of the change of costume from an early 19th century soldier to an ancient Greek warrior. All I saw was one instant Napoleon asleep wrapped in a long gray overcoat with a cocked hat on his head. The next instant Napoleon, in the armor of "The Thinker," was standing, sword in hand, before me. The glance of his eyes was terrible. It was as blinding as the lightning's flash. I could not bear his gaze, but my eyelids closed convulsively, as they do on a dark night when in a thunder storm out of inky blackness, a blinding streak of forked lightning cleaves its way. I also experienced a slight sensation of heat on the closed lids, as one does, standing at a safe distance from a blast-furnace. I recovered my self-possession and opened my eyes. This time, prepared as I was for what they had to encounter, I was able, by will-power to-so to speak—force my lids to remain open under the glare of Napoleon Bonaparte's battle-glance. I succeeded in forcing the lids to remain open, but I could not prevent a convulsive blinking which continued for some seconds. Finally, this, too, passed away and I could look at Napoleon steadily. I shall not attempt to picture his countenance. At the lapse of a few seconds, he said in slow, grave tones, "Marshal, we meet again." Without the least thought—and as though I were employing Vocal-Automatism, my lips uttered "Sire, we do." "Marshal, the time for payment has come." "Sire, 'tis true."

"Marshal, adieu." Whereupon Napoleon vanished. Thereupon I felt myself instantly stripped of all armor, and reduced to natal nakedness as before. Thereupon, upon the self-same bench that had borne such different—first lovely, then terrible—burdens in so short a time, appeared a form clothed entirely in scarlet. The costume was that worn by Pontius Pilate, in other words, the Paludament, or red cloak-like robe, worn by Roman generals. The features of the said being were those of the typical Roman Military Governor, by which I mean typical Roman soldier-politician, as practically all Roman soldiers of rank were. Said being gazed upon me sternly for some time. His gaze seemed to search my very soul. At the end of about ten minutes, said being said in hard, cold, dry, judge-like tones, in perfectly good English: "Marshal Ney, you are about to prepare yourself to be able to undergo the trials, toils, torments and tortures merited by you for your self-indulgent, obstinate, thoughtless conduct of the battles of Quatre-Bras and Waterloo; the which animadverted against the general plans of the Emperor. The heroic courage you displayed at Waterloo, taken together with your heroic end, mitigate largely the charges against your heart and intellect. Be assured that you will triumph in the end, and emerge as invincible as your courage is and always has been, indomitable, adieu." Immediately his place was taken by a female figure dressed somewhat after the fashion of a sister of charity in the Roman Catholic Church, with the following marked differences. The color of her robes was a creamy white, not dazzling, but soothing to the eye. The shape of her head-dress was not in the least bonnet-like. The material was white linen, which was wound in a band under the chin and around the crown of the head. Her hair was done after the Greek fashion. Her robes were Greek also in cut. Said female allowed her hands to fall into her lap, the left hand over the right, in an easy posture, as she gently gazed upon my face. Slowly she studied my features. Slowly she opened her beautiful, but gravely sad lips, and said in a voice in which subdued sadness, was the dominant tone: "Marshal Ney, prepare your soul for trial." No sooner had she spoken than a most terrific shout rent the air—yells such as Indians give in charging in a night attack upon their foe, split the very firmament.

Instantly, the said female form vanished, and I saw dashing towards me from among the trees on the East of the Palace a skirmish line of naked American Indians in full war paint. Each had in his hand a bow with an arrow in place to draw to the head, while the gleam of tomahawk and scalping knife shone at their belts. A quiver of arrows was strapped over the shoulder of each. The bodies of the oncoming band were stripped to the waist, their limbs being clothed in deer-skin leggings. Their heads were shaved except for the bristling scalp-lock, and their faces and chests were painted fantastically. I made shift to get to cover, but once more said mysterious current held me riveted in my tracks. The next moment a flight of arrows whizzed past my head and shoulders. Instantly, each brave drew another arrow from the quiver and (stopped at about 6:35 A. M., 8-23-'12, 8-22-'12 (N.) (Napped on the sofa till about 8 A. M. and now resume automatic writing at about 3 to 9 A. M., 8-23-'12, 8-22-'12 (N.), J. A. C.), fitting same to the bow string let fly another flight. This time I did not escape so easily. About half a dozen arrows struck me. Before describing their location, I should observe that the texture of the arrows was somewhat remarkable. Instead of being of wood shod with steel, the arrows were of steel shod with flame. The steel again merits description. It was the most delicate lambent material, metal was ever bounded by. In thickness the arrows were not grosser than the thinnest lead pencil you ever saw. Furthermore, the steel had the quality of bending, upon impact, as flexibly as though it were coiled into a series of spirals. Lastly, regarding the nature of the steel, it was the lightest metal imaginable, far lighter than aluminum is by the side of lead. Said arrows were feathered as wooden arrows are, but the feathers were as much heavier than ordinary feathers and also stronger, as the steel was lighter than ordinary steel. It remains to describe the flame that tipped each arrow. Said flame had a magic quality, in that it offered as much resistance to a foreign body as did the steel. The said flame also kept in place, by which I mean did not flare or flicker, but stood straight out stiffly and firmly as though it were steel painted to represent flame. I shall first describe the location of the half dozen hits made on me as a butt, next the sensation accompanying same. The

first hit was precisely and directly in the center of my heart. (Is that "heart," may I ask?) It is. The second hit was precisely and directly in the centre of my right eye. (Phew! Harold, the last English King's fierce fate). Precisely. The third hit was precisely and directly in the centre of my liver. The fourth hit was precisely and directly in the centre of my kidneys. The fifth hit was precisely and directly in the centre of my right lung. The sixth and last hit was precisely and directly in the centre of my mouth. (Uncle alleged, you surely were shot up). It is very easy, my dear Sir, for you to sneer, but permit me to suggest that when the time arrives for you to take the same kind of medicine—after passing in your checks—pray attempt to remember that flippant remark. (No offence, Uncle alleged, no offence). Oh, I am well aware that your mouth is choke-full of glib phrases to ease your way through life—none more so, my dear sir, none more so. (If you will pardon a suggestion coming from so unworthy a source as my "glib self," may I push forward the idea that you would have no farther trouble in procuring a respectful hearing from me, if you would only deign to furnish me with a scintilla of proof, of the authenticity of your incredible statements, in the slightest degree commensurate with the enormity of the same). What did I just tell you about your glib tongue? (I perfectly well remember what you just told me regarding that usually unruly member). I shall now proceed. Concerning the sensations following hard upon the heels of the entrance of said peculiarly constructed arrows into my frame, I shall attempt only a partial description. In the first place the inconvenience and pain caused by the entrance of said arrows into my frame was incredibly increased by two peculiarities before alluded to in respect to the flaming tips of the said arrows and the flexible spiral-like stems—so to speak—of the said shafts. For, unlike ordinary arrows, the greatest pain was not caused by the entrance of the same into the frame—that was noteworthy certainly, but not a court-plaster patch upon the excruciating agony immediately following said entrance. *For then the burning only really began.* The flaming tips aforesaid began to get in their work only after obtaining a foothold—so to speak—in the centre of the *heart, liver, lung, kidneys, mouth and eye.*

The said flaming tips then began to wheeze and flare—so to speak—precisely as a blacksmith's bellows wheezes, and causes the flame on the forge to flare. It was as though each Indian had his lips attached to the other end of each arrow, and was using it as a blow-pipe to excite the flame and increase its penetration and area. Of course, such was not the case, the flames—so to speak—took care of that themselves. *Next, we come to the damnably uncomfortable said spiral-like steel shafts at the end of said flaming tips. These said accessories seemed suddenly to become attached to a steam-roller—so marvellously did said delicate, frail looking shafts increase in weight. Each shaft began to weigh tons.* (Is that “tons,” may I ask;) You may. I reiterate the incomprehensible statement to mortal ears, that each steel shaft began to weigh tons. In order to aim to help you to attempt to take this in, I should add that the supporting strength of my frame exactly increased with mathematical exactitude and precision so as to keep pace with the strain placed upon same by the magical increase in weight of the said flexible steel shafts. The same, of course, held good with the resisting power of the texture of each organ aforesaid, subjected to the above Hellishly unpleasant process of extermination, purification and concentration. I may as well lift another fold of the veil separating the living from the dead. It is far from my present purpose to break the thread of this narrative sufficiently to subject you to a discourse upon the nature of, and cure required for the extermination of sin—far from it, my dear Archie. But I must, in justice to the situation, say a few words of explanation touching the above frankly incomprehensible—otherwise—statement. The object of all trial, toil, torment and torture in Hell and Purgatory, is to purify the mind, heart, frame and soul, and thereby *cure* it of moral evil, and fit it for better things than being turned into a chopping block, archery butts, or macadamized road, as I was by the said flight of arrows lighting in me, and getting in their work. “Vengeance is mine, I will repay,” is perfectly true, and surely carried out. But the repayment is so far in excess of the original debt that it would be horribly unjust to carry out the said archery practice and road-making—I might call it “good-road” making—were the same not scientifically necessary to burn up and crush out of the

system—so to speak—the corroding, rotting quality of sin. I hope that I have said enough to show you that Jehovah does not permit Satan—should Satan desire so unjust a thing, which his superb nature would forcibly prohibit his doing—to allow wandering bands of redskins to Fenimore Cooper, the Human Race in Hell—to coin a phrase meant, in no disrespect of that great and far from properly appreciated in most quarters, novelist of all time—Jehovah is far too just to permit Satan, as Lord of Hell, to organize bands of roving savages to attack in the above dramatic manner, new arrivals in Hell. Satan acting in accordance with the most dark, dire, inscrutable and ominous code of Law ever compiled, and known as the Decrees of Destiny, Satan acting in accord with said dread code, has used his poetic and dramatic art to render heroic, romantic, and far from damnably mechanical, the surgical and chemical processes necessary for the purification of the human heart and other organs in Hell.

Having had a shot at showing you why *I* was so shot at, I shall now proceed with my tale of woe:

The first thing that will occur to you will be to inquire what I did under the circumstances. Well, I did nothing, for the excellent reason that I could do nothing. Said mysterious force held me in a vice, while it sustained me, under the tons of weight rolled round in the various said portions of my anatomy, from breakage under said strain, and, at the same time, permitted the full and free burning, and grinding, cutting, grilling and flattening necessary for the eradication of the corroding and rotting effects of sin from said portions of my frame. You will at once desire to inquire as to whether I cried out under said torture. To which I instantly reply that I had the strongest possible desire to do so, but was as strictly prohibited from so doing as I was prohibited from budging or moving a muscle. I attempted to cry out, in rage and despair, curses, and what not, that would naturally come to the mind of any one worthy the name of man, at such apparently unjust and tyrannical treatment of a newcomer in a perfectly helpless unarmed state—in a state of nudity. But try as I did, I could not utter a sound. Meanwhile the Indians were gloating over the sight of my sufferings—no doubt feeling that they were merely getting their dues for the outrageous robbery of their rights

by the white man from the first time that individual ever came in contact with the red. As I learned later, every emotion of my mind, every wish of my heart, every thrill of my nerves in agony was as legibly readable to a sojourner of experience in Hell, in my countenance in torture, and in every man and every woman's countenance in torture, as are stock quotations on the bulletin board in a Wall Street Stock Broker's reception parlor. You will ask if I got accustomed in the slightest degree to the agony as it went on, as we do in the world. To which I reply, not in the faintest degree. The reason for this difference is the difference in the texture of the corruptible body and the incorruptible. In the former, of course, after the nerves have been sufficiently affected by torture, there is more or less diminution in the power of sensation. Not so in the incorruptible body. Here the torture is as penetrating in its last moment as in its first. Unutterably suffering as I was, yet said mysterious force compelled me to take note of the faces of the Indians. Never in my life had I ever imagined anything comparable with the savage joy lighting up the faces of the braves. Their eyes gleamed like stars in their dark faces. Their cruel lips parted, showing their white teeth as the emotion of retribution at last meted out to the enemy and destroyer of their race's power on earth, spread itself through their souls. Now and then a fierce, triumphant war-whoop would shatter the silence, as a brave noted a peculiarly poignant desire of revenge at such diabolical injustice as I was receiving, sweep over my storm-tried countenance. Now and then a chief would rise, and throwing out his chest, would begin to chant a war-song of triumph at my woe. Now and then a brave would beckon to another and point to my face and smile exultingly. Whereupon the second would sometimes shout out a defiance at me, and sometimes begin in *his* turn to chant his war-song. The group consisted of about a score of male Indians. After about half an hour (For Heaven's sake! A half hour of such work!) A full and ample half hour, I do assure you. After about half an hour of torture, a sound of peculiar sweetness pierced the cloud of agony shrouding my perception. It came from the West side of the Palace. Slowly it drew near. Of course, I could not turn round, nor would have turned round if I could

have, having other pressing matters in mind at said time. But wild—*with half an hour of such agony as no man has ever imagined*—as I was, I could not be insensible to the peculiar sweetness of the sound that fell upon my anguished ears. Slowly it drew near. Slowly it came abreast of me, and as slowly passed. It proceeded from the lips of a bevy of Indian maidens, about a score in number, which slowly filed by me in Indian file, singing in low accents as they passed. In Hell as I was, in more than one sense of that much used and frequently grossly abused word, in Hell as I was, I could not escape the beauty of these maidens. (Uncle Tom, I salute you as the Hero extraordinary, of the male sex in its adoration of the female. With a flaming arrow in one eye, revolving, if not rotating as well—and rubbing it in on you to the extent of several tons, to say nothing of the several other arrows—yet and nevertheless your unoccupied-by-an-arrow—*other* eye, true as the needle to the pole, followed its loadstar beauty to the bitter end). As I before remarked, wait till you get what's coming to you, my boy. To resume. As the beauty of the Goddesses transcended the beauty of all women I had ever imagined, so did—in its sphere—the dark beauty of the Indian maidens surpass that of all Indian beauties I had ever seen or heard of. In place of the copper color of the Indian on earth, their skin below has the hue of bronze mingled with and lightened by gold. The color is sometimes seen on earth in an unusually beautiful mysterious summer sunset, but nowhere else. Their eyes were much more beautiful than their eyes on earth, as were their skins. Their figures—of which more could be seen than of the Goddesses. but nothing that could affront modesty—were as perfect as those of the Goddesses. Their costume was an idealized pattern of the usual Indian female garb. The maidens slowly filed past me and took up position towards the South, that is to say, towards the Grove from which—as I afterwards learned—the Goddesses had emerged on the East side of the Palace. No sooner had they done so than the warriors, with one ear-piercing war-whoop of defiance, vanished into thin air.

At that instant, my torture instantly ceased, and you mortal, cannot comprehend this—as instantly did every vestige of it disappear from my memory. (Come! Come! Uncle

Tom.) What did I tell you, my dear Archie. To resume. Not only did every vestige of the agony disappear from my memory, but I also was deprived of the slightest recollection of what had just occurred. (Phew!) You may well whistle, my observant and attentive friend.

Now, you can see the mercy of God. *Now* you can comprehend, that in spite of the Hell-awful punishment one undergoes in Hell, yet, through it, over it, and under it all, are the Everlasting Arms, are the encircling, protecting arms, of a Fatherly, loving and tender God. (That, my dear Uncle Tom, is the best you've done yet). To resume. So soon as the torture ceased and all memory of it and its occurrence was erased in a twinkling from my mind, I perceived that I was no longer nude. At the same instant I became clothed as before in antique armor. So soon as this most desirable change in my costume had taken place, the bevy of maidens approached and ascended the steps of the piazza, much in the same dignified, yet graceful, and easy way, in which the Goddesses had filed past me into position on the aforesaid stone seat. The leading maiden of the Indian band regarded me slowly with a searching penetrating look. Her hands were in precisely the same attitude of repose in her lap as had been those of the—so to speak—sister of charity, aforesaid. Slowly, she regarded me. Slowly her perfect lips opened, and slowly issued forth the following words in English, slightly tinged with an Indian accent: "Pale face, welcome to the Happy Hunting Grounds. The Great Spirit has been pleased to number you among the chosen braves of His band. Again, I bid you welcome." To which strange speech I at once, without the slightest conscious ratiocination, and, as it were, by vocal-automatism, made reply "Princess, be graciously pleased to deign to accept the homage and devotion of the most unworthy of his race." To which, I may add, for my part, equally strange speech—the leading Indian maiden made the following reply: "Warrior, I accept thy homage. The Great Spirit loves and trusts thee above all other pale-face warriors. You are his favorite. The Great Spirit will not as yet convey these words to you because you are still new and strange to this strange world, but I am deputed by Him to notify you of your lofty place in His heart. Warrior, know that many

perils lie along thy way. Thy way is beset with terror, as the way of the Indian was beset with terror after the coming of the Pale-face. But rest assured that your heart is strong, and your fate even stronger, and the Great Spirit's love for thee stronger than all; Warrior, farewell." With these words, the bevy of maidens vanished.

For a few seconds thereafter I was actually left alone with my thoughts, I could hear the rhythmic purring of the sleeping monster before described as half-lion-half-horse. It was lying on its side in the attitude of a sleeping cat. I was now free to move my body, but not yet my feet from where I had been glued, so to speak, during so many startling experiences. I could therefore see the recumbent dragon, also fast asleep, and chug-chugging as steadily as ever. A thin stream of smoke ascended from each nostril as it slept. I hasten to say that the unspeakable odor of the creature—I found to my unutterable relief—which had not only terrified but nearly strangled me—is never emitted unless the creature is irritated, and desires hostile action upon its part. Nothing could surpass the peacefulness of the superb prospect. I recalled nought of the torture, as aforesaid, but minutely recollected the slightest detail of each other incident. My heart swelled within me, with mingled pride and ambition, at the words of the Indian Princess. Slowly, the sinister meaning lurking in the background of her kindly warning, began to steal over my senses like a cool, almost chilling breeze. No sooner had this impression of impending evil reached my being, than I saw a shadow stealthily project itself round the Western corner of the Palace. As I did so, I felt my feet released from the stocks, so to speak, in which they had been riveted, and the current instantly crouched me down behind the green marble bench on the West—as on the East side—of the piazza, and my hand stole to the hilt of my sword and waited. Slowly the shadow crept round the corner of the Palace. At length I saw the head of an Indian warrior, in full war paint, project itself beyond the shelter of the corner of the Palace. His gaze met mine. With a yell of surprise, the head disappeared. Instantly I felt myself speeding after the retreating savage with my sword drawn and shield advanced to cover my front. As I rounded the corner of the Palace, the Indian reached the

edge of the lawn, that surrounded the Palace on all sides, and turned to look in my direction. He then drew an arrow from his bow—not a flame-tipped one, as in the former band of Indians—but a wooden arrow, as I afterwards ascertained, with a steel point—and let fly at me. Instinctively I raised my shield, and the missile clashed against the metal surface of my shield, and fell harmless to the ground. With an whoop of defiance, the savage disappeared into thin air. At the self same second of time, a third figure appeared in view. This was nothing less than a giant. (Is that “giant,” may I ask:). It is “giant.” This creature was about the size, build and equipment of one Goliath of Gath. You may imagine my surprise and concern. He was standing in precisely the same spot from which my Indian friend—the one who had shot an arrow at me—had vanished into thin air. The aspect of Goliath—for so I shall dub him—was highly truculent and menacing. He was without his shield-bearer, but bore his own door-like shield on his left arm. His features were handsome, of an antique, stern, fierce type of oriental beauty, and his muscles and limbs and arms were superb. He haughtily observed me for a few seconds, and then said, in tones that rumbled like mimic thunder, in English, hinting of a strange accent “What make you here, Abner.” To which I replied, as usual, without the least thought: “I make my rounds, Goliath, I make my rounds.” To which the giant said: “Harken, Abner. The time has come for a trial of strength betwixt us twain. You have often boasted that the force from the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts could equal the strength Baal and Ashtaroth have implanted in my arms and limbs. Now hark you, Abner. I will a wager lay with thee. I will wager a talent of gold against a talent of brass, that I can throw my spear against thy shield, on thy arm and spit thee as I would a beast.” “Goliath, I will joyfully accept thy wager, and let the game begin now.” “Stay, friend Abner, where is thy forfeit?” “It is here Goliath.” And with that, I produced from the air—as it seemed to me—a talent-weight of brass and laid it on the greensward in front of me, but to the left of the line of vision, between Goliath and myself. Thereupon the giant produced from apparently the same obliging quarter a talent-weight of what appeared to be pure gold, and deposited it

on the grass to my left. Thereupon he said, "Now I will essay." I may as well observe that I was as much amazed at my own hardihood and indifference to inevitable destruction—as it appeared to my judgment, to turn myself into a human target for a spear-throwing contest with Goliath of Gath, Goliath to hurl the spear, and I to hold the target—I was as much amazed at my own hardihood and indifference to death by violence, as I was at the sudden sense of overwhelming strength, gigantic, all-subduing strength that swept into my being from the soles of my feet, as though I stood on a magical battery of some sort and was being charged with magic force—and coursed through my veins until it reached my heart, which it thrilled and inflated with a feeling of confidence and physical strength, little short of superhuman. No sooner had I felt this ecstatic throb of power in my heart than I shouted in a loud voice: "The Lord liveth! Let His enemies be scattered! Advance, Goliath of Gath, to thy humiliation!" With that Goliath flew into a rage that was terrible to witness, but which left me absolutely calm and indifferent. I was standing in a nonchalant attitude, except that my shield was on my arm and my arm bent and ready to fly into place should Goliath let fly his spear. The giant, without more ado, raised his right arm, and hurled his weaver's beam of a spear at me. To my amazement, I felt no more shock when it struck my shield than I had when the Indian's arrow fell harmless therefrom. The monstrous spear crashed harmless against my shield, and dropped, broken in two, at the impact. Thereupon Goliath drew his enormous sword, and advanced upon me at the charge, with his huge shield on his left arm. To my utter amazement, I felt no more concern at this than I had at the former threat of death aforesaid. The feeling of supernatural strength aforesaid, if anything, seemed increased rather than diminished, and I rushed to meet his charge with the joy of a Homeric Hero. I shall not now attempt to describe this combat, but shall at some future time. You are getting somewhat, naturally, sleepy now, and need repose after practically incessant writing, bar some three hours' nap, since yesterday evening. Let it suffice to say that the force in my sword-arm was fully equal to that in my shield-arm, and my skill at fence amazed me. Goliath was a skilled

swordsman, and, as may be well imagined, a powerful one. But he did not do more than supply a strong foil to show off my dangerous and aggressive attack. He never touched me, whereas I drew blood from his arms and thighs more than once—not deep or dangerous wounds, but ones that bled freely for a few moments. After the fleshing of my blade several times in his carcass, Goliath concluded that I would be a good man to leave alone, and brought the combat to a close with these guttural words: “Abner, I did thee and thy God gross wrong. I know that the Lord of Hosts is a powerful God, and after Baal and Ashtaroth, worthy to be praised. Abner, take thy prize, and know that Goliath harbors thee no ill.” To which I replied, unconsciously, as always, under said circumstances: “Goliath, speed thee well. I take not thy forfeit, for the glory is to the Lord from whence cometh my strength. May Baal and Ashtaroth bless and reward thee for the greatness of thy soul. Adieu.” Whereupon Goliath of Gath disappeared into thin air. No sooner had Goliath disappeared than I found myself once more standing on the same spot on the piazza of the Palace, stript of everything but my skin. In front of me, standing this time in front of the familiar bench on the East side of the piazza, stood my keeper foretold by Napoleon Bonaparte. To my delightful surprise, I saw that said keeper was none other than the said Sister of Charity. I of course, did not know the above from having been so told, but the instant I saw her standing there with a white garment like a Roman toga, depending from her uplifted hands, I divined that she was to be my keeper, in very much the same way that female nurses attend male patients in hospitals. Instantly, I was wrapped in the ample fold of the toga. Thereupon, she spoke as follows: “Marshal Ney, you have acquitted yourself well in the heroic struggle you have encountered. You must know that from now on for a considerable time, you will have no more feats of strength, skill, and courage to occupy you, but your preparation will be purely spiritual. I do not wish you to infer from this that you will have to submit to homilies by me or anybody else, on matters religious or moral, but simply that the scientific side of spirituality will be shown you, and the vast field of mind opened up. This field will require some years for you to conquer. You

will not don warlike habiliments again until the aforesaid field has, by your own efforts, been made your own. I shall see you for several hours each day, but for the first year here you will see nobody but myself. Your life will be that of a prisoner condemned to solitary confinement, except that there will be no disgrace connected with your confinement, nor will it be in a building in the least resembling a gaol. I shall conduct you to your place of abode." With that we both of us disappeared into the centre of the earth. (Is that "disappeared into the centre of the earth," may I ask?) It is. The action was so incredibly swift and sudden that for the life of me I couldn't tell what had taken place. I discovered later the minute details. Briefly the nurse—as I shall in future term her—and I were standing opposite each other on the fatal spot on the piazza, when I felt the floor of the piazza sink beneath me precisely as you feel an elevator in a sky-scraper sink swiftly under your feet when the man in charge has slammed the gate shut. We went with the swiftness of thought, the nurse and I, down a chute or elevator shaft apparently concealed in the flooring of the piazza. I could see nothing as we shot, as though expelled from a catapult, down the pitch black shaft. I noticed a damp, earthy smell, as though on entering a mine shaft. That was the solitary observation I was enabled to make as we whirled downward. At times, I was aware of great heat, but there seemed to be a—so to speak—cool atmosphere that accompanied us as we descended—as a bank of cool air hangs in a hollow on earth. Through the bank fierce jets of heat at times pierced their way, and they were terrible, but so short-lived that they were hardly noticeable, since the enveloping bank of cool, pure, upper air appeared to continually replenish and renew itself from above as we shot downwards. At the lapse of some five minutes, roughly estimated, a faint ray of light began to be perceptible in our elevator—so to speak. This swiftly broadened and brightened until it was as bright as day when the elevator came to a gradual stop. As it did so, its sides—so to speak—disappeared, and I found myself in a most ravishingly beautiful country. I shall not attempt to describe this now, for reasons already stated—you *must* go to bed and to sleep. Let it suffice to say that I saw within a few yards of me a building precisely like an old-time Roman

Catholic monastery. "There lies thy goal," said the nurse. I shall not touch upon the architecture at this séance. I shall hurry to a close. Before the frowning portal the nurse halted: "Marshal Ney," she said, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you. Seek and ye shall find. For the nonce adieu." With that she disappeared. I approached the gloomy doors and knocked with my right knuckles upon the door. A wicket—so to speak—a small space in the door, opened, and a deep sepulchral male voice said, "Who Knocks?" "Marshal Ney," I replied, with the usual unconsciousness. "Marshal Ney, enter in the name of the Lord." Whereupon the huge doors slowly swung open, and I beheld a chapel lighted very much as in Ritualistic Protestant Episcopal churches, but less ornate than in the Roman Catholic Church. At the head of the chapel stood the altar, which was also more Ritualistic than Roman Catholic in construction. There were lighted candles thereon. I saw no one. The same voice said "Kneel, Marshal Ney, and confess thy sins to God." Whereupon I found my knees kneeling naturally. "Pray, Marshal Ney, for the sins of the world." Whereupon I found my lips moving, and low words issuing from them. At the end of say, five minutes, the voice said, "Arise, Marshal Ney, and follow me." Of course, as the owner of the voice was absolutely invisible I could not have followed him through the long windings and turnings of the monastery at either side of the said chapel, which I afterwards found was in the centre of the vast pile, had I not found myself once more in the grasp, so to speak, of the friendly current. It pushed me along as gently as it had out of the bed chamber of His Satanic Majesty, and through Napoleon Bonaparte's Palace. After traversing a building as much vaster than the Escorial in Spain as the Escorial is vaster than a village chapel, to put it rather mildly, I found myself in front of the door of a cell. The cell door was shut. It was the only door on that corridor. The voice said "Marshal Ney, behold thy home for years. Enter, and fear not. Adieu." Whereupon the door of the cell opened of itself from within and I entered. The cell was the size of an ordinary large bedroom. The windows were barred heavily with iron. There were two aspects from the cell; one to the South and one to the West. The cell opened on those points of the compass by its win-

dows. The view to the South disclosed another vast building, whose architecture I shall not now take time to describe. The view to the West embraced a beautiful prospect, which I shall not now describe. Not a soul was in sight nor a sound heard. I next addressed myself to acquainting myself with the furniture in my future home. There was a plain, monk-like bed, comfortably furnished with clothing, and on the walls, to my surprise, were engravings of historic incidents, known to mundane history. A large plain table, a chest of drawers, and several chairs completed the furnishings in my cell. I saw a second door in the wall. As I approached it opened of itself inward, and to my amazement I found a marble bath sunk into the floor, through which a stream of water was falling from a fountain—carved in the form of a lion's head—the bath and fountain were antique in build and design. Feeling a desire to bathe, I stopped the progress of the stream through the bath, and throwing off my toga, plunged in. The bath was deep enough and large enough to cover my shoulders with water when I stood up, and to allow of my floating and taking a few strokes before reaching either side. After a most refreshing ten minutes, I climbed out by some marble steps let into the side and found what I had not seen before, clean towels precisely like our bath towels. Also I found another costume laid out for me by the side of my toga, the costume of a Greek when indoors. This I put on and re-entered my cell. So soon as I did, I heard the same voice say "Marshal Ney, prepare thy soul for prayer." Thereupon the idea occurred to me to banish all thoughts from my mind but those of the Deity and my own unworthiness. This I did as best I could. Thereupon the voice said "Kneel," I found a *prie-dieu*, or kneeling bench, with cushions for the knees, and rest for the head—such as is found in Roman Catholic oratories, for instance. Upon this I knelt. Thereupon the voice said: "Marshal Ney, know that this place was ordained for thy reception from the foundation of the world. Nothing happens by chance, all is foreordained. Chance exists, but it is only chance in name—actually it is the working out of God's will in the world. Prepare to pray." I once more composed my mind to prayer. Thereupon the voice said, "Marshal Ney, why dost thou think that thou art here?"

Whereupon I unconsciously, as usual, replied "For the good of my soul." "Thou sayest well," replied the voice. "Marshal Ney, what dost thou intend to do during thy stay in the monastery?" "I intend to prepare my soul for the grand things in store for it." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, whence comest thou?" "From Hell." "Where art thou now?" "In Purgatory." "Thou sayest well. How dost thou propose to prepare thy soul for the grand things in store for it?" "By prayer, fasting, and deep inward searching of the heart." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, whither art thou bound after thy sojourn in Purgatory?" "To rejoin my Emperor in Hell." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, how dost thou propose to deeply, inwardly search thy heart?" "By, *first*, a study of the Scriptures, in order that I may know what fashion of Being Jehovah is; what fashion of Being Jesus Christ is; and what fashion of Being the Holy Spirit is. By, *second*, forming a rule of conduct for my daily guidance in my dealings with my fellow beings, based upon the fashion of Being I shall find Jehovah to be by said study of the Scriptures; and based upon the fashion of Being I shall find Jesus Christ to be by said study of the Scriptures; and based upon the fashion of Being I shall find the Holy Spirit to be by said study of the Scriptures. Upon said two pillars of faith hang all the secrets of life." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, what thereafter dost thou propose to do?" "Thereafter I propose to quicken my spirit by prayer, and thoughts on the welfare of the world; and how I, by prayer, may guide and aid the destinies of the world, and my fellow beings." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, what thereafter dost thou propose to do?" "Thereafter I propose to perfect myself in all manner of learning, to the end that I may aid the destinies of the world and my fellow beings as best I may." "Thou sayest well. Marshal Ney, may God strengthen thee in the hour of trial. Farewell." Thereupon I rose from my somewhat cramped—from being somewhat unaccustomed to an adoring attitude—knees, and heaved a profound sigh of relief. Whereupon said voice said "*Scoff not at humility before the idea of Perfection, for that is the essence of true prayer in the form of adoration of the Supreme Being.* Know that from now on thy slightest thought will be answered—unless it requires no answer, either because

it is correct, or does not ask an unconscious question of creation, or because it is incorrect and demands correction for the good of thine own immortal soul. Know that from now on knowledge shall take the place of ignorance in thy heart, and certitude, of doubt. Know, moreover, that by strict attention to a high ideal of thought, *as well* as of intention, *as well* as of conduct, is the only way in which to achieve thy aforesaid future high and worthy purposes. *From now on thou art never done.* I take the place of thy conscience, and shall chide thee, or sparingly praise thee, as does conscience. In no other way can the dictum 'Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect be attained, than by constant attention to the slightest hint of ideas suggested to your mind by conscience.'

You may see from the above, my dear Archie, that life below decks has a very serious side to it. A side that bores all worldly people to stupefaction, but a side, nevertheless, that *must* be cultivated, if one wishes to achieve either Hell or the Underworld and avoid the Kingdom of Sin and Annihilation. Believe me, you have not been more fatigued by the above catechism than was I. I don't wonder at your spelling the pronoun I, e-y-e after the above hours.

(Stopped about 4 P. M. exact, 8-23-'12. J. A. C.)

END

OF

FIRST SPIRIT-MESSAGE (Alleged) FROM HELL.

ERRATA.

- P. 14. 12th line from bottom: "sendings" should be "sending."
 P. 15. 20th line from top: "form" should be "from."
 P. 34. Paragraph 3. The sentence beginning "The time has come" should be in italics.
 P. 40. 6th line from top: "act" should be "fact."
 P. 41. There should be quotation marks at the end of paragraph 1.
 P. 47. 6th line from top: "other" should be "rather."
 P. 50. 17th line from bottom: After the word "war" should be inserted: "between the States."
 P. 50. 12th line from bottom: "side" should be "sides."
 P. 52. 13th line from bottom: "fida" should be "fide."
 P. 54. 14th line from top: There should be a period after the word "Thinker."
 P. 54. 15th line from top: Hyphen, not dash, between "lightning" and "like."
 P. 59. 19th line from top: There should be a period after the word "woe."
 P. 61. 14th line from bottom: The word "as" should be inserted between "were" and "much."
 P. 68. 7th line from top: "doors" should be "walls."

“THE INFERNAL COMEDY”

IN MEMORIAM DURANTE.

I

The womb of Death and Hell will now unfold
The awful secrets of their Mystery
The upthrow will at times the blood run cold
And make the reader *curse* this History.
But fear of favour strangers are to me—
The meek recorder of these dreadful things—
I tell the story as 'twas told to me
With blunt veracity the whole thing rings.
As “Medium”—so-called—to me did come
Across the Gulf of Death long-distance call
From dear-loved friend who'd gone to his long home
Who knew my number—rang me up—that's all.
For those who treat me fair all's fair and well
For those who don't the road runs straight to Hell.

II

By “automatic writing” did he weave
A web as pictured as Penelope's
Of deeds so dark stout hearts contracted heave
When the mind's eye their blood and Hell-fire sees.
I tell the story as 'twas told to me
Telling the same with every—*all* reserve
Giving and asking no credulity
Save for the telling o't my meed of nerve.
I'll let my friend Tom Miller speak for me—
He tells the tale I turn same into rhyme—
Continuing the Ancient History
Called “Hell” which I did write once on a time.
So far so good fair dames and sportsmen all
I'll now proceed—and G—d protect my “gall”!

III

In "Hell"—writ by Tom Miller as is this—
 Save there his words in prose are straight set down—
 'Twas shown that Satan is God's friend I wis
 His mighty right arm to protect His throne.
 That Sin Personified's another thing
 That Sin Personified's God's enemy
 Upon whose head anathema doth fling
 And 'twixt whom and Satan there's dread enmity.
 That Hell's heroic and a Paradise
 For brave romantic souls who follow war
 Other abodes there are for milder eyes
 And 'twixt Hell and Sin's vast Kingdom there's grim war.
 That Satan reigns in Hell, God's deputy
 Coming and going as in Job we see.

IV

"'Artie'† my boy, 'tis after many years—
 Five stricken years as I do make it out—
 That once again I 'call' the Vale of Tears
 On Hell's Long-Distance and thus hunt you out.
 My tale I'll take up where I did leave off
 Or, rather, I'll hark back to how souls land—
 The instant following their taking off—
 Upon the verge of this most awful strand.
 My landing was, you know, exceptional
 And straight to Satan's Bed-Chamber did go
 Thus exceptional was I to nearly all
 Who land upon this strand of dreadful woe.
 The reason was my lot on earth was fell
 I passing honest, hence I won in Hell."

†Our Great-Grandfather—on the Distaff side—the late William B. Astor, of New York—gave us that name as being the only diminutive possible for "Armstrong." He being a college chum of Schopenhauer, being logical—if nothing else. Thomas Jefferson Miller evidently prefers the stricter etymology of "Artie" to "Archie," when communicating under the auspices of the Muse—the latter being a distillation from "Armstrong" which has nothing etymological in it, and was merely the haphazard attempt of an infant relative to pronounce "Armstrong."

V

"And other reasons, too, mysterious
 Which need not here be entered on at all
 'Twould make my story seem too devious
 Too deep replete with bitterness and gall.
 So let it go for what it's widely worth
 And open now thine alabaster ear—
 Thine ear was shapely and cool pink on earth—
 Lend it me now my dreadful words to hear.
 In Satan's Chamber there's an *Oeil de Boeuf*
 Which doth command all Hell—her vast expanse—
 From Torture-Chambers where Fiends 'cut up' rough
 To flowery Pleasance where sweet Fairies dance.
 To's Chamber from my penitential cell
 I monthly came—the sight did pay me well."

VI

"I'll take a soul when it arrives in Hell—
 A man's grim soul—fair woman's later on—
 And what said soul goes through viridic tell—
 On earth my record was a truthful one.
 But bear in mind I do not tell it all
 Some things there be are draped in mystery
 Which can't be told till flesh from soul doth fall
 And face to face the soul its Judge doth see.
 But these are things beyond the reach of man
 He couldn't guess them in a million years.
 So—believe me—the Hell I'll bid you scan
 Will satisfy your doubts if *not*—your fears.
 Now brace yourself my friend—call up your nerve
 None but the coldest chilled steel now may serve!"

VII

"I saw a Judgment Hall before me rise
 Rich draped in ruby red—the ceiling gold
 Much like unto our earthly Courts in size
 Save that the air thereof was rich not cold.
 Upon the bench a figure dread did sit
 In antique Roman armour clad was he
 A red paludament did drape o'er it
 His sword hilt peeped beneath it brilliantly.
 Such face on earth I never, never saw
 So stern—so awful in its majesty
 Severe inflexibility sans flaw
 Justice's enfeatured self did meet mine eye!
 Alone upon that awful bench sat he
Imperial in his awful majesty."

VIII

"Beside the dock stood a Centurion
 Armed at all points and leaning on his spear
 Th' expression that his lean shaved face had on
 Was one to chill the stoutest heart with fear.
 No other beings were there in this Hall
 Whose utter silence almost could be felt
 A silence that the bravest would appal—
 If to that Judge in suppliance they knelt.
 Sudden a pon'drous door that faced the bench
 Did open with a sullen sombre clang
 As unseen hands the mighty knob did wrench
 Admitted guarded soul then closed with bang.
 A naked man betwixt two soldiers grim
 Then slowly crossed the Hall—clothed but in 's skin."

IX

"His Majesty Satanic had been pleased
 To name a day when one of our club-friends—
 'Manhattan' Club—from the flesh was released
 And was—in consequence—on his beam ends.
 Being a sailor I employ that term
 To paint a man in case most desperate
 A state of facts that doth contain no *germ*
 Of safety—in which none is situate.
 Egotist, liar and a hypocrite
 His very common faults lump-summed up were—
 Outside of that a gentleman polite
 Who never *once* in Fashion's Code did err.
 You hated him. I wish you'd seen his face
 When he that marble bench and judge did face."

X

"The two soldiers grim into the marble dock
 Escorted our swell friend of former years
 And once within the gate *itself* did lock—
 The soldiers at each side leaned on their spears.
 The awful Judge then slowly turned his head—
 His eyes before had gazed on vacancy—
 And gazed upon the trembling recent-dead
 With a gaze it chilled my very *soul* to see.
 It was as though a knife shot from his eyes
 And pierced the heart's core of the looked-upon
 A gaze ice-cold, immune to all surprise
 A gaze that conjured up the Book of Doom.
 The sinner's knees gave way and down he fell
 All of a heap, inert, mixed up, pell mell!"

XI

"The Judge then sounded on a golden gong—
 A glistening disc of gold hung by his hand—
 When a small door to's right swift open swung
 And entered in a female fair and bland.
 This maiden garbéd was as is a Nun
 Save that her head-dress showed her lustrous hair
 Her face my eyes did ravished gaze upon
 I never in my life saw one so fair.
 Upon her arm she bore a mantle soft
 A vial and a glass were in her hand
 The soldiers raised the sinner straight aloft
 And mantle o'er him threw when he did stand.
 The maid th' elixir then raised to his lips
 Tipping it with her rosy finger tips."

XII

"The magic liquor courséd down his throat
 And swift the sinner's senses did revive.
 Whilst his 'mazed eyes did on the maiden gloat
 An 'attitude' he aiméd to contrive.
 For he pursued the sex when on the earth
 And widely as a 'masher' known was he
 And as of the 'long green'† he knew no dearth
 For lust he was a 'spender'—spender free!
 The Judge took in this little comedy
 Although his iron face gave ne'er a sign
 The soldiers too looked on in irony
 Thinking upon his pending pains condign.
 The maiden with serene indifference
 Resumed the vial and departed thence."

†Greenbacks.

XIII

"The small door closéd softly after her
 Whereon the sinner's face did sadly fall
 And he heaved a sigh as from a sepulchre
 Shuddered, and round him closely drew his pall.
 Once more the Judge turned on him his dread gaze
 And coldly measured him from top to toe
 The gaze this time the sinner did not 'faze'
 Th' elixir magical did buoy him so.
 But as he gazed the sinner felt a chill
 Creep slowly down his spine and raise his hair
 It conjured up the phrase *re* 'looks that kill'
 Of pending danger made him swift aware.
 He braced himself against the Judge' grim word
 And well he might—for this is what he heard."

XIV

"Sinner give ear unto my final words.
 The sins thou'st done on earth shall straight begin
 Upon that screen—as actors on the boards—
 As they were done in life to whirl and spin.
 The maids thou hast seduced thou'lt there seduce—
 The deed as done on earth thou'lt there do o'er
 The crimes which lovely maidens did reduce
 Unto the frightful status of a ———.
 Each kiss thou gavest shalt thou give again
 And each caress and stroke of stealthy lust
 Each sundry gesture made, there view with pain
 Nor miss an attitude—for *look thou must*.
 Thou mayest sit. Thy limbs would fail thee sure
 When thou dost witness thy fell acts impure.'"

XV

"The brazen tones that rolled athwart his lips—
 Not loud but hard and resonant as brass—
 Could scarcely wound more had they barbéd tips
 And through the sinner's beating heart did pass.
 Scarce had dread silence settled in their wake
 Than on a screen across the Judgment Hall
A sight appeared which made the sinner quake—
 Nought but his sitting posture saved a fall.
 A maiden and himself he there did see
 In semblance like as life—life's colours—*all!*
 Sitting beneath a low umbrageous tree
 A maiden whom he lured unto her fall.
 He made to turn away but felt a spear
 Held by each soldier hard upon each ear."

XVI

"He groaned aloud as the scene did progress
 Started to raise his hands to shade his eyes
 When two sharp spear points did those hands caress
 But yet did not draw blood—to his surprise
 As all the act of love was there portrayed—
 The sacred act no eye may gaze upon—
 His breath came short as he grew dread dismayed
And in his anguish leaned the spears upon!
 Their points did pierce his flesh but no blood came
 Their points were torture but less than the sight
 Of his unutterate and nameless shame
 At sight that seemed his very sight to blight.
 He groaned and sobbed and from his eyes shot tears
 Which stung his cheek as did his arms the spears."

XVII

"No sooner was this scene in anguish viewed
 Then fell adultery shot on the screen
 And in a scene with treachery imbued
 He debauched the wife of one whose friend he'd been.
 In sinister procession then went on
 Each act of selfishness through lust he'd done
 Perforce of spears each act he looked upon
 Nor missed a posture—not a single one.
 His other vices then did troop in view—
 Mendacity and foul Hypocrisy—
 Full many a lie and act did he then rue
 Thrown on the screen for Judge and him to see.
 In less time that it takes the thing to tell
 He felt assured his place was right in Hell."

XVIII

"And when at last this suffernig was o'er
 He looked upon the Judge—the Judge on him—
 And then began to suffer even more
 On thinking what he'd pay for this his sin—
 Something akin to pity in the eye
 Of his most awful *vis-à-vis* he gleaned
 And from his bosom heaved a mighty sigh
 And on his storm-tossed soul some faint hope beamed.
 The Judge—who saw these signs—encouraged them
 Unbent his awful brows and almost smiled—
 At all events did lighten his grim phlegm
 And seemed by pity for the nonce beguiled.
 The sinner upward shot his first short prayer
 Of which Recording Angel was aware."

XIX

"The Judge began in tones metallic-hard—
 'Sinner, thy doom I now decree to thee.
 Upon the wheel till broken as a shard
 Thou shalt revolve and writhe in agony.
 Two brawny Fiends with mallets of chilled steel
 Shall bray thy ribs and arms, thy limbs and thighs
 Shall break and rend till thou hast ceased to feel
 Till hush in agony yells, groans and sighs.
 This done one hundred years in penance dire
 In penitential fast varied with pain
 Till purged are thy foul sins in Hell's own fire
 Lo! I have spoken. Further words are vain.'
 He rose and stalkéd thro' a door at's rear
 Leaving the sinner paralyzed by fear."

XX

"The stern Centurion then rouséd him
 And rose erect from leaning on his spear
 Stroked with his horny hand his shaven chin
 And said in tones metallic—trumpet clear—
 'Soldiers to work—and rouse that sinner there
 The dog has had his day—Hell now has her's
 The Judge 'threw into him' a pretty scare
 He always does when dealing with such curs.
 The scare he's had is not a circumstance
 To the scare he will have when he doth see
 The Fiends of Vengeance round him dance and prance
 Before they start him forth his weird to dree.
 When ye attain the grade Centurion
 Ye'll marvel at the sights my eyes gaze on.'"

XXI

"The soldiers stiffened, then gave the salute
 Mounted the dock and seized the prisoner
 All huddled in a mass, inert and mute
 And straightway shook him to—both then and there.
 He rolled his eyes in agony around
 He gasped and moved his lips in vacancy
 His senses numb and foggy as a swoond
 His thoughts chaotic as in infancy.
 The soldiers swiftly pulled him on his feet
 And thrust their shoulders underneath each arm
 Thus boosting him along with steps full fleet
 But at the same time doing him no harm.
 At said small door they touched a silver bell
 A silvery voice said: 'Enter. All is well.'"

XXII

"The door swung open and the soldiers paused
 Upon the threshold—bending rev'rently.
 This act in them unusual was caused
 By the sweet maiden in her dignity.
 'I thank thee, soldiers'—said she in that voice
 As sweet as water falling in one's sleep
 In which the tones as rich as they were choice
 Were varied as the murmurs of the deep—
 'I thank thee, soldiers, for thy courtesy
 In bringing to me thus the new-arrived
 Whom I assure will look less piteously
 Once at my hands he has been duly shrived.'
 The soldiers pushed him in. The door swung to.
 The three then left the Court sans more to do."

XXIII

"The sinner drew his first unstrained breath
 As his dazed eyes gazed on this lovely Nun.
 And felt as though he'd 'scaped the jaws of Death
 As her entrancing face he gazed upon.
 Expert in beauty he did swift take in
 The wondrous beauty of the face he saw
 How like to alabaster was her skin
 The pink therein all matchless—sans all flaw.
 The lips were full as they were beautiful
 And delicate as they were rosy red
 But o'er them hung a shadow sorrowful
 As one in love, deep loveth one—long dead.
 Her eyes glowed 'neath her brows like two grey stars
 Which have lit battlefields at night—grim Mars."

XXIV

"Her figure full as it was virginal
 Showed her round bust by girdle at the waist.
 Lissome and willowy and somewhat tall
 The air of her as mountain ice was chaste.
 The sinner heaved a deep and piteous sigh—
 As sad as wind across a wintry sea—
 As this pure beauty met his wanton eye—
 This chastity his bestiality.
 He sighed and blushed and sighed then groaned aloud
 Then dropped upon his knees as tho' shot dead
 And kissed her garment's hem as 'twere her shroud
 Then hushed him as in presence of the dead.
 The maiden nothing said and nothing did
 Save—'fore her eyes—a tear stood on each lid."

XXV

"Slowly the sinner rose upon his feet
 Then bowed his head in all humility.
 The Nun then said in voice as music sweet
 'Spite of thy doom I may encourage thee'—
 The sinner started at th' unlooked for words—
 The maiden raised her finger warningly.
 'Beware!' she said 'for my hint dread accords
 With toil and pangs will wring the heart of thee.'
 As sudden frost kills flowers in a night
 These dreadful words the sinner's heart did chill
 And filled his very soul with deadly fright
 And in an instant new-born hope did kill.
 '*Courage!* I did but caution thee' she said
 '*Justice, Hell rules. And God is overhead.*'"

XXVI

"Now follow me and I shall lead the way
 Unto the quarters due allotted thee.
 Which same thou wilt inhabit many a day
 Until—thy penance done—thou shalt be free.'
 She spake and glided onward as in a dream
 Almost sans motion one sees figures move
 As noiseless as a leaf floats on a stream
 As graceful in her poise as hov'ring dove.
 A sombre corridor they traverséd
 Hewn from black marble interlined with gold
 And thereupon a wide cell enteréd
 Built of white marble full as chaste as cold.
 A cushioned marble bench she sat upon
 And motioned the sinner to a second one."

XXVII

"An iron pallet in a corner stood
 With ample drapery in place thereon
 At's head hung a Monk's garb—the gown and hood—
 At sight of which he scarce repressed a frown.
 She saw the frown but let the action pass.
 A table with some books stood near at hand
 I'th' corner, basin, ewer and a glass†
 A chair, and chest, too, were at his command.
 A door ajar showed him a marble pool
 Sufficient deep and long some strokes t'accord
 His heart since mounting penitential stool
 Here first gave birth unto a sunny chord.
 Bars of pure gold did arm each window sill
 And hope of all escape did instant kill."

XXVIII

"Now our first lesson shall I now begin'
 The maiden said and smiled bewitchingly.
 'I am thy teacher all the time thou'rt in'—
 'A hundred years!' He gasped beseechingly.
 '*A hundred years*' she smilingly replied.
 'Time's nothing to us here—*we grow not old*'—
 Here—since his death—for th' first time he gay cried
 'I understand thy point—I make so bold.'
 The maiden smiled and bowéd gracefully
 'Hell hath her charms—when once "thy bit" thou'st done.
 Thou'st no conception how the years roll by
 And how—tho yet in Hell—there may'st be fun.
 Hell—of all places—thou in time wilt find—
 Of *all and sundry*—is the most maligned'."

†Looking-glass.

XXIX

"God is the God of love and not of hate.
 He sends his rain on just and the unjust—
 From time to time I aphorism state
 From time to time because—I simply must.
 You see the secret of all life in Hell
 Is hid in just one word—one little word.
 You'll laugh when I to thee the word shall tell
 For 'tis so simple that 'tis just absurd.
 The word is: "*Thought*"—Ha! Ha! I see thee start'—
 The sinner started had and turned dead pale
 And on his brow the sweat in beads did start
 He cowered on his bench—he e'en did quail.
 '*My God! My God!*' he cried, my whole life long
 To stifle thought was th' burden of my song'."

XXX

"And that is why we women find that Hell
 Is far less hot than it is said to be.
 Because if I to thee the truth must tell
We women think far, far, far more than thee!
 From when we're tiny tots we're taught to think
 Lest from our mouths should pop some naughty word—
 Not gross of course—but to make Grundy blink—
 Naught *coarse*, of course, but something plump absurd.
 This "totine" training makes us by and by
 Look sharp as weasels at the words we use.
 And every word we weigh, and dust and try
 To make full sure the word can't bring abuse
 In other words we think from morn 'till night
 Not on high lines perhaps, but what is right'."

XXXI

"Whereas you men despise the *name* of thought—
 You'd rather walk a mile than think a minute—
 Unless to think ye have been duly bought
 Unless ye think because "there's money in it."
 Hence, when ye get to Hell ye're in despair
 For "thought" is here the crowning word of all
 It floats serenely on the very air
 'Tis sword and buckler against Hell her gall.
 Therefore, fair sir, I'll straight teach thee to think
 To think on lines of logic—sound and hard—
 The effort *now* would cause thine eyes to blink
 But in good time thou'lt play the winning card.
 One hundred years gives thee time to turn round
 And say—at last—"The secret I have found'."

XXXII

"The newcomer then fixed his eye on her
 And murmured in a maze: '*One hundred years!*'
 Then with a start cried out: 'By Jupiter!
 The time for preparation soothes my fears!'
 The maiden swift replied: 'You're very right'—
 For time is everything in Hell you'll find.
 By time you train your sinews for the fight
 By time you train the powers of your mind.
 When you are ready for the great essay
 When to the wheel you do with pride advance
 You then the rôle of hero stern will play
 And glory that you have the dreadful chance.
*For as you rule the powers of your mind
 Just so from torture full relief you'll find."*

XXXIII

“The Scriptures give one picture *sole* of Hell—
 The one where *Dives* in the throes is seen—
 Where—by the way—*Dives* plays his part well
And better than his play could not have been.
 He first did follow Nature’s mighty law—
 Self-preservation did he full pursue.
 Then when he found that his “attack” held flaw
 Prayers for his brothers then did swift ensue.
 Herein doth lie the complete key to Hell
Think first for thyself: next for others strive—
 In speaking thus I thus the story tell
 Thus doing thou dost save thy soul alive.’
 The newcomer drank in her every word
 And thought: ‘This is my job—howe’er absurd.’”

XXXIV

“So now, fair sir, this talk draws to an end
 I must leave thee to ponder on my words
 Bearing in mind in me thou hast a friend
 Whose aim—to save thy soul—with thine accords.’
 Thus speaking she did rise with dignity
 And towards the newcomer extend her hand
 Which he did grasp with Passion’s rhapsody
 Which she sustained with calm and aspect bland.
 She said: ‘I leave thee now for thirty days
 At end of which again shall I appear
 To further lecture thee upon the ways
 That spell salvation, and thy soul win clear.
 Farewell. *And bear in mind there is a God
 To Whom all things in Hell bow—to Whose nod.*’”

XXXV

"Thus speaking did she float swift from the cell
 Or seemed to float so lightly did she move.
 The new-arrived encircled by her spell
 Muttered t'himself: 'That creature do I love.'
 He then did heave a devastating sigh
 A sigh that seemed his very lungs to crack
 Then brushed away a tear from either eye
 And then reclined at ease upon his back.
 Thus gazing at the ceiling of the cell
 A voice broke on his ear—*deep* and *sonore*—
 'How likest thou thy first view, sir, of Hell
 I trust it is not one unbroken bore.'
 The new-arrived rose swiftly to his feet
 And glanced about in hopes this male to meet."

XXXVI

"You look in vain for me—my worthy sir
 I am a voice—a voice and nothing more—
 I supplement the future work of her
 Whose lovely form has just passed through that door.
 I am thy conscience speaking loud to thee—
 That conscience which hath whispered all in vain
 That conscience thou didst slur so shamelessly—
You threw me out but here I am again!
 And here, my friend, I have thee "dead-to-rights"—
 Stooping for th' nonce to the vernacular—
 As dead as "John L."† had his man in's fights
 Those knock-out bouts so rare-spectacular.
 "Thy name is Denis"‡ now, my friend, trust me
 For I see thee, but me thou can't not see."

†John L. Sullivan.

‡A slang phrase of twenty years ago signifying that a man had "lost out."

XXXVII

"The new arrived gazed round him in amaze.
 His hair stood straight on end—the sweat burst out—
 His eyes stood out as in galvanic gaze
 He felt he knew not what he was about.
Sudden he felt himself seized by the throat
In grip of steel that shut his windpipe off
 And for his life he would not give a groat
 And felt he'd met a second taking-off.
 The very instant this idea occurred
 The pressure instantly was swift relaxed
 And he sucked air so hard, to say a word
 His whole mentality had been sore taxed.
 He gasped and panted like a hard-run dog
 Then fell back on his back still as a log."

XXXVIII

"The bench he lay on was full three feet broad
 And its thick cushion rested him full deep
 He closed his eyes and looked no more abroad
 And in a little while was fast asleep.
 How long he'd slept he knew not when a start
 Convulsed his very *soul* with terror dread
 Clutched with convulsive hand his beating heart
 And once more raised each hair upon his head.
 He felt an awful 'presence' in the cell
 Something he knew not what that chilled his soul
 An odour damp of tombs he 'gan to smell
 And felt once more he stood upon Death's goal.
 The awful presence then drew on more near
 Rousing in him an *ecstasy* of fear."

XXXIX

"He rose convulsively upon his feet.
 His parchéd tongue clave to his mouth's dry roof
 His eyes seemed scorching with a fiery heat
 His heart-beats struck as though each bore a hoof.
 This tension final snapped in a yell
 The like of which his ears had never heard
 It seemed to him its peal would rouse all Hell—
 He yelled and yelled but uttered not a word.
 The awful presence still drew on more near.
 He seemed to hear the rustle of a pall
 He listened and it came distinct and clear
 In silence which could have heard a pin fall.
 Once more he did emit a ghastly yell
 Then in a dead-faint on his face he fell."

XL

"How long he lay thus he did never know.
 After a time he came his senses to
 Oppressed by a *mountain's* weight of woe
 And dread as to what next he must pass thro'.
 He rose unto his feet then sat him down
 Upon his 'mourner's bench' and groaned aloud
 As he recalled the cause of's recent swoon
 The awful presence with its ghastly shroud.
 His weary head he rested on his hand
 Supported by his elbow on his knee
 He felt so weak he was afraid to stand
 Deep dreading what the next foul fright would be.
 'No more today'—then said the Voice sonore
 'I rest in hope that Hell doth not thee bore'."

XLI

"‘Me bore!’ cried out our friend exasperate—
 But comforted to hear e’en ghostly voice—
 ‘For throwing scares into one Hell’s first rate
 A nonpareil—leaving no second choice!’
 ‘I’m pleased thou are not bored’; the Voice then said.
 ‘Boredum dulls th’ edge of hospitality
 Boredum and Hell are two things never wed
 The one thing Hell lacks *not’s*—vitality.
 Hast thou a mind to dine before too long?
 Your dinner will be richer than you think
 And while you dine your ear’ll be joyed by song
 And lovely sights will make thy scared eyes blink.
 For you must know that Satan, Lord of Hell
 Treats all his visitors surpassing well’.”

XLII

“I’ll not take time to paint the ecstasy
 These words brought to our friend’s most storm-tossed soul
 Suffice to say his face was sight to see
 ’Twas that of wanderer who’s made his goal.
 ‘Perform ablution and then follow me.
 A plunge will do thy tortured soul much good.
 And think meanwhile on what thou soon shalt see
 And on thy viands—Hell’s *au fait* in food.’
 The new-arrived then hied him to the pool
 And shed his pall and plungéd head-first in
 Exulting in its limpid waters cool
 Which like smooth satin did caress his skin.
 He took three strokes then floated on his back
 And thought: ‘Variety in Hell’s no lack’.”

XLIII

"He found a bath-towel handy and it used
 Then donned his monkish garb with wry grimace.
 His smile was half contemptuous half amused
 Thought—if they saw him—on his Club friends' face.
 He found new brush and comb of first-rate make
 The same he plied with care and solemn zeal
 Before the glass and got his hair in shape—
 So much so, like himself he 'gan to feel.
 'Now follow me my friend and have no fear'—
 Thus spake the Voice—"Thy strife today is o'er.
 Banish from out thy mind all hint of care
 And on Hope's pinions let thy spirit soar!
 As guest of his Imperial Majesty—
 As Satan's guest—thy soul should be care free'."

XLIV

"Know that our princely King and Emperor—
 That Satan—King and Emperor of Hell—
 Is guide and friend o' t'humblest newcomer
 To all and sundry Satan wisheth well.
 Of course the piper each must frankly pay—
 "Vengeance is mine. I will repay" saith God—
 For each side-step fro'th' straight and narrow way
 For each delinquency above the sod.
 But that once done the future is thine own
 The piper paid—the future is all gold
 After the sweat and blood and soul-wrenched groan
The splendours of Hell's life can scarce be told!
 So let the prospect cheer thee, sir and friend
 And know that as on earth trouble hath end'."

XLV

"We now may start. On passing thro' thy door
 Turn to thy right and do as I direct.
 Thou there shalt find a marble corridor
 Of palest pink. *This warning ne'er neglect.*
 Look neither to thy right nor to thy left
 But keep thine eyes severely on the ground
 Continue till of colour 'tis bereft
 And nought but pure white marble may be found.
 Follow this colour till it turns to green—
 A green translucent like to cresting wave—
 When looking up a portal may be seen
 Strike bold the knocker and an entrance crave.
 On entering thou wilt be shown thy seat
Raise not thine eyes till then I stern repeat."

XLVI

"Our friend thus cautioned wended on his way
 Nor once his eyes did raise from off the ground
 Which he did find just as the Voice did say
 And when he did look up a door he found.
 A door like that of a Cathedral old
 Carved marble stained by time a misty grey
 Its knocker—a huge human hand in gold—
 The new-arrived let fall as th' Voice did say.
 A peal as hollow as a funeral knell
 Struck on his startled ear a dismal clang
 A boom as heavy as a huge Church-bell
 Shot from the mighty knocker's raucous bang.
 A solemn voice within said: 'Who is here?'
 The Voice spake for him: 'One who craves thy cheer.'"

XLVII

"The mighty door swung open without sound
 And closed upon him then as silently.
 Whereat the new-arrived did glance around
 No sooner done than no one did he see.
 He saw a vast and lofty Banquet-Hall
 Arranged with tables its vast entire length
 Richly bedecked as for a festival
 Loaded with plate and wines of richest strength.
 No viands on the board did yet appear.
 He stood at ease and waited the next move
 When an enraptured sound smote on his ear
 As love-lorn as the cooing of wood-dove.
 Great tears of ecstasy sprang to his eyes
 At this mellifluous and wild surprise."

XLVIII

"The female voices floated down the Hall—
 A mighty chorus with stringed instruments—
 The Opera it instant did recall
 But by these tones *its* tones were rudiments.
 Ne'er had he heard such music in his life—
 And ear well trained in music eke had he—
 Such ecstasy of contrapuntal strife
 Such harmony of Music's witchery.
 The voices rose like winds that lash the main
 Or strip a virgin forest of its limbs
 Then like hushed waves they sobbed a soft refrain
 Which lulled the soul as heard-at-evening hymns.
 He stood enraptured—like one in a trance
 In perfect bliss—nought could his joy enhance."

XLIX

"Sudden a mighty portal opened wide
 And down the Hall a mighty Concourse came
 Garbed as himself their Monkish weeds did hide
 Wounds that did make them crippled, halt, and maim.
 The Voice low at his ear said: 'These same men
 Are brothers in adversity to thee
 What they've gone through hath ne'er been writ by pen
 Nor told by tongue—nor yet did eye e'er see.
 What they've gone through in time must thou go through
 And suffer as thou seest them suffer here
 But if so be to thyself thou art true
 Thou'lt rise triumphant—on that have no fear.
 These thou seest here pertain to Christendom
 Other religions to this zone ne'er come.'"

L

"Each nationality is by itself
 Each County and each Town group with their own
 Ranked as they were in life—by birth or pelf
 Thus none in Hell are asked to stand alone.
 Some friends thou'lt find—both friends and comrades true—
 Thy place is straight reservéd amidst them—
 "Manhattan" Clubmen—a most jovial crew—
 They'll be rejoiced to see thee once again.
 They're grouped today at this first table's end
 Stand by a plate and wait their coming there.
 To their advice thy strict adherence lend
 Then of the future thou need'st have no fear.'
 The new-arrived—his eyes ablaze with joy
 Strode towards his seat—as happy as a boy."

LI

"The mighty throng advanced at a slow pace
 Their crippled state prevented ought of speed.
 He saw that Pain was seated on each face
 That Suffering therein had her full meed.
 A deadly fear assaulted straight his heart
 In thinking that these men portrayed his fate.
 It came upon him with a sudden start
 None the less poignant in that it was late.
 He pulled himself together out of pride
 For fear his ancient comrades would it mark
 And for his lack of courage him deride
 Since after all he did not fear a mark.
 With mighty effort he assumed a smile—
 That of Society—with all its guile."

LII

"The leaders by this time were near at hand.
 The face of each he 'gan with vim to scan.
 He caught a chair—or he had failed to stand—
 When he encountered that of the first man.
 It was a Judge of high and wide renown
 Learnéd and upright as a ramrod he
 Who seldom wore the dark Judicial frown
 For he was known for geniality.
 Above the sod he'd known his Honour well
 And with him at the Club had oft played pool
 His horror hence at finding him in Hell
 And so cut up was something far from cool.
 The Judge gazed on him with an awful eye
 That seemed to say: 'Ask me not how nor why!'"

LIII

"Our friend—whose tact was vast—said not a word
 But bowed and smiled as he had been on earth.
 This in the Judge struck sympathetic chord—
 Of friendly manner had he ne'er shown dearth.
 Our friend then glanced beyond—and wild amaze
 Did hold him rigid as a statue cold
 Whose fearful shock his nerve did nearly 'faze'—
 It was a Bishop—if truth must be told!
 A Bishop in his Church—Episcopal—
 Of fame so lily-white and sacrosanct
 That for an Angel he seemed formed as 'pal'
 And all who failed to worship were thought 'cranked.'
 'What's coming next!' Our friend in horror thought
 'Who'd ever thought his Rev'rence could be caught!'"

LIV

"With '*Pax Vobiscum*' air the priest came on—
 Deeply embarrassed—but he passed it off—
 Saying in steady tones: 'How is my son?'
 And then fell back upon a nervous cough.
 Our friend just bowed and smiled as heretofore
 'Silence is golden'—thought he—'e'en in Hell.
 I'd give stout sum to know what *he's* here for—
 Whate'er it be I'm "dead sure" he won't tell!
 And then appeared a Roman Cardinal
 Known to our friend from his newspaper cut
 Whose face was prey to bitterness and gall
 On having fallen into Hell's deep rut.
 'Here is a goodly "bunch"—so help me G—d!
 Enough to bring a smile to Boston's Cod.'"†

†The effigy of the codfish in the State House in Boston, U. S. A.

LV

"But where on earth is my "Manhattan" crowd
 I'd love to have them by me at this board"—
 He silent thought and full as deeply vowed
 When—looking up—he caught a smile most broad.
 Some ten feet from him sat a merry band
 Of what were known on earth as 'dead-game-sports'
 Who all and sundry waved him the 'glad hand'
 Tho' from their wounds and cuts they'd all done torts.
 'That is the place for me! No doubt of that' —
 Thus thought our friend prepared to make a bolt—
 'This grave "bunch" here will swift "talk thro' their hat"
 And bore me stiff, and give my nerves a jolt.
*Hurrah for the old Club! She stands up well
 And her bold offspring hold their own in Hell!"*

LVI

"He swiftly then did engineer his bolt
 And bowing gravely right and left slipped out
 Feeling as doth at liberty a colt
 And a pronounced temptation to shout out.
 To his delight he found the jovial crew
 Had—in their midst—for him a vacant chair.
 So on the six he beaming glances threw
 And for the nonce was wholly free from care.
 He started to shake hands but found that all
 Had one arm or the other in a sling
 This wrapped his spirits as t'were in a pall
 And to his cheek a pallor swift did bring.
 His comrades saw it and said: 'Have no fear
 This sort of thing you won't meet for one year'."

LVII

““On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined”
 As sang the mighty Byron in his day.
 In Hell both Joy and Torture are combined—
 E’en entwined—in a most wondrous way!’
 Thus spake the leader of the Jovial Crew—
 A stock-broker of note in his hot day—
 And from our friend e’en rich commissions drew—
 In ringing voice thus did the ‘scalper’† say.
 ‘You’ve no idea the fun we have down here
 There’s nothing like it even on Broadway
 All is fair play—there’s no foul play to fear
But bear in mind you must the piper pay.
 But that’s too complicate to unfold here
 Wait till you’ve sojourned with us for a year’.”

LVIII

““So now sit down my friend and feel at home
 And well you may since for one hundred years
 From this dread Zone you never once shall roam—
 This Zone of laughter intermixed with tears.’
 Thus speaking he did show our friend a chair
 In which he sat and found himself at ease
 At ease and for the nonce full free from care—
 To see his old Club cronies did him please.
 Sudden stillness fell upon the Hall
 And a sepulchral voice said in chill tones—
 ‘Beware, my brothers, lest in sin ye fall
 But now fall to and leave nought but the bones.’
 A mighty shout as from an arméd host
 Cheered to the echo this hint of their host.”

†A slang term for a Wall Street Stockbroker. Alluding to their taking—“scalping”—commissions from the losings, as well as the winnings, of their customers.

LIX

“And then a marvel rose before his gaze!
 Magic of magic did at once unfold
 Our friend did view in wonder and amaze
 A thing which did his senses spell-bound hold.
 A thousand silver platters did appear
 Before the thousand guests spontaneously
 The sight did fill him with a sudden fear
 As ’twas his first sight of necrómancy.
 The platters brought themselves—sans other aid
 Laden with oysters cool and succulent
 An oyster fork then by each platter laid
 Then at it tooth and nail th’assemblage went.
 Goblets of gold were by gold flagons filled
 Silent and swift and not a drop was spilled.”

LX

“‘We have had nought to eat for one whole week’
 His Club friend said as he a lemon squeezed—
 ‘Hence secret of our zest’s not far to seek
 E’en with less fairy fare would we be pleased.
 But once a week we eat—as you now see
 And each may have his fill sans ought of stint
 At the same time we “watch out” warily
 Bearing in mind our stern Preceptor’s hint.
 Each man may drink as much as he can stand
 But let him dread beware of drunkenness
 I’t’h’ calaboose for one month that will land
 The brother who doth show such thoughtlessness.
Thus drinking is a test of self-control.
 Strengthens the will and cheers the striving soul.’”

LXI

"Just then two of the walls dissolved in air
 Facing each row of guests as they did sit
 And opened on a stage beyond compare
 Vast in proportions and by Magic lit.
 A dreamy melody then filled the air
 Soft as the sougning of an evening breeze
 Which instant soothed the soul suffused with care
 And equally the intellect did please.
 If trees had leaves were harps Aeolian
 And Zephyr softly played upon their strings
 With Apollo as the grand custodian
 O'th' baton and his orders silent flings—
 You'd get a hint of music that brought tears
 As its soft melodies sunk in our ears."

LXII

"Then on a sudden voices low did call
 From the umbrageous trees which formed the wings—
 Sweet girlish voices whose clear tones did fall
 Upon the ear as soft as beating wings.
 And a Midsummer Night's Dream 'fore us rose—
With real and actual fairies in the cast—
 Did Titania and her Oberon disclose
 And Fays and Fairies—a whole concourse vast.
 A second cheer deep-throated as the first—
 A cheer that caused the lofty dome to ring—
 Did from th'entranced host like thunder burst
 And to the Fairies' cheeks sweet blushes bring.
 The actors then their rôles did straight rehearse
 Another text but in great Shakspeare's verse."

LXIII

"The Fairies' figures were a thing of joy
 Of grace and symmetry and lovely lines
 Their stature was as that of girl and boy
 Which five feet, five feet two in each confines.
 But beyond that their figures were mature—
 Their dainty drapery hinted a breast
 Whose sweetly swelling lines were firm as pure
 Whose beauty was a thing can't be expressed.
 Their faces matched their forms in fairy charm
 The like of which our eyes had never seen
 Their glance intelligent as it was warm
 The whole ruled over by an air serene.
 The faces of the males were stern and bold
 While their muscled frames a warlike vigour told."

LXIV

"King Oberon did port a Kingly beard
 Which did resemble that of Charlemagne
 Its dusky strands his cuirass' top just cleared
 And from his square jaws tumbled like a mane.
 Titania's lovely tresses were pure gold—
 A gold as delicate as sunset-sheen
 With glamour and with lustre can't be told
 The like of its mine eyes had never seen.
 Her teeth of pearl and lips as ruby red
 Her dark grey eyes that like two jewels shone
 The fairy grace which shone forth in her tread
 As she and Oberon did mount their throne
 Her charms—my boy—totted up such a sum
 That—on my soul—the sight clean struck me dumb."

LXV

"And when she spoke her voice did bear the tones—
 The witching murmur—that one hears in streams
 In little streams which murmur o'er the stones
 When o'er the bank long summer shadow streams.
 And when she laughed 'twas like a chime of bells—
 Of elfin bells heard on a frosty night
 Within the hollows of those haunted dells
 Where Dian loves to shed her silvery light.
 No rhapsody is this but solemn truth
 Poor mundane ears ne'er yet heard such a sound
 On hearing it I almost swooned in sooth—
 Swooned from pure joy—near went off in a swoond.
 The voice of Oberon was strong and stern
 But through its chords a tenderness did yearn."

LXVI

"Upon the other stage was shown the Court
 Of Fairyland's Crown Prince, and Consort fair
 A handsome stripling with dark locks curled short
 While like Titania's was the Princess' hair.
 I merely turned to look then turned away
 Because my heart Titania fair had won
 But my esteem all lust firm held at bay
 In Hell adultery i'th' head is done—
 Just as Christ said—and in Hell all soon find
 Illicit thoughts it pays one *well* to shun
 Unless i'th' calaboose he'd be confined
 Unless for thirty days he'd lose all fun.
 A play dramatic as its verse was grand
 Then held us spell-bound—by magician's hand."

LXVII

"Such jewels as the lovely Queen had on
 Were never worn by Empress on the earth
 Suffice to say they like the dew-drop shone
 When the first rays of sunshine reach their birth.
 Her pearls were like the hoar-frost when the moon
 Draws near her time and falls upon the wane.
 Her rubies like a tulip at high noon
 When not a breath doth stir the weather-vane
 And when the sun doth glow like new-shed blood
 Athwart her lustrous velvet petal fine
 Or when red wine that in a goblet stood
 Is slowly spilled and through't the sun doth shine.
 Her robe was pearl-sheened silk—her shoon of gold—
 But of her charms I scarce the half have told."

LXVIII

"Meantime the banquet did sans halt proceed—
 Viands and wines to grace a kingly board—
 All dined with gusto but sans hint of greed
 And not a brother took too much aboard.
 Another wonder then did straight unfold—
The knives and forks did cut the meat themselves!
 Thus those whose wounded arms a sling did hold
 Were, as it were, tended by viewless Elves.
 Nought of the scene behind did any hear
 Magic did halt the sound-waves instantly
 Thus nought of discord jarred upon the ear
 And all moved smooth and Fairy-pleasantly.
 Cigars of rich aroma then were brought
 And the solace which they bring by all was sought."

LXIX

"Now what I straight shall say will make you smile
 But you do know full well I'm Truth itself
 That on the earth I was as free from guile
 As I was surely, surely free from pelf.
 Sudden the scene changed to a *Minstrel Show!*
 'Interlocutor' and 'End Men' black as night
 With tambourine and 'bones' to make things go—
 The vasty stage did make a gorgeous sight!
 I feared the tympana of these my ears
 Would crack beneath the weight of that vast yell
 Of rapture—of catcalls and joyous jeers
 That burst from out the throats of us in Hell!
 The ebon Interlocutor so bland
 With smile full mundane bowed and waved his hand."

LXX

"Whereat another and a *fiercer* yell
 Than e'en the former made the welkin ring!
 Which quieted by magic 'neath the spell
 Of singer who did like a Seraph sing!
 Like raindrops on a desert fell those tones
 Upon the parchéd ears o'th' mighty throng
 Which burst in stormy laughter as the 'bones'
 His comic end-man 'business' brought along.
 The Interlocutor's unruffled air
 As he did pose his questions to the 'ends'
 Brought vividly to mind the upper air
 And when all hands were bent on human ends.
 The grand finale brought ecstatic yell—
 Featured: 'Smart Aleck's' *entrée* into Hell."

LXXI

"Which roaring farce had scarce come to an end
 When a deep bell struck one soul-chilling tone
 Warning the throng their banquet straight must end
 And sobering the face of everyone.
 Once more the Voice with the sepulchral tones
 Re-echoed down that vasty Banquet-Hall
 Bounding and echoing along its stones
 Up-conjuring all bitterness and gall.
 The cowed assemblage slowly, sadly rose
 And with bowed heads awaited stoical
 Th'irruption of those awful tones that froze
 The heart and chilled th'immortal soul of all.
 Like breath from glacier o'the' Boreal Pole
 Then slowly swept those tones upon the soul."

LXXII

"All things have end in Hell as on the earth
 Save torment in the Brimstone Lake of Flame.
 Prepare ye now for six days of dread dearth
 When all meet here again if free from blame.
 That fasting desert past ye feast once more
 In this our Banquet-Hall of Hell's good cheer
 Where's ne'er a thought of care, nor hint of bore—
 Nor Care nor Bore dare show their noses here.
 So summon up your courage—brave my lads!
 Call up the Soul's reserves of nerve and gall
 Which make Her timber's strong as ironclad's—
 Enable you to triumph over all.
 Think on the joys which 'wait the victor-soul
 The bliss and glory waiting at the goal'!"

LXXIII

"Once more the walls on both sides lifted swift
 Disclosing scenes past all description grand
 As though the Walls of Paradise showed rift
 Which did a view of Her delights command!
 Beside a silver stream whose shaded banks
 Of velvet lawns her wimpling waters kiss
 My dazed gaze beheld in serried ranks
 The blushing beauties of the Maids of Bliss.
*Immortal maidens destined for the brave—
 Rewards of valour and of constancy—
 One for each hero who his soul doth save
 Who o'er his passion holds the empire.*
 In modest mien they grouped upon the marge
 Prizes to fire the coldest to the charge!"

LXXIV

"Their robes diaphanous of creamy hue
 Veiled while they showed the splendours of each form
 To th' lines of Grecian beauty ever true—
 A beauty magical—beyond the norm.
 Their golden zones beneath their budding bust—
 Cup-like and perfect as fair Helen's own—
 Held firm the garment 'gainst the breast's firm thrust
 A sapphire and a ruby clipped each zone.
 Their naked feet in sandals of pure gold
 Dimpled the lawn, like petals from blown rose
 Whilst of their face the beauty can't be told
 'Twas purest Greek—from lips to brow and nose.
 In groups they stood—of modest mien serene
 A sight to warm an anchorite—I ween."

LXXV

"The vast dome seemed to *rock* above the cheer
 Which burst from out the Host at this sweet sight
 Whose roar received an echo sweet as clear
 From that green bank with beauty thus bedight.
 The maidens smiled and waved their rosy hands
 And showered flowers on the rippling stream
 Then ranged themselves beneath one whose commands
 Had the authority one yields a Queen.
 In double lines they formed—then rhythmic moved
 To unseen music in a stately dance
 Which their sweet grace and suppleness full proved
 And did their stately beauty deep enhance.
 Then from their coral lips floated this song
 Which held spell-bound the cowed and breathless throng."

LXXVI

"Rouse! Warriors! Be brave! And win the prize
 Which 'waits each hero on this flowery bank.
 Your doughty deeds are viewed by Beauty's eyes
 And with her smiles your efforts will she thank.
 In us ye view the Soul-Mate of each one
 Of thy vast throng foredoomed by Destiny
 For sweet companionship—once task is done—
 Throughout the aeons of Eternity.
 Thy hopes are ours! Thy wishes are *our own!*
 We yearn for thee as ye do yearn for us
 We weep in anguish when we hear thee groan
We see thee suffer—'tis ordained thus.
 If ye do yearn to fall into our arms
 Speed ye to combat! *Rush* to war's alarms!"

LXXVII

"Near us Satiety doth never come
 Our beauties never wither, never fade.
 In sketching thus the programme of our home
 We must be frank and call a spade a spade.
 With us sweet Love is one long Honeymoon
 Throughout the confines of Eternity
 It lasteth not for one poor paltry moon
 As for our sisters in Flesh' frailty.
 Each morn we rise a virgin from our bed—
 For sleep reneweth our virginity—
 Each morn forget what passed when we did wed
 What happed last night in our vicinity.
 The same forgetfulness doth thy love renew
 Hence is it ever maiden—*ever new*.'"

LXXVIII

"We are thus frank because we know the world
 Know that man's nature is polygamous—
 How hotly Passion's flames are round him curled
By meeting nearly any one of us!
 The prospect of eternity with one
 Would be to most men a most awful curse
 Hence we have shown a miracle brought on—
A miracle of love—no less—no worse.
 With fell Satiety by Fate thus banned
 With beauty never fading—ever young
 Our life together will with joy be crammed—
 The *sweetest* honeymoon was *ever* sung!
 If ye do yearn to fall into our arms
Speed ye to combat! *Rush* to war's alarms'!"

LXXIX

"When a tornado thunders through a wood
 Uprooting trees—backed by the lightning's crash
 Leaving deep holes where once an oak tree stood
 Midst roar of thunder and the levin's flash
 Thus rushed a storm of passion thro' the souls
 Of that vast throng of desperate heart-sick men
 Who on a sudden saw before them goals—
Enchanted goals—rising within their ken!
 Whereat a shout like that of a vast Host
 That runs to combat with a joyful heart
 Ready to conquer or give up the ghost
 From those grim lips did like tornado start.
 Ere it died down the scene did disappear
 And nought but grey walls on each side appear."

LXXX

"Once more arose the voice of our grim host
 Whose tones sepulchral chilled our very heart
 As hopeless as the tones of a soul lost
 Where Hope hath dwindled to a withered wart.
 'Ye see my boys I did not overdraw
 The beauties of the Maids ye just have seen
 A beauty matchless as it is sans flaw
 The whole ennobled by an air serene.
 Therefore, my lads; "*Be brave! Be fortunate!*"
 The prayer said o'er the dauntless Knights of old—
*And bear in mind that when each wins his mate
 His coffers will be flowing o'er with gold.*
 So now gird up your loins and set forth home
 And one week hence may ye all hither come'."

LXXXI

"With a stern martial air the Host set out—
 With head erect and firm and haughty tread—
 And as they rose gave forth a mighty shout
 That seemed to shake the rafters overhead.
 By two and two they marched in column long—
It roused the soul to watch their stately pace—
 And as they marched their stern lips gave forth song
 To which all slightly swayed with rhythmic grace.
 It was as though the magic of the sight
 Of that green bank peopled with lovely maids
 Had healed the wounds all suffered from *outright!*
 Had rendered them intangible as shades.
 My heart took fire when I did hear the song
 That burst from the fierce lips of that grim throng."

LXXXII

"We are the men condemned to fight with flame—
 The Magic Snakes which Satan, Prince of Hell
 Hath organized to purge us free from blame
 And rid us of our faults and failings fell.
 Fierce is the battle with these deadly things
 From whom a thrust doth reach the marrow's heart
 Who full i'th' heart or liver plant their stings
 And make the very *soul* from torture start.
 Skillful the thrust of these dread enemies—
 These *masters* of the school of deepest fence!
 Who now attack our mouths—and now our eyes
 And 'gainst which nought but *thought* is a defence!
Except one thinks both just, and true, and quick
These Hell-Snakes' fangs do pierce him to the quick'!"

LXXXIII

“The problems posed by one’s Subconsciousness
 To which on earth each lent a heedless ear—
 In Hell are put with this increased stress
Not to respond fills each with grisly fear!
For whilst one halts, his snake doth stab him fierce
And drives its fangs through limbs, and arms and thighs
 One’s lungs and abdomen doth vicious pierce
 Whilst deaf as adder to his groans and cries.
One’s very brain is not immune thereto—
These Hellish fangs do pierce clean through the skull.
Do shoot from wall to wall sans more to do—
Thrust through the skull as though its walls were wool!
 Their fangs feel like an iron at white heat
 And torture throbs therefrom from head to feet’.”

LXXXIV

“You lose an eye and then—*the sight’s restored!*
The very instant that the pangs are passed!
 A thrust i’th mouth makes teeth go by the board
 The anguish gone—the teeth in rank are massed.
 A thrust i’th’ heart or brain doth cause *swift death*
 Pain gone, *by magic* one doth live again!
 Thy death hath lasted but a single breath—
 By magic too is driven off all pain.
But in that breath thou’st once more tasted death.
 And so it goes! one dies and lives again
 All in the compass of a fleeting breath!
 But in that breath lurk aeons grim of pain
One dies a thousand deaths within the week!
 Till hard-run soul Oblivion would seek’!”

LXXXV

"No bones e'er break—the flesh alone doth scar—
 Or what at least takes up its place in Hell—
 And wounds ne'er suppurate—they heal full clear
 Acting beneath the Prince of Hell—his spell.
 The magic ichor that doth stand for blood
 Flows through the veins as doth the blood on earth
 But ne'er a drop is spilled of its rich flood—
Too priceless is its rich—immortal worth!
 Its ruby drops do hover round a wound
 And then return to th' stream from whence they came
 No drop of ichor e'er falls to the ground
 But like quicksilver joins its ruby main.
One's ichor keeps one cool or warm by turns!
Warm when 'tis cold—cool when the noontide burns'."

LXXXVI

"Hence garments are for grace and decency—
 To deck the figure of a man or maid—
 And never by a chance, utility
 Since by the ichor is all warmth e'er made.
 Since all wear armour of the Grecian type
 Spear, shield, sword, helmet, greaves and steel cuirass
 For combat all in Hell are ever ripe
 And ne'er an insult unavenged may pass.
For Self-Respect's the motto here below
 Here all are equal when it comes to that
 And Hell's fierce Prince doth make all taste of woe
 Who when insulted force not *tit for tat*.
 Thus Self-Respect and Courage are nursed strong
And ne'er in Hell may live unrighted wrong'."†

†Showing where Hell—as the sporting phrase hath it—can—for Justice—give this much lauded world: "*Cards, spades and a licking.*"

LXXXVII

" 'Ideality's the watchword of all Hell—
 Of all who've done their time and serve her Prince—
 Who love the clash of arms e'en passing well
 And from the shock of battle do not wince.
 Ideality's our Watchword and our God—
 For what *is* God but Ideality—
 Whose sceptre's a *sharp sword*—no mere blunt rod—
 Whose rulings rest on Truth and Equity!
Jehovah Jah—that mighty 'Man of War'—
Fills—on His record—the above rich cup
Hence doth His praise in Hell deep echo far
E'en towards the stars doth its incense rise up!
 A Warrior-God, He rules o'er warriors
 Hymns to His glory fill Hell's corridors'!"

LXXXVIII

" 'And when against the Hosts of Sin we war—
 The villains who seduced us on the earth—
 And from both Truth and Justice lured us far
Of zeal for deep revenge there is no dearth!
 To th' shock of arms *exultant do we dash—*
 Eager as lover for his mistress' breast—
 Eager to fill the air with arms stern clash
Eager to be i'th' shock of battle pressed!
 The awful shock of the engaged Phalanx—
 Like avalanche against an avalanche—
 With her deep files of glistening steel-clad ranks
 Doth make the cheek of all but heroes blanch!
Then may be heard Hell's long-drawn battle yell
As we do drive our doughty foes pell-mell!"

LXXXIX

"Then may be heard the charging war-horse' hoof
 As Squadron against Squadron *hurts* in shock
 Pounding like rocks upon an iron roof
 Pulsing fierce eagerness from crest to hock!
 Their riders thrust or strike as they whirl by
 Parry or lunge as circumstance commands
 In perfect poise of body, hand and eye
 As leaders—trumpet-tongued—shout their commands.
 Like whirlwind do they meet—like whirlwind pass—
 Some horses riderless—some horses down
A pulsing thunderbolt!—A breathing mass!
 Which hath no sooner come than it hath flown!
 We cheer our comrades as we see them win
 And drive in whirlwind flight the Troops of Sin'."

XC

"After the victory the banquet grand!
 In Satan's mighty Banquet-Hall sublime
 Where he doth sit with's peers on either hand
 Whose faces intellect and strength combine.
 There doth he sit and welcome us to joy—
 To joys of which earth hath no faintest hint—
 To joy unmixed and free from all alloy
 Poured out with lavish hand sans hint of stint.
 There do we feast—whilst music rapturous
 With voices sheer seraphic in their tone
 Enchant the ear of each and all of us
 Waft on the Wings of Song both all and one!
 For such sweet joys and glories do we fight—
 Cry strong: "Lay on! And God protect the right"!"

XCI

"Thus the grim Throng did chant and wind along
 The labyrinthine ways from whence they came
 Our friend formed unit of that cowléd Throng
 The Voice low whispered him to do the same.
 Leaving the Banquet Hall a cloister'd way
 Led straight as arrow till the chant was done
 Which then did turn into a covered way
 Dark as a dungeon—when of light there's none.
 In utter silence did they enter here
 The only sound their sandals muffled fall
 Once entered on our friend did feel the fear
 Which gripped him when he heard that rustling pall.
 Sudden a thought like iron nerved his soul!
 The beauteous Maids of Bliss and their sweet goal."

XCII

"His Club-friend at his side low-whispered him
 'This place is haunted by the Fiends of Fear
 Who'll make the goose-flesh rise upon your skin
 And on your forehead beads of sweat appear.
This they will do. One cannot them prevent
 The bravest of the brave feel these same things
 But sans the least disgrace—they're Nature's vent
 So be prepared when this with Fiends' yells rings!
 He'd scarcely ceased when such a yell burst out—
 Soul-chilling and hair-raising fraught with dread—
 As made the sweat in streams on him spout out
A yell to bring up standing men long dead!
 Whereat the dauntless Host gave back a yell
Of fierce defiance fit to rouse all Hell!"

XCIII

"Whereat the very ground beneath their feet
 Did quake and totter with an earthquake's heave.
 It seemed as though the floor each face would meet
 Which rose in billows—like a wave did heave!
 By magic did the bricks which paved the floor
 Hold in their places as though glued thereto
 Whereby to Death was opened wide a door
 Since straight against their faces the floor flew!
 But halted just before it mashed them in—
 The earth waves making the grim heroes reel—
 And all the while the air bore such a din
 As though all Fiends in Hell their yells did peel.
*But through the darkness rose th'undaunted yell
 Of the cowl'd Host surrounded by Hell's spell."*

XCIV

"His Club-friend threw his arm about our friend—
 About his waist—and yelled: 'Cling tight to me!
 A danger spot doth lurk at this gut's end
 We vet'rans know it—though naught o't' may see.
 We know when we approach it by the smell—
 A cesspool's rose-water by its foul stench—
 For 'tis a smell peculiar *strict* to Hell
 And carries fear which makes e'en our hearts blench.
 When you first smell it crouch prepared to fall
 In this way you may dodge the giant-bats
 Which harbour at that end 'gainst either wall
 Their bodies are five times the size of rats.
 The limit of their swoop's four feet fro'th'floor
 Sec to it that your stature is no more'."

XCV

"These filthy things port lice a full inch long
 Which spring upon you if their wings you touch
 And if they land they bite as though a prong
 Had pierced you roundly and was in close touch.
 The bats, too, bite like any cornered rat—
 Their teeth are long and sharp as carpet tacks—
 And you may safely bet a new top-hat
 You'll fly pell-mell from one of their attacks.
 There's nothing to be done but crouch full low
 With all your muscles flexed and joints relaxed
 Thus you dodge bats and lice at one fell blow
But I warn you your patience will be taxed!
 The uproar by this time did clean subside.
 Our friend gave thanks, his nerves were sorely tried."

XCVI

"Then suddenly a stench attacked his nose
 To picture which imagination *quails*
 At its vile touch his senses almost froze
 To paint that stench my language simply fails!
 He scarcely had recovered from this shock
 When his hair stood on end at whir of wings.
 His Club-friend in the ribs him swift did knock
 As signs of circling bats that did impinge.
 Instant our friend did crouch and grope his way
 With arms and hands outspread to grip the floor
 Whilst 'neath the waves of stench his soul did sway
 And once again outburst the fell uproar.
 Cold sweat sprang from his ears, his eyes, his nose
 As he did dodge the bats and their vile blows."

XCVII

"Sudden a light burst on their hungry eyes
 As golden-rosy as the sunset's sheen
 And their stunned ears were soothed—to their surprise—
 By female tones—cross 'twixt a song and keent†
 Slowly the words emerged as from a mist—
 In which shapes are obscure and lack all form—
 And as they did their very souls seemed kissed—
 Their storm-tried souls—so sweet these words did warm
 'Now welcome, heroes, to a zone of rest
 For a set space no danger here doth come
 Here is brief rest for souls with strife oppressed
 Here for a time may ye breathe as at home.'
 The voices ceased. The Host sank on the grass
 Which luscious here and flower-laden was."

XCVIII

"For a full sweet hour did they slumber there
 When trumpet blast did burst upon their ears
 And once more were they roused to toil and care
 Once more to face a world of grisly fears.
 The Host up-sprang like soldiers at command
 And ranged themselves in column as before
 When they did see approach on either hand
 Two monsters which chilled our friend to the core!
 A cross betwixt an elephant and snake—
 Their trunks were snakes their tails were snakes as well—
 Who as they moved a trumpeting did make
 Which seemed to shake the base of *very* Hell!
 The serpents writhed and hissed like a simoon
 And scared our friend till death seemed a sweet boon."

†Irish funeral song accompanied with wailing.

XCIX

“*Stick close to me.*’ His friend said in low tones
 ‘If we do hold our ranks no harm can come.
 He who falls out they crush to pulp his bones
Kill him and trample him and then roll home.
 An exercise in Moral Courage this—
A simple one and highly, primary—
 An odour foul rides on each serpent’s hiss
 Of which foul smell I warn you to be wary.
 Its tendency’s to make one get away
 And if you do you never can get back
 A force mysterious holds you at bay
 Until the beasts have laid you on your back.
 After a man’s been killed he straight comes-to
 But that fell trampling is a thing all rue.’”

C

“The beasts are forced to keep full six feet off
 The Laws of Hell forbid they nearer come
 Those of us who’ve the nerve the brutes then scoff—
 Scoff and revile them till they make things hum.
 None but a man of iron nerve dare this
 For the beasts pick him out and let him see
 What’s “up to him” if he one point doth miss
At the dark game of cold Self-mastery! ..
The Cardinal’s the only man as yet
 Among our thousand who dare challenge them
But’s logic is a thing on which to bet
 And logic—of *all* things—is rare in men.
 The beasts first try our ranks both front and rear
 To see if any one hath budged from fear’.”

END
 OF
 CANTO ONE

**Second Spirit Message
(alleged) from Hell**

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By
JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER.**

INTRODUCTION.

It occurred to the writer to attempt to follow up the alleged spirit-message from his antique friend, the late Thomas Jefferson Miller, of the "Manhattan Club," New York, formerly a non-commissioned officer in the Confederate Navy. The writer did so, with the enclosed somewhat startling results, to-wit. The hypothesis that life beyond the tomb is something to be desired rather than dreaded—at least by all reasonably honest and humane folk—and that nothing is comparable to its glamor and thrill outside the pages of the "Arabian Nights." The loves of "Marmaduke Grantham" and "Lucile Sternold," originating in a shooting affray at the foot of the Capitol in Washington, D. C., and carried on in a most entrancing and bewildering fashion beyond the tomb, *opens up to civilization an entirely new vista*, as follows:

It is characteristic of human nature to—if interested in a story or novel—put oneself in the place of the hero or heroine—as one happens to be a male or a female novel-reader; this—one may say—is the universal habit among novel-readers of dramatic instincts, plus imagination. Well, this habit invariably carried a boomerang with it—it invariably landed its follower, what is known in the Prize Ring, as a "punch on the jaw," in the shape of a heavy sigh, when the tale was told, and the thought: "This is only a novel—things don't happen that way in real life. *If they only did!*"—swooped down upon the soul when the book was closed.

The romance of "Marmaduke Grantham" and "Lucile Sternold"—placed between quotation marks because fictitious names, to conceal the alleged actual romance of actual Washingtonians recently deceased—the romance of these charming personalities in the Land Beyond the Grave, fills the above long felt want—allows the male or female novel-reader to luxuriate in surely the most resplendent dreams of satisfied love and satisfied ambition *ever put upon paper*, and the writer is fully aware of the largeness of said preceding phrase. There is no shadow of conceit in the same, since the writer did not write the said romance—it is strictly the production

of his Subconsciousness—named by him his X-Faculty, or Unknown Faculty. Being a Medium, according to so distinguished and honored an authority as the late William James, M. D., Professor of Psychology at Harvard University—but at the same time, admitted by Professor James to be an utter disbeliever in Spiritualism—and, instead, charging up all his spiritualistic phenomena such as Automatic Writing, Automatic Speech, Trances, and Trance-Like States, to the at present utterly unknown, utterly Science-baffling force which produces what the Father of the X-Ray—for without his invention there could *be* no X-Ray—what the inventor of Crookes' Tubes—what Sir William Crookes, in the Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1911, terms most scientifically and succinctly: “percussion without impact”—vulgarly known as “spirit rappings.”

What this force is, Science at present knoweth not. All that Science knows is that such “raps” *are* produced, and, as Sir William Crookes describes, in an utterly Science-baffling—an utterly unheard of manner—*the sounds of the raps or blows are produced without any known natural or Scientific cause—the sound of the “percussion”—of the rap or blow, is heard, but there has been no stroke, no “impact”—to produce the sound—to produce the “percussion.”*

The writer charges up said baffling phenomenon to a force in himself—as well as in all other Mediums—over which the Medium has absolutely *no* control—can neither initiate nor halt the raps, when once begun. He firmly believes that some day said force will be explained. Until said bright day, however, he contents himself with charging said force up to his X-Faculty, or Subconsciousness. Now, said X-Faculty or Subconsciousness is perfectly willing to be so charged, but, as is the rule in all mediumistic séances, demands respectful treatment at the hands of the writer while said séances are in session, upon pain of the utter refusal of the Subconsciousness to operate the nerve-centres in the writer's brain, which control the movements of his right hand, and thus produce the Graphic Automatism or Automatic Writing, before alluded to. This explains the writer's addressing the alleged charming consort of the *no longer* hoary-headed and antique Thomas Jefferson Miller, when that interesting personality—

or, at least alleged personality—takes part in the séance and operates the pen with which the loves and dangers of “Marmaduke Grantham” and “Lucile Sternold” are depicted, by her own alleged name. The writer preserves an absolutely judicial attitude in the whole affair—unprejudiced, and unbiased, as a judge should be. He is perfectly willing to believe that—upon the reception of adequate, indisputable proof—that the fair consort of the late Thomas Jefferson Miller is a living soul, and not a mere alleged Mediumistic Control.† He uses the phrase “mere alleged Mediumistic Control” as indicating that he charges up the work of the alleged “Control” to the X-Faculty, or Subconsciousness, *masquerading* in the guise of a personality, or spirit. No one could be more charmed than the writer to receive sufficient proof to establish the claims of the charming alleged consort of the alleged spirit of the late lamented Thomas Jefferson Miller, of the Manhattan Club, New York. For it would utterly and completely banish the doubt and dread at present shrouding the heavily-veiled exit of man from this terrestrial ball. *It would make death—instead of being the biggest horror in life—or, at least, usually a highly undesirable occurrence—as by the touch of a Fairy’s wand the “open sesame” to the most magical and rose-hued grotto of divine delights, ever dreamed of by the mind of man!*

Of course, the romance of “Marmaduke Grantham” and “Lucile Sternold” *may* be as true as Gospel, *in which event, old age—instead of being the head-centre of disgust and dread, would become the antechamber of a Palace of A Thousand Dreams—where every old man and every old woman could beguile the flying hours with weaving romances—such as befell “Marmaduke” and “Lucile”—in which said romances he or she could play an actual, vital, and rosy rôle.*

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER,

“The Merry Mills,”

Cobham,

Virginia.

December 9, 1918.

† “Control. * * * *Spiritualism*. A personality or spirit believed to actuate the utterances or performances of the medium.” *Webster’s New International Dictionary*.

Second Spirit Message (alleged) from Hell

1' to Noon, Sunday, November 18th, 1917.

"The Merry Mills." (My bedroom).

(I should like to ask if I may be permitted to resume communication with the alleged spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller.)

(X-Faculty): You are permitted so to do, and may begin immediately.

(Many thanks.)

(Uncle Tom, I am now prepared to enjoy further fruits from your gifted pen.)

My dear Archie, you amaze me. Upon what grounds am I the flattered recipient of a request from you to resume communication with you—I knowing full well that you are as firm a disbeliever in Spiritualism as ever?

(Upon the following hypothetical and philosophical ground my sarcastic and venerable friend. *Primo*. You scored what you will pardon my frankness for dubbing the Devil of a hit in forecasting this titanic, this Hellish world-war, five years before it was ever dreamed of. Your prophecy is two-fold—one open—one secret. The open prophecy was as follows: On page 26 of "Hell" you say: "The occasion of the present embassy is a rumor which has got about that the world is approaching its end, by which I mean that the Millennium is about to begin." Now anyone who knows anything knows that the battle of Armageddon ushers in the Millennium in the Book of Revelation. Therefore it follows logically that Armageddon and the Millennium are one. Now, the entire British Nation terms this world-war Armageddon. Therefore to their minds, at least, either the Millennium or something very like it is under way. So far, so good. To the above is to be added the following remark from you—page 34, "Hell"—"The time has come when God Almighty is about to wipe out His score

against that damnable aggregation of foul qualities yecept man and woman." The ensuing lines show how strongly I revolted against that summary of my race—or at least, the female portion thereof—and nothing has since transpired to shake my position in said regard—but when one considers the world-wide scope of woe opened up for the heart of woman—not to speak of the heart of man—the hearts of mothers, wives, sweethearts, and sisters, torn and anguished by anxiety, day and night for three years past, and—to my mind—to be torn and anguished for at least two years to come—till well on in 1919, at the very earliest—to say nothing of fathers too old to fight, whose sons are at the front—and when, outside said classes, one considers the heart of every human being in the warring nations depressed and tormented by taxes and restrictions, regulations and privations, practically unheard of since the world began; when one considers the normal man of all classes, from the millionaire to the small country cross-roads merchant, from the banker to the pawnbroker, all with debt—national debt—hanging about their necks like small millstones, their profits eaten into by their increased expenses through taxes—not to speak of the increased cost of living—and when, lastly, one considers the laboring man as well as the man-in-the-street, pinched as to their stomachs as to what they are permitted to eat—how much they are permitted to eat at home or at a restaurant—when one considers the above startling, strange and unheard of items, one is forced to the conclusion that *if* God Almighty has a score against humanity, why then, in said event, God Almighty comes within measurable distance of wiping same pretty thoroughly out. I have omitted to mention the most appalling side of this universal holocaust—so-to-speak—that is to say, the Hellish destruction of human life, and, what is almost worse, the damnable mutilation and disfigurement resulting from this war. I do not dwell upon this phase of the discussion because it fills me with so ferocious a form of woe that it fatigues me—my little pamphlet entitled "Pieces of Eight" supports my last contention.

In conclusion. When we add to the above open prophecy by you on the onrush of this Hellish war, the "secret prophecy" alluded to, but entirely unveiled,

in the following brief words page 34, "Hell," to-wit: "Now nothing can be farther from my mind than for you to infer that said prophecy" (said "secret prophecy") is meant to be believed by a solitary inhabitant upon this terrestrial ball, male or female. Belief is not in the least desired. Far from it, dear boy, far from it. The time is come when God Almighty is about to wipe out, etc., etc."—the said secret prophecy, in other words, as aforesaid. When we add both prophecies together we get a very creditable result—credible, I mean, to you as the heir of the Prophet Ezekiel—for the said "secret prophecy" smacks strongly of that most holy and most mystic of Prophets.

Secundo. Now, though Spiritualism is to me a stench in the nostrils, yet and nevertheless, Necromancy is far from being so. Necromancy is what was practiced by my fair predecessor the Witch of Endor in the mystic art of searching the dark and utterly unexplored caverns of the soul—yclept Psychology. Necromancy is thus described in Stormonth's Etymological Dictionary. To-wit: "Necromancy . . . from Greek, *nekros*, dead: *manteia*, divination. Divination by the agency of the spirits of the dead. . . . Necromancer . . . one who practices the art." Now, to avoid error, I shall supply Stormonth's definition of "divination," to-wit: "Divine, Latin, *divino*, I foretell. To foretell or predict. . . . Divination . . . foretelling future events."

So far, so good. Therefore in so far as you foretold this war to me five years before its occurrence, and in so far as you are one of "the spirits of the dead"—at least, alleged—and lastly, in so far as said divination was the result of my art—why—to that extent, to say the least, I am a Necromancer. And, as the spirit of Samuel the Prophet foretold the last battle of Saul, to Saul, King of Israel, through the art of the Witch of Endor, so did—on the evidence—and with all possible and appropriate reservations—so did your spirit foretell the onrush of the present holocaust to me.

Therefore, my beloved and respected Uncle, alleged, I take off my hat to you as a seer second only to Samuel, former Judge of Israel, himself!).

Argued with your usual care, smoothness, assurance, and audacity. Now permit me to operate the pencil for a few

moments—after—and as a change from—your manipulation thereof for so unconscionable a time.

In the first place, permit me to observe that you apply the term “fair predecessor,” in what you term “the mystic art of searching the dark and utterly unexplored caverns of the soul,” permit me to observe that you apply the term “fair predecessor” to a personage banned by Jehovah and held in detestation, therefore, by all devout Christians.

(Permit me to reply, my beloved and respected Uncle, alleged, that “the ways of God are past finding out.” No greater mistake could be made—by a mind, at least—to speak with extreme frankness—by a *soul*—worth “Hell room”—no greater mistake could be made than to throw stones at the so-called Witch of Endor.

She ranks with Deborah as one of the most heroic figures in the Old Testament. Permit me to support the following possibly bold statement. In the first place it is permissible to assume and believe that she was a Philistine. As such, she cared no more for—and *rightly* so—for the mandates of Jehovah than you would for the alleged decrees of Mahomet’s God “Allah.” She bowed to but one God, and that God was the God of two of the greatest—from *every* point of view—heroes, and military *and* statesmanlike heroes, at that, of the entire world—two of the greatest geniuses of the Universe, namely, Hamilcar Barca and his marvellous son, Hannibal—the scourge of Rome. Both were Carthaginians, and therefore Phoenicians—since Carthage was but a colony of ancient Tyre—and both were therefore Philistines. Having explained why she had a perfect right to disregard the mandates of God Almighty, I shall now close by touching very briefly upon her heroic character. In the first place, she practiced her art—of Necromancy—under the penalty of death—owing to the recent decree of Jehovah. In the second place, *after* practicing said art she showed that she possessed some of the loveliest attributes of the female heart by ministering—*against her will*—and out of pure womanly sympathy to a *fallen monarch*—a monarch from whom she could look for no earthly reward, *and*, note this, my nineteenth century New York Club man—man of the world, and man-about-town,—at the immediate and serious cost to her bank account—for she at once killed a calf, and served it, and there is not the

slightest hint in the Scriptures that Saul, in his naturally frightfully distracted state of mind over the impending, immediate ruin of his Kingly House, and his own immediately impending defeat and death in battle with his beloved sons—and, my venerable and beloved Uncle, alleged—there is not the slightest hint in the Scriptures that Saul thought of paying her for her calf, which must have been a serious loss to her, since her income was practically wiped out by the afore-said decree of Jehovah, punishing with death any one employing a “familiar spirit.”)

In the second place, you appear to think that the Millennium has actually begun.

(I challenge you to support that claim. I merely point to the striking similarity between the terms “Armageddon” and “Millennium”—and say that Great Britain says the first is here, and you—my venerable Uncle, alleged,—said the second was distinctly *en route* five years before it arrived. *Voilà tout.*)

Let it go at that. Now then, permit me to observe that there is one more thing that deserves clearing up—or, at least, *attempted* clearing up, upon your part—and that is how on earth you have the face to ask me to continue communicating with you, when nearly every other line of yours is an insult to me, a doubt hurled at my veracity and even bare existence.

(Ha! ha! Uncle Tom, you make me smile. Ha! ha! ha! ha! you afford me the heartiest laugh I’ve had in many a dull day. Ha! ha! You know pretty Devilish well—you hoary old rogue that *all you have to do* to get me to admit your identity, is to “pass up,” so to speak—one of those Greek Goddesses in clinging diaphanous drapery—spoken of by Thomas Jefferson Miller the Prophet—pp. 49-51 “Hell.” Send one of them to the monastic precincts of “The Merry Mills” and I shall arise and call you the *greatest Prophet God ever made.*)

It doesn’t require much to satisfy your doubts as to my identity does it? I pause for a reply.

(Not much.)

“Not much!” NOT MUCH” “NOT MUCH!” You bare-faced young reprobate, it requires but little short of *the whole thing!* And you know pretty Devilish well, that I am not permitted to pander to your irregular desires.

(You are "going strong," my venerable Uncle, alleged—going strong, I frankly admit.)

I accept your apology, and pass over your fall from grace, in putting such a reprehensible proposition to one of my sanctity. I shall now lift another "corner of the veil which separates the living from the dead."

(In spite of your remarkable language to one who is a member of the following mighty fraternal organizations, to-wit: "The Red Men," "The Eagles," "The Elks," "The Masons"—and last, but most powerful of all—"The Woodmen of America," I shall hear with interest what you have to unfold, my venerated Uncle, alleged).

In the first place, my dear Archie, I do not for a moment propose to paint my own personal experiences in Hell—for certain reasons heavily veiled—far too heavily veiled to permit of penetration by the eye of the average novel-reader—I don't care a d—n *how* intelligent—*how* experienced a novel-reader he may be. So I shall state now, *once for all*, as follows:

So far as the satisfaction of the natural mundane curiosity as regards "what's coming to them" is concerned, every reader must look to "The Infernal Comedy" for his or her satisfaction. As Marshal Ney—the right-hand of the greatest military genius, Napoleon Bonaparte, since Hannibal Barca—my lot in Hell is far, far above that of the average sinful man or woman. I am one of the favored few of Fortune—so to speak. The dangers I faced—the perils I braved as Marshal Ney—and a Devilish sight longer than ever I *was* Marshal Ney—should explain my exemption, to the mind of an averagely intelligent, averagely truthful, averagely honest man. And, so help me God, those are the only men I care a rap about, *in re* recounting what is in store for them once they have "shuffled off this mortal coil." In "The Infernal Comedy" I shall depict—to be turned into poetic language by you—the *lot of every man and woman on earth*. Later on, in future cantos, I shall take up the extremely delicate—but equally delectable—subject of lovely woman's fate therein.

I shall, every ninety days, disclose to you matters to be turned by you into one hundred and twenty-five sonnets—no more, no less. In each new publication I shall supply—of "Hell and The Infernal Comedy"—at least, and possibly no more than, fifty pages in prose—as I have in the first volume

of "H. A. T. I. C." The reason for this is not far to seek. There are numerous mysteries which are *not* permitted—*understand* this discrimination is not of my choice—to be disclosed to the world—which are not permitted to be even remotely touched upon by you. You are merely permitted to record what is the lot of every *average* mortal of either sex. Such being the case you will comprehend why my remarks at the beginning of each volume of "H. A. T. I. C." are limited to certain episodes or revelations in—or without—my experiences in Hell.

The unbroken thread of my narrative for revealing the life and experiences in Hell of the average man—and, later, the average woman—will ever and always be confined to my communications in "The Infernal Comedy," since the poetic medium thereof is far more appropriate for rendering the atmosphere and local color of that highly dramatic—not to say highly poetic—place, than is prose—no matter how poetic said prose may be. So I shall now start in where I first began in Volume I, of "Hell"—page 26—where I intimated that an embassy from the Kingdom of Sin was then in the Hall of Audience. Thereafter, I shall clear up another point of interest hinted at by me in "Hell," page 70, concerning the so-to-speak collegiate course in morality all newcomers are matriculated in. These two subjects will form all the subject-matter of my prose communication to you in "H. A. T. I. C." Vol. II.

(November 19, 1917).

On page 26 "Hell," you will remember I stated that the cause of the embassy was a rumor which had got about that the world was approaching its end—which is to say that the Millennium was about to begin, and Satan—according to the old legend—about to be bound. That on said hypothesis, Personified Sin—the Head of the Kingdom of Sin—proposed to Satan to form an offensive and defensive alliance against Jehovah. That nothing could possibly induce Satan to do such a thing—since the Millennium would be a joy to him—he being a Prince of Paradise—the fourth personage in Heaven after the Trinity, but that Personified Sin—or Sin—as I shall now dub that most damnable being, seeing everything through sinful and therefore more or less blinded eyes fails to "catch on" to the situa-

tion. I said on page 23, *ibid*: "I shall conduct you to the Hall of Audience. By this I mean that I myself shall at once be there, and from there report to you all I see and hear." I desire to clear up the ambiguity surrounding the phrase "I, myself shall at once be there."

This means that in Hell those of us who have paid the piper and have a right to do so, can, without distinction of rank or sex, transport ourselves to any spot in all Hell in the twinkling of an eye, by the mere act of wishing ourselves there. We feel no more sense of motion, no more sense of flight than does the soul after death, in its passage from earth to Hell. We are one instant standing in one spot, or sitting or reclining in one spot, and the next, we are standing, sitting or reclining in another—as we may elect—a thousand miles—or more or less—off. The rules governing this most expeditious means of locomotion are most strict and most rigidly enforced. I shall first explain what happens if one is rash enough to attempt to wish oneself where one has not a right so to do. In the *first place*, the magical current, which lifts and transports one *does not act*, and one does not budge from the spot in which he or she was. In the *second place*, one, if a man, receives a most tremendous buffet upon the point of the jaw, which puts him down and out for four and twenty hours. He simply receives said buffet and falls flat, or, if already reclining, loses consciousness for the next twenty-four hours. The buffet feels—so they say—I have never experienced it—like a blow from a boxing-glove and leaves no mark on the face. The buffet comes from the current, which, so-to-speak, to use an automobile term, "back-fires" instead of carrying you forward. If a woman, she simply goes off into a dead faint for twenty-four hours, wherever she happens to be. Now to explain the phrase "and have a right to do so," as aforesaid. This means: (1) If in being transported to a given spot one is not leaving the confines of Hell—not entering the No Man's Land separating Hell from the Kingdom of Sin—and also, not entering the Kingdom of Sin. (2) If in being transported one is not going where one has no business to go (A) as, for example, where one would be trespassing upon Imperial or private property. The vast domain of Hell is divided up into Imperial property appertaining to the Emperor—to Satan—and private

property, appertaining to individuals. All followers of his Satanic Majesty have superb domains—that is to say the Nobles and Warriors—the Nobles—the Lords of Hell—the highest officers in Satan’s tremendous army, who are also the Peers of the Realm—the members of the House of Peers, who, with the House of Warriors, corresponding to the House of Commons in England—rule—under Satan—the vast and glorious empire of Hell. The Peers are created—their titles and estates, as were the nobility of the Napoelonic era—by Satan. The members of the House of Warriors are elected by the entire army. There is a Constitution—a written Constitution, restraining the acts of the Parliament. This Constitution was *given* to Parliament by Satan, and is supreme over every one *but* Satan, who can veto once and for all any act of Parliament. Every soldier, every warrior, has an estate of one hundred acres and a handsome house thereon. The architecture I shall go into on another occasion. The estate is in the country. Every soldier also has a handsome town house, and a snug fortune. There are no such things as “hewers of wood” or “drawers of water” in Hell. *There are no servants of either sex, since all work of every description is done for one by magic—just as I told you in “The Infernal Comedy.”* The knives and forks cut the viands themselves, the flagons poured their rich contents into the goblets themselves, the golden dishes and silver dishes containing the viands brought, and removed themselves, in the twinkling of an eye. The same is true of every kind, sort or description of work or toil of any description whatever, from erecting a marble palace overnight, to a lovely being’s bringing her filmy night gown from a wardrobe across her bedroom, and the nightgown slipping over her glorious form in the twinkling of an eye, and by the expenditure of no more effort than the bare wish—I hasten to add—since I can see you smile tho’ I am in command of your nerve-centres controlling the automatic writing—I hasten to add that I have a legitimate right to know the expeditious—and at the same time charmingly languorous—manner in which the ravishingly beautiful females dress and—ahem—undress themselves—since I am the blessed possessor of one of the most magnificent creatures the sun ever shown on—or on whom the moon ever shed her beams. You see, the mere

thought of my Goddess makes me rise into poetic language. I might add that such a thing as a bachelor or a spinster is, and are, rarely found in Hell. *Every male and every female in Hell is wedded to her or his heart's desire.* This is not so in the Underworld—where there are about as many bachelors and spinsters as with you—and in the Kingdom of Sin there are even more. But Hell being dramatic and poetic—as fully explained in “H. A. T. I. C.,” Vol. I, and as there can be little drama and practically no poetry without at least a soupçon of love therein—it is logically essential that each soul forming part of the Empire of Hell—not the transient guests—there only for their own, and decidedly *not* Hell's good—it is logically essential that each soul forming part of the Empire of Hell *should be satisfied*—and no soul in Hell—as described—can be satisfied without his or her mate, his or her Soul-Mate.

To resume. There is no current to transport one or to do away with manual or other labor in either the Underworld or the Kingdom of Sin. In the latter there are servants of both sexes, as with you. In the former, all the male servants are in the nature of orderlies in the army, hence, there is nothing the least lowering in their service. The female servants are always the mates of the orderlies—duly wedded to them—and thus escape, in practically the same way as their mates, any lowering form of service. *In a word, there is no magic anywhere but in Hell.*

Now you are going to be surprised at this that follows. There are two branches of the Imperial Government of Hell—a female as well as male branch. The female branch is equal in number and power with the male. The upper branch is called the House of Peeresses, the lower, the House of Ladies. The female branch have the sole and only jurisdiction governing females in the Empire. They legislate for women. The male branch legislates exclusively for males. When the legislation is necessarily mixed—that is to say, men are equally concerned therein as women—then it is worked out by conferees—just as in the United States Senate and House of Representatives—committees from the Warrior's Parliament—as it is called as a whole—meet committees from the Ladies Parliament, as it is called as a whole—in a marble palace midway between the Warrior's Parliament and the Ladies Parliament. When said committees clash—which is extremely

rare, I can assure you—the issue goes to the Emperor, who has the casting vote. There is no such thing as a poor man in Hell—nor a poor woman. All are well off—“independent”—as they say with you. Every soldier draws his pay from the Emperor; every female draws hers from the same source, on the ground that she is the Soul-Mate of a soldier. The Emperor dowrs every female with a handsome trousseau—which—for peeresses and the wives of officers—includes a superb diamond necklace and ditto pearl rope—with beautiful, but less magnificent jewels, for the soul mates, or wives, of warriors—as well as what the French and Latin races so admirably set aside for their daughters—even the poorest—termed the “dot.” This *dot* amounts to an independent income, and is of the exact size of her Soul-Mate’s fortune, at the hands of the Emperor—over which she has full control. The incomes of the members of the House of Warriors are splendid—their pay for serving in said House—in which each is elected for seven years. The incomes of the Peers are magnificent. The same holds good for the House of Peeresses and the House of Ladies. The pay of all Warriors—both Officers and Soldiers—is lavish, and this over and above each Officer’s or Soldier’s fortune at the hands of the Emperor. All incomes—all emoluments—spring from the lavish generosity and unbounded riches—unnumbered as the sands of the sea—in gold, silver and precious stones—of the mighty being who rules this dread domain—Satan, King and Emperor of Hell.

To give you an idea of his generosity and wealth. He does the same thing for the Underworld, *and*—now open your eyes—for the Kingdom of Sin.

(Uncle, alleged, I do open my eyes).

Well you may, my boy, well you may. Satan specially pleaded with the Trinity when the Decrees of Fate were first made—by which Decrees the world is run on schedule time—so-to-speak—Satan specially pleaded to have his arch enemy made rich enough to do for his followers what Satan does for his. And the Trinity acquiesced, and permitted Satan to set gold mines and silver mines and mines of precious stones, and pearls in its sea, in the Kingdom of Sin, so that although there is a strict limit to the wealth of Sin, yet it is bound-

less enough for him to do, in large measure, for his people what Satan does for his.

Lastly in the aforesaid connection.

(2) If, in being transported, one is not going where one has no business to go (B) As, for example, where the satisfaction of idle curiosity is the sole object.

I shall now reveal a fact sunk in "Hell," and that is that there is a *fourth* division here below. I did not think it worth while to mention it when I wrote my first book of revelation, yecept "Hell," in 1912—there was no occasion for so doing, as is readily seen from a perusal of said little book. Said fourth division is the opponent and deadly enemy of my delectable abode, the Underworld. Its name is Cockaigne, in honor of the imaginary land—here made at least a near-reality—of "idleness, plenty and pleasure." It—like the Kingdom of Sin—is a Kingdom. But unlike the Kingdom of Sin, it is neither pseudo-dramatic, nor pseudo-poetic—but is, as the world, worldly—as is the delectable Underworld. The Underworld is a replica of Paris under the Empire of France, under Napoleon. The language of the Underworld is French. That of Cockaigne is English. Satan is the avatar or incarnation of Napoleon Bonaparte, and rules as Emperor of the Underworld. Strange as it sounds, though the language of the Empire is French, its *name*—the Underworld—is in English. The costumes, arms, weapons and manners are a sublimated replica of those of the First Empire. In Cockaigne, Personified Sin rules. He rules his Kingdom of Cockaigne in an avatar not necessary to name now. The undramatic, unpoetic candidates for the Kingdom of Sin migrate to the Kingdom of Cockaigne from Hell, after paying the piper. Now, although its real name is the Kingdom of Sin, and Personified Sin is the real name of its King, yet not to degrade Personified Sin and his hosts, the poetic name—and name in common use—is Philistia, or the land of the Philistines, and its people are known as Philistines.

When Satan goes to the Underworld to carry on a campaign against the King of Cockaigne, he is absent from Hell for he does not—altho' he could—split up his personality. In that event, one of his Peers rules Hell as Regent. Sin *cannot*—even if he would—split up his personality. So when Satan makes war on his Kingdom of Cockaigne there is no

war by Sin on Hell, for Sin must scurry off to Cockaigne to meet Napoleon Bonaparte at the head of his old Guard.

The government of Sin is modelled precisely on the lines of that of Hell. A House of Peers, a House of Warriors, a House of Peeresses, a House of Ladies. The government of the Underworld resembles that of France under Napoleon, only sublimated, and with the Emperor holding an absolute veto on all legislation. Tho' far less rich than in Hell, the Peers and Deputies of the Underworld are—the first splendidly rich—the latter handsomely so, and there is absolutely *no* poverty. There are people who are in slender circumstances but no sufferers from poverty and *no* unemployed—all laborers have well paid occupations. The same precisely holds good in Cockaigne.

Lastly, you would naturally suppose that sin held high revel in the Kingdom of Sin, and idleness and debauchery in that of Cockaigne. But just as the current aforesaid, knocks one down in lieu of transporting one, if one errs in invoking it, so in the Kingdom of Sin and in Cockaigne, *any crime such as murder, rape, arson, theft, perjury, is even more summarily punished than the lie of Ananias and Sapphira*. A current knocks a male out for twenty-four hours, and at the same time leaves a black and blue lettering on his forehead to fit the crime. For example, "Murderer," "Thief," etc., etc. This label stays on his forehead till run down by the minions of the law, when he is tried and either imprisoned or executed, as the case may be. Upon being put to death he immediately comes to life again, however, and *without* the label—in order to start fresh. The label remains until the penalty of the crime has been paid. In the case of female criminals the only exception is that the current puts the criminal into a dead faint for twenty-four hours, without any violence, but at the same time brands her, as in the case of the male criminal. This rule has absolutely no exceptions—not even Personified Sin is exempt therefrom—in either his position as King of Philistia or King of Cockaigne. The brand or label remains on—in his case—for never less than thirty days, never more than ninety days. If he attempts to repeat his attempted crime he gets knocked out again and keeps getting knocked out until he conquers the temptation—conquers his evil disposition—

and as Shakspeare, as I remember, puts it "lives cleanly." In this self-adjusting, mechanical correction of any form of tyranny, injustice or selfishness in its more violent forms—such as murder, arson, rape, theft, perjury, no subject of the Kingdom of Sin or that of Cockaigne, need fear for his liberty, life, or property—from the highest to the lowest. Adultery and seduction are not so punished, but ample satisfaction is awarded to the victim by the seducer. The reason is that all females, having paid the piper in Hell, and matriculated at the College of Morality—so-to-speak—aforsaid, know what they are about, and if they permit themselves to be seduced they do so with their eyes thoroughly open.

In the Underworld there is no such self-acting "current of Justice"—so-to-speak. The people are far superior in character to their aforsaid opponents in Cockaigne, and moreover, Napoleon Bonaparte has a system of swift and searching justice which makes crime practically unknown in his domain.

A knowledge of English is instantaneously conferred upon all men and women upon arriving in Hell. This is done for the following reasons. *First.* Since it is the language of Hell and of all its various, multifarious zones, it is essential to learning the laws thereof. *Second.* It is essential since Shakspeare and the English Bible are used in the College of Morality, aforsaid, and therefore the knowledge of English is essential from the moment one arrives in Hell. Since all the world passes through Hell—at least the Purgatorial Zone thereof—therefore all the world knows English. But each nation—the nations of the world—retains its nationality and language and customs and religion in Hell and the Kingdom of Sin, as well as in the Underworld and Cockaigne. Upon receiving the gift of English each nation speaks it—strangely enough—forever after, with the accent of said nation regarding English—as nationally distinct in accent as the French way of speaking English is from the German, the Italian from the Chinese. The language of diplomacy—in which truces, armistices, pourparlers, etc., are recorded, is, as with you—on the Continent, at least—French.

Since everything which Jesus Christ desired is desired by Satan; and since individuality was the very keynote of Christ's message to mankind—the *preservation of individuality*—and

all that that word implies—such as self-respect, proper pride, courage, independence—in the Underworld and Cockaigne are grouped every nation now in existence under its own laws and government and religion and customs, *but sublimated*, as in the time of Napoleon Bonaparte, except that nations which have since recovered their freedom—as the Spanish-American Republics, Greece, etc.—are free from the dominion of Spain and Turkey, but the two supreme rulers of the Underworld and Cockaigne are the supreme heads of the rest of the world, as more or less divided between them. I shall not take time to detail that now, as this séance has been a long one. But—in a word—the world—in these two Spheres—in the Underworld and Cockaigne—is divided up between the two. The local independence of all the subject, or allied, nations is assured by treaties. The allies fight on the sides of their Chiefs—send contingents of troops, or ships, or both.

There is absolutely no commerce in Hell. There are dépôts—like the Army and Navy Stores, say, in London, owned in common—co-operative stores—by the troops and their officers—where jewels, fabrics of silk and satin, furniture, and—in other branches—live-stock of all kinds, can be bought at cost price. The same is true of viands and wines. *In other words, no such undramatic and unpoetic a thing as trade is known in Hell or the Kingdom of Sin—tho' in the Underworld and Cockaigne trade and commerce flourish.* In a word, Hell and the Kingdom of Sin are the Feudal System *sublimated*. The Underworld and Cockaigne modern times—that is to say, up-to-the-date of Waterloo, but not beyond.

In winding up this rather discursive introduction, let me add that the mystery which has baffled Historians from the very dawn of History concerning the inevitable decay of a nation's strength, power, wealth and prestige from the time of the Pharoahs to, say, that of the Doges of Venice, or the Medici of Florence is about to be disclosed. It is this.

It was absolutely necessary for, say, Rome, to decline and fall in order for History to progress to first, Mediaeval, and then Renaissance, and lastly, Modern times. Because God Almighty desired to create these various—so-to-speak—“personalities” of nations, then have them die and—now prepare for the surprise of your dramatic and poetic life—and then,

my boy, *live again!* Resurrected on a habitable star! Where forever and forever the "soul" of that nation, *and* at a given epoch—will live forever!

(You *do* amaze and also delight me, Uncle, alleged).

I fancied I would, Archie. Thus. Not only is a century—say the *Cinque Cento*—as the Italians term the Renaissance—preserved in all its splendor forever, but the generations leading up to and immediately succeeding the same. And—mind you—since each "angle"—so-to-speak—of the Renaissance is eternal—and suffers no change—each generation aforesaid, has a star to itself! !

(Superb! Uncle, alleged. Superb!)

That's *one* reason why there are so many stars.

For generation after generation of an *interesting* period—not of the decadence of a given nation, nor its emergence from barbarism—for generation after generation, since the world began, is preserved each on its separate star—all members thereof sublimated—all having passed through Purgatory.

In conclusion. The religion of Hell is Christian. So also—outwardly at least—is that of its—to use a physical term—"reflex"—the Kingdom of Sin. There are zones in Hell where other religions are practiced, but only temporarily—only until the worshippers have paid the piper and passed out to other climes. For all who join the banners of Satan are and must be Christians. In the Underworld and Cockaigne zone, on the contrary, there are—in the various nations—all the various religions in vogue in Napoleon's day.

Furthermore. The standing, in the moral scale—the scale of Aspiration of the Dramatic and Poetic—of what I shall term the "Starry Kingdoms", above described, immediately succeeds Hell, and is superior to that of the Underworld. Now, as combat is the keynote of existence—physical, spiritual, or both—there must be perpetual war on each star. The prototype or next-to—as aforesaid—Hell, is the nation which in a given generation gave its color to History—such as Greece in the time of Socrates, Pericles, and *all* her mighty heroes of the sword or of the soul,—Rome, in the purest days of the Republic, or under, say, Vespasian or the Antonines, or some other worthy Emperor; Florence at her zenith—Genoa at hers—and so forth—including the small Italian Principalities and Dukedoms. The same *principle* appertains as to the superiority of

the *chosen people* for said generation—as compared with its rival, or rivals, in war as appertains to the superiority of Hell over the Kingdom of Sin. The same magical force which prevents tyranny and crime in the Kingdom of Sin, prevents it in the *chosen people* as well as in their enemies. Remember, every member of a “Starry Kingdom” or Republic or State has passed through Hell, and *thereafter* had the experience erased from his or her memory so as to preserve their complete local color. This erasing does not occur in the case of the Underworld or Cockaigne. But for obvious reasons unless it *did* occur in the Starry Zones, aforesaid, said Zones would lose entirely their historic individuality. Thus, that mighty Englishman, Alfred the Great, rules England as he heroically did fighting the Danes forever, on his separate star. So does that wonderful Monarch, Charlemagne. In fact, speaking by and large, practically *all* the great, the really *great* men of all time live forever in their day and generation. The same is true of the Orient. The same is true of the American Indian who thus gets his “Happy Hunting Grounds.”

To finally wind up this introduction. I shall state that until the end of the world—its destruction—at the end of the Millennium and the subsequent birth of the New Heaven and the New Earth—upon which occurrence Hell and the Kingdom of Sin will have an entire star to themselves, as will also the Underworld and Cockaigne—until said distant period they will occupy their two distinct tiers within the earth. Each tier is an exact replica of this world with its oceans and continents. Each tier has its own heaven and *apparent* stars—apparent sun and apparent moon. For the only real stars, sun and moon are those mortals see.

(May I be permitted to ask a few—one or two or so—strictly pertinent questions before you close?)

Provided you are correct in their being “strictly pertinent” yes, and with pleasure.

(Many thanks. First, I should like to ask how the memory of Hell and Purgatory is erased from the inhabitants of the “Starry Kingdoms”, Republics or States and yet death be eliminated therefrom. How can any form of morality, worthy the name, that is, morality which rises more or less to spirituality—how can that exist without the idea of Heaven, or at least death, and facing God, may I ask?)

You very well may. I purposely left that unexplained to test your logic and penetration. The erasure which takes place in the memories of the inhabitants of the stars aforesaid, does *not* include the fact that each has died and passed thro' Purgatory. That is absolutely all they recall of said experience, except the *moral* lessons here learned. But as to history or literature—beyond their own generation on their own star—that is entirely swept from the confines of memory the instant before each male and each female takes his or her instantaneous and utterly unconscious flight to his or her long—and I am glad to be able to add—*happy*, home.

(Many thanks. That is entirely satisfactory. Now one more thing. I should think it would be an extremely interesting thing to visit said multitudinous stars and vary the experiences of eternity in so multicolored a way. May I have an opinion from your experienced alleged self upon that interesting point, my dear Uncle, alleged?)

You surely may, my enquiring young friend. That is the privilege of the very highest of the Peers of Hell. The Princes and Dukes of Hell. It is done thus. This small and select group have—they and their Soul-Mates—the privilege of reincarnating in any star which is inhabited, in the person—the Prince in the person of a male—the Princess in that of a female—of some noble of the highest rank on said star—and his wife. For, on the stars, the term husband and wife is retained—as it is emphatically *not* in Hell, the Kingdom of Sin, the Underworld or Cockaigne. The starry noble and his wife are utterly unconscious of the said visitation. Only a mere handful of the Princes and Dukes of Hell can obtain permission from Satan to go on a furlough to a star at the same time, for the reason that their presence is needed—that is, of the majority of them—to combat—to fight in battle—to lead their squadrons against the restless and aggressive forces of Sin. All males in Hell and the Kingdom of Sin are proved and tried warriors—all are fighting men from the highest to the lowest. Only in the Underworld and Cockaigne do we find Statesmen who do not lead troops to battle; do we find lawyers and merchants. Of course, no inventions take place. There is neither steam nor electricity. *Science is now having her day and it is as final a day as it is a murderous one—I speak of the modern form of warfare.* In the Underworld and Cock-

aigne hygiene and domestic comforts and public roads are up to date as with you—and considerably more so—and there is, of course, gun powder. But stage coaches replace trains, and sails—men-of-war—armour-clads, U-boats and flying-machines.

November 19, 1917.

This digression was absolutely necessary to give you enough of the marvellous superiority of life down here to life up there, to enable you to come within measurable distance of comprehending what I shall now describe, took place in the Hall of Audience five years ago.

(I fully agree with you, my dear Uncle, alleged. And permit me to thank you. Phew! I feel as tho' I'd been attached to the tail of an air-ship-comet, shooting through space and dodging star after star as I whirled by.)

Well you may, my boy; and I can assure you that you were a Devilish sight less bored than I at the longwinded recital. But anything less discursive would have left chinks and crevices for curiosity to creep in and take your mind off of my future communications. From now on, my communications will be almost entirely dramatic in nature—episodes, short stories, sketches—so-to-speak. I shall, as aforesaid, unload all detailed, consecutive narrative description on "The Infernal Comedy." So "*revenons à nos moutons.*"

SATAN'S HALL OF AUDIENCE.

As I said, page 24, "Hell," "You must know that I am now in the Hall of Audience of Hell. I am standing against the wall on the right side of the Hall looking toward the Fiery Throne. Upon said Throne sits Satan." In order to explain how I could communicate with you, and at the same time look on and hear all that went on, I should say that my Consciousness wrote to you, while my Subconsciousness looked on in the Hall of Audience, and thereafter my Subconsciousness wrote out for me—by magic, in the twinkling of an eye—what transpired at the reception of the embassy from the Kingdom of Sin; and moreover, there is a series of—so-to-speak—moving picture records of all such important functions of State, open to the highest

of the Peers, in which all sounds, as well as all sights are revealed precisely as powerfully as when they occurred. As Napoleon Bonaparte's Chief Marshal—I—by courtesy—rank as of the Inner Circle of the Peers—the highest Peers of Hell. So I shall speak as though I actually saw it—which you know, I subconsciously did.

In the first place, as I told you in "Hell," the Hall of Audience is miles long, miles wide, and miles high. I shall describe what I saw later. First, I shall describe the entire ceremony *before* my arrival—this is got from the aforesaid moving picture, reserved for the Inner Circle of the Peers. The Hall of Audience was as deserted as Sahara before the hour for the audience had struck—for a full hour before—nothing but silence and emptiness reigned through its majestic spaces, sparkling and glittering with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires; while its magical marble floor sent back the reflections of the clouds as their shapes were mirrored therein through the crystal roof—as transparent as glass. Not a sound broke the stillness. The Fiery Throne stood empty and sans flame. Suddenly a trumpet-blast broke the unearthly silence, blown by the lips of a mighty Cherubim who whirled like a thunderbolt—flying at terrific speed—from the rear, from the miles of space forming the rear of the Hall, from the rear of the Fiery Throne. I shall describe the appearance of this superb being.

In the first place, his height was some six feet, his features were classically beautiful, of the Grecian type, *but far more terrible* than any Greek sculpture that was ever hewn. The face was beardless. The hair jet black, and curling about the temples in short, crisp curls. The expression of the mouth was the sternest I had ever seen even in Hell. The lips were full and beautiful, but set in a rigid line of martial sternness. The nose rose like a tower—to borrow a Hebrew simile—from the plane of the face. But it was the eyes which riveted my gaze—fascinated. They were black as jet, and yet seemed to glow with actual heat—if I may so express myself—as though a coal could keep its color—black—and yet emit the heat it does when it has changed that color to red. I can come no nearer to describing to mortal mind the effect and impression made by the supernatural brilliancy of the eyes of this winged warrior. He was in full antique armour of the Greek type,

with a shield on his left arm and a sword on his left thigh. His right hand held the silver trumpet from which the terrific blast which had shattered the silence of the Sahara-like Hall of Audience had issued. His wings were some nine feet long from tip to tip. They sprang from his shoulder-blades. They were feathered like the wings of a bird, and of a most gorgeous royal purple colour, shot with crimson and green—iridescent as the neck of a pigeon. His cuirass, helmet and greaves were pure gold, inlaid with rubies, diamonds and emeralds. A crimson cloak—the short cloak worn by the ancients in the field—floated from his shoulders, and between the crotch of his wings. It is impossible to convey to mortal mind the brilliancy, the beauty, and at the same time, *the terror* which shone and flashed from every curve of his glorious form—every facet of his gorgeous gems. He whirled over and past the Fiery Throne, and disappeared through the mighty arch forming the portal of the Audience Hall.

In the twinkling of an eye—so soon as his terrible form had disappeared from view—the hitherto Sahara-like waste was peopled with armed men. Their arrival was so swift the eye could not grasp it. All it could grasp was the vast open spaces of the Hall *one* instant, followed by the *next* instant the sight of those spaces filled to repletion by the Hosts of Hell. In the van was a cohort of gigantic elephants, caparisoned for war after the manner of the Carthaginians, with war towers on their backs, filled with tawny archers in light armour, while a mahout—or elephant-driver—also in light armour—carrying a large shield with various apertures for vision before him, sat astride of the gigantic creatures' neck, immediately behind the ears. The elephants' tusks were armed with spears—short, and entirely of metal. Their breasts were protected by plate-armour as were their heads, bellies, backs and ribs, while scale armour covered their limbs. Their trunks were also covered with scale armour which enabled the creatures to manipulate them readily. *The expressions of these terrible beasts were as fierce and warlike as their appearance.* The whole six hundred at a touch from the goad of the mahout, stretched their trunks rigidly before them at full length and made even the vast reaches of the Hall of Audience ring again with their blood-curdling trumpeting. The cohort was formed in line

of battle, three rows deep—two hundred elephants in each row. As I happen to know—for I can see your inmost soul as I can see your face—you love elephants more than any beast that walks the earth, not even excepting saddle-horses or bulldogs. I shall now differentiate between the elephants you have in mind—the noble “Jumbo”, the *King* of elephants—who sacrificed his life to save the baby elephant in the Barnum and Bailey troupe, when the freight train struck him in northern New York years ago. The elephants in Hell differ from those in shows in several particulars. *First*, the elephants in shows are always more or less docile and eager for bags of peanuts to be hurled—by your respected self, for instance—down their cool, pink jaws. *Second*, the elephants in shows are more or less good natured. *Third*, and last, the elephants in shows are more or less lazy and indolent in their gait. Now, let me describe the elephants in Hell. *First*, the elephants in Hell are about as ferocious as Bengal tigers before a meal. *Second*, the elephants in Hell are as eager to kill—to pierce with their tusks and trample with their ponderous feet their human foes—or their foes in human shape—to speak rather more by the card—as a goaded bull in a Spanish Bull Ring. *Third*, the elephants in Hell are as much the reverse of “lazy and indolent” as is an African lion for two days in search of food.

But the mysterious current which in Hell takes the place of a well organised police force, held the creatures at their station without the slightest effort upon the part of the mahouts. The mahouts simply indicated, by the lightest possible touch of the goad, that aggressive action was desired—such, for example, as the thunderous, blood-curdling trumpeting—but no least *repressive* action upon the part of the mahouts was required. The ferocious man-eating creatures—so-to-speak—were held immovable as bronze statues by said current, until the mahouts touched their necks or shoulders with the goad. No sooner had the heart-chilling trumpeting of these mighty beasts died away into an awed silence than the Fiery Throne instantaneously sprung alight. Let me pause a moment to attempt the impossible feat of picturing to mortal eyes—even eyes as artistic, dramatic, and sympathetic as your own—the terrible appearance of said phenomenon. Before even attempting to approach the terror and splendor of the Throne when

on fire, let me touch briefly upon its dimensions and general appearance when in repose—when not aflame. The Throne resembled—more than anything else I can conjure up at the moment—a Pyramid, with a Roman lounge—or reclining couch—such as was used at banquets in ancient Rome, at its summit. The said Pyramid, fifty feet square at the base and tapering swiftly to a point fifteen feet square at the top, was at least thirty feet high, and was of marble, of the magical quality hereinbefore noticed. Each step was nine inches high. The couch at the top was of pink marble of the most magical hue imaginable. That is to say, that even when the Fiery Throne was at rest—was not on fire—said magical pink marble glowed as though there were a magical night-light behind each slab thereof—and all this in the broad daylight. A crimson leather cushion, the shape and thickness of a mattress, covered the couch. A crimson leather pillow lay at the couch's head. Over the crimson cushion was draped a covering of purple wool. The steps as well as the Pyramid itself, were of snowy whiteness.

Having now described the Throne at rest, let me attempt the utterly impossible feat of picturing the Fiery Throne in action. In the first place, my suspicious, cynical, and doubting young friend, let me stress the fact that fire, or flame in Hell has an utterly different appearance from fire or flame on earth.

In the first place, let me assure you that the—to Hellish eyes at least—fuliginous, smoky, sooty, foul-hued flames of earth lose themselves in an Aurora Borealis—so-to-speak—of unutterable splendor, impossible to even hint at to the mortal mind.

November 24, 1917.

In the first place the nature of flame in Hell is utterly different from that of flame with you—not only in its chemical properties, but in its essence and appearance. To give you some hint of what I am gropingly attempting to portray, let me say that flame in Hell is *more like fireworks with you* than flame. That I can sit before my fire in my hall in the Palace in the Underworld—which is mine officially by right as Commander-in-Chief of all the armies of the Emperor—with my marvellous consort by my side, and enjoy as brilliant a display

of pyrotechnics as you, when you had a law office in the Equitable Building in New York—some twenty years ago—could see at Coney Island or anywhere else.

(Uncle Tom, alleged, provided what you say is a fact—no slightest disrespect intended—you almost make me wish I were dead—fireworks have always attracted me).

To resume. To a mind of ordinary intelligence I have said enough to at least hint at the unutterable splendor of the Fiery Throne aflame.

I shall detail this phenomenon. In the first place, every step in the Pyramid bursts into flame. The flames shoot in two directions, to-wit: towards the observer, and straight into the air. The flames shoot six feet in each of said directions—a cascade of sparks—parti-colored light marvellous to behold. Another peculiarity about Hell flame is that it has—even in broadest daylight—all the beauty and glamour—all the poetry and terror—of a large building aflame at night. In the second place, the combination of colors, the—so-to-speak—bouquet of colors on each step is utterly different from the bouquet burgeoning forth in unutterable splendor, beauty and terror on the next step. The combination is unspeakably beautiful, awe-inspiring, and grand—it is as though a magical prairie fire were at work and starting on its career of devastation and terror. Added to the above must be the extraordinary fact that when in the course of its natural career any flame assumes the form of lightning—assumes a forked shape, suggesting forked lightning, that, following the universal law of Hell, harmony—where order, is the watchword—no sooner has said forked flame appeared, than a most deafening and terrifying crash is heard, as though a thunderbolt had just been landed at your feet. As said forked flames are of frequent occurrence, you may well imagine the tremendous effect of the Fiery Throne in action.

(I surely can, Uncle, alleged, I surely can—you amaze me).

Now, let me approach a marvel even more extraordinary than what has gone before. It will naturally occur to you that flames shooting six feet into the air would obscure the sight of the author of all this splendor, terror and magnificence, reclined in royal pomp upon his couch at the apex of the Pyramid of fire—the Fiery Throne. Well, in order to do away with

this objection the flames of the four topmost steps, instead of acting as do those of the lower steps, perform a—so-to-speak—loop-the-loop act—thus. Said flames leap from their respective steps straight into the air, but with this marvellous result: that instead of leaping as flames leap with you—by which I mean that one can follow with the eye the flame during the entire course of said leap—in Hell the flame leaps like a *solid body*, and with such swiftness that no eye can follow it. The result is that one sees absolutely *no* flame on or *anywhere near* said four topmost steps—except, of course, *below* said steps—but above the head of Satan as he reclines upon his couch of rosy marble—some fifteen feet above—said flames from the four topmost steps, form a marvellous, and terrific as marvellous, baldachin—or canopy—above his imperial head, with this extraordinary addition to said statement, to-wit. Each step retains its individuality, to-to-speak. Each step—of course, I mean the bouquet of flame which has leapt from each step—each step continues distinct and separate from each other step, and thus is seen four tiers of flame, as above described iridescent as the most marvellous sunset you ever saw—four tiers of flame forming a canopy above the head of the Prince of Darkness as he reclines in state. The four steps from which said canopy has sprung retain in embryo—so-to-speak—the fiery glow of each step when in action—when aflame—but the flames are never longer than six inches when, as aforesaid, in embryo.

I have attempted in the above to give you some faint inking of what is implied by the Fiery Throne. To continue.

No sooner had the Fiery Throne burst into flame and the walls of the Hall of Audience shaken—so-to-speak—with the soul-chilling peals of thunder, aforesaid, than a sudden deathly silence fell upon the air. The marvellously thrilling spectacle of the serried ranks of Hell—cavalry and infantry—massed behind the elephant cohort, and spreading to the right and left until the vast space seemed well nigh filled—said marvellously thrilling spectacle, with each foot soldier standing in his glittering armour, as rigid as though carved in bronze, each cavalryman sitting his horse as though part of the noble animal—each horse, white, black, or bay, according to squadrons, as the case might be—standing as though carved in marble, said marvellously thrilling spectacle was, if possible, ren-

dered more awful by this sudden, soul-chilling hush, aforesaid. This hush lasted some thirty seconds, at the end of which time a fanfare of bugles, such as never burst upon mortal ears—so brilliant, so beautiful, so defiant, and above all—so terrible—burst that stillness, and the vast host divided itself in twain leaving a passage up its centre from the rear of the Hall of Audience, some fifty feet in width.

Up this avenue rode Satan upon a coal black horse. He was in full armour. The horse had armour protecting its head, breast, neck, shoulders and flanks. The armour of both rider and horse was of gold, sparkling with jewels. Satan wore a crown—a narrow band of gold, supporting on its face a trefoil of gems, consisting of a ruby, a diamond and a sapphire, each the size of the first phalange of a man's thumb, and of the purest water—encircling his helmet. His horse was the most beautiful animal I have even seen—a stallion of the most perfect symmetry and strength, showing blood in every line. This noble war-horse champed and fretted at the bit until the armour covering his breast was flecked with foam. Satan carried a baton in his right hand, some eighteen inches long, of pure gold, glittering with gems. His only arm was a sword. The expression on his terrible face was enough to chill the stoutest heart with dread. Let me attempt to approach a depiction thereof.

In the first place, his face was of a marble pallor—quite different from the rosy hue I described—or at least—attempted to—at our preceding séance in 1912. In the second place, his full lips were drawn into a thin crimson line of implacable determination and hatred. In the third place, his eyes seemed almost black—instead of pearly gray, as formerly described—from the fierceness, concentration, and deadly hatred, burning like a lurid flame in their beautiful but dreadful depths. *I saw before me, the God of War.*

I should observe that the partition of the host—as above described—only extended some five hundred yards from the elephant cohort rearwards. The division once made, Satan simply *appeared* there, riding forward. Upon the termination of the aforesaid fanfare of trumpets—“flourish of trumpets”—the mighty Shakspeare terms it, a silence similar to the first fell upon the host. Slowly the noble animal paced forward, bearing his redoubtable burden. Upon reaching the elephant

cohort the first thing approaching a sound—beyond the sound of Satan's charger's hoofs upon the magical marble flooring of the Hall of Audience—I should not omit to state that Satan rode absolutely alone—no guard, no staff, *nothing*—upon reaching the elephant cohort, the first thing resembling a sound was heard. This sound will delight your ears. It was the rustling of the ears of the six hundred elephants against their heads, as a sign of joy and love—these mighty beasts began to move their huge, palm-leaf-fan-like ears against their skulls. The creatures were so well disciplined that they did not let their emotions seduce them from an attitude of absolute rigidity. But they *did* allow their love for their master to show itself in the aforesaid gentle movement of their ears. Satan instantly caught the sound, and his terrible face unbent for a second as he recognized its cause, and as he threw a lightning-like, rapid glance upon the terrible forms of these monsters on each side of him, something approaching the ghost of a smile of love and sympathy shot like sheet-lightning across the deadly gloom of his beautiful but sombre countenance, as his marvellous eyes took in the slow, steady flapping of the creatures' huge ears. But it was only for a second. The next instant, his face resumed its deadly rigidity. The moment he emerged from the elephant cohort into the open space beyond, these animals extended their trunks almost in unison—for this act was *not* the result of a touch from a mahout, but was the spontaneous prompting of their hearts—or what, at least, takes its place in a beast. The moment he emerged from the elephant cohort these mighty beasts extended their trunks—this time *not* before them, as formerly, but straight over their heads, and sent forth a royal and imperial salute, worthy even of the Lord of Hell.

Once again the terrible countenance of Satan unbent, and the ghost of a smile swept over it—as a sunbeam over a burnt-up prairie—to be instantly followed by the same death-dealing implacability. When his charger had borne him some hundred feet beyond the elephant cohort, he wheeled abruptly

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and drawing his jewel-studded, gold-hilted sword, brought it swiftly to the salute. Whereupon—to do justice to the situation I must perforce fall back upon the mighty Milton, and

say: "Whereat the universal Host upsent a shout that tore Hell's concave—and beyond—frighted the reign of Chaos and old night". Words utterly fail your formerly—but thank God, now no longer—venerable Uncle Tom—in which to semi-adequately depict the *mountain*—veritable mountain of sound—which rose and shot skywards from the assembled, practically innumerable host of cavalry and infantry. Let me assure you, my cynical and doubting young friend, that it would not only have made your naturally curly hair curl more—but curl backwards—curl the wrong way—to have heard it.

(Uncle, alleged, it must have been a "rip-snorter," if you will pardon my profane comment upon so serious a situation).

Certainly, my dear Archie, I will pardon your damnable, modern, slang-degrading view-point—certainly I'll pardon you. To resume.

If it were possible to select a so-to-speak dominant note amidst this concourse of sweet sounds—to a soldier's ear, at least and that is what the Book of Fate has proven your former venerable Uncle Tom to be—if it were possible to select a sound which rose over all other sounds in that—so-to-speak—bouquet of Hell's yells—I would have put my money—jocularly, sportingly, to speak—upon the soul-chilling shout arising from a body of one hundred thousand American Indians, forming the skirmish line of Satan's Host, immediately behind the elephant cohort, and extending in a line five rows deep—to a large extent to either side. You may well imagine—and don't for a moment think that the covert smile now curling your lips escapes me—you, I repeat, may well imagine that American Indians were not in high favor with your Uncle Tom, owing to the soul-chilling, blood-curdling—to a person of average intelligence, to say the least—experiences of your Uncle Tom at their hands—minutely detailed in "Hell."

(I readily recognize the accuracy and justice of the above remark).

But in spite of the natural repugnance I had to Redskins, I could not forbear a feeling of admiration for the appallingly hair-raising nature of their war-cry. The term "hair-raising" is not so slangy as it might at first appear to be, since anyone who knows anything about Redskins knows that their war-whoop is but the curtain-raiser—so-to-speak—to raising the hair, lifting the scalp off the skull of their vanquished

foes. The braves were costumed precisely as I have already described in "Hell." Full war paint, scalp lock, bow, arrows, tomahawk and scalping knife, naked to the waist; deer-skin leggings and moccasins from there down. *I have learned that the American Indian is more dear to the heart of Satan than any other division of his mighty Host.* That the American Indian is, in fact, the body-guard of the Lord of Hell. Surrounding his Palace, day and night, besides forming the established skirmish line of his Host. I found that Satan values the following qualities which marked the Red-Man until—at the very worst—contact with the whites, and the whiskey of the white man, had more or less degraded him from his former high estate as a son of Nature. *First.* Satan admired in the Redskin the absolute superiority to anything in the least degree material—when its defence conflicts with the native pride and self-respect of the owner—even if the thing material represents his own body—his own flesh and blood. Who ever heard of an Indian at the stake begging for his life? Who ever heard of an Indian at the stake doing ought but hurling defiance at his encircling foes, or, at least, treating their combined efforts to torture him into an admission of weakness or a cry for mercy—with lordly and silent contempt? Who ever heard of a white man—at least, since the time of the Spartans—who could have his constancy put to such a Hellish test without succumbing?

Second. Satan admires in the Redman his marvellous self-conquest, as proven by his ability to keep his mouth shut until circumstances indicate that the time has come to open the same—say, at the Council fire. What white man whom you ever saw or heard of, could do the same? They chatter like magpies from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same—and beyond—'way beyond—and you know that I speak the truth.

(There is no doubt about it, Uncle, alleged. Men—to say nothing of the fair sex—talk a Devilish sight too much; in fact, in many instances, do nothing *but* talk).

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No sooner had the air ceased to vibrate with the yell of Hell than a silence as appalling as its opposite had been startling fell upon the vast throng. This lasted some three min-

utes, during which time Satan sat motionless upon his coal black horse, regarding the entire line of battle before him with a penetrating gaze, accompanied by a slow movement of the head, as his eye measured the host from wing to wing. So soon as this inspection had been carried out, a bugle blast rent the air and once more the yell of Hell was heard; once more the elephant phalanx extended their trunks on high, accompanied by the most terrific sounds; once more the war whoop of the braves was the one note distinguishable amid this hurly burly of fierce and terrifying sound. Once more silence settled upon the host as Satan turned his horse's head and advanced slowly. He had scarcely gone fifty feet before a magical sight presented itself. A chariot of fire descended from the upper air borne by four coal black stallions, harnessed abreast in trappings of gold, driven by a soldier in full antique armour. The chariot simply appeared in mid-air, some half mile above the host. It then swiftly descended, moving spirally—by which is meant in wide curves, revolving around a common axis. The hoofs of the horses made no sound, but the air formed a firm foot-hold for their hoofs, as it did a solid rolling surface for the gold-fellied, gold-tired, gold-spoked, and gold-naved wheels of the gold-bodied vehicle. The gold was not visible to the eye when the chariot was in motion for the reason that flames shot from each fraction of an inch of the surface of the wheels and the *outer*—not inner—surface of the chariot from the moment the wheels began to revolve. But so soon as the wheels ceased to revolve and the chariot came to a halt, then the flames instantly disappeared and the gloriously gleaming, brilliant yellow gold of the car was apparent. The flames shot six inches in a solid blaze from the aforesaid surfaces, and continued without either increasing or diminishing in the slightest degree until the car stopped. The stallions were hitched at least three feet away from the furthest thrust of the flames from the fore-part of the car—by which I mean that their hind legs were never nearer than three feet to the blaze. The flames of the chariot had the same magical, pyrotechnical quality as the flames of the Fiery Throne. It was marvellous, a soul-terrifying sight to see. The chariot was of the regular antique quadriga—or triumphal car—type, on two wheels, the body open at the rear, and sloping backwards, the driver and passenger standing erect. The

stallions were driven at a full gallop. They reared and plunged even at the highest speed—splitting the air with terrifying neighings. They seemed sired by that immortal animal the war-horse, in the Book of Job. The soldier-charioteer had no need for the short, flexible leather whip hanging from his right wrist by a loop. He *did* have need of all his sinewy strength, however, to hold—or, at least, *guide*—his fierce charges.

Swiftly they bore the flaming car along, the entire host meanwhile standing motionless and gazing upon the miraculous spectacle. The elephant phalanx even, lifted their massive heads and turned their fierce little eyes skyward. Whereupon the same subtle sound of pleasure before noticed, was observable, namely, the rustling of their huge ears against their enormous skulls. The creatures recognized the four horses as belonging to the Host—in that they were soon to bear their Chief aloft to his Fiery Throne, and the huge beasts appeared pleased at the recognition. When within a hundred yards of the ground, the charioteer pulled his horses back upon their haunches, by throwing his entire, massive bulk against the broad, jewel-studded yellow leather reins. From there down, the horses went at a walk—their former speed had been thirty miles an hour. Their jet black skins were white with foam, where the jewel-studded harness met it. Their massive chests were flecked therewith. Their large, bold, fiery eyes seemed almost to shoot flame as they snorted and tugged at their gold bits. Their cup-like, delicate nostrils seemed filled with blood as they dilated and contracted under their fierce gusts of breath. Their tails banged to protect them from the flames—swished angrily from side to side, and their hind legs momentarily lifted spasmodically as their polished, jet black hoofs were raised daintily, nervously and threateningly, as though to launch a blow in the rear. But no kick was ever aimed. The creatures seemed to know their august charge, and refrained from so irreverent—so undisciplined—an act. The chariot halted when it reached the ground, some fifty feet in advance of Satan. The latter then slowly dismounted. No sooner had his feet reached *terra firma* than his war-horse disappeared—vanished into thin air, within the smallest possible fraction of a second, imaginable. Satan then slowly advanced towards the chariot, slowly mounted the same, and

took his stand on the right of the driver, who had brought his right hand to the salute when Satan was within some ten paces of the car. Satan acknowledged the salute in military fashion. No sooner had he taken his place than the trumpet again sounded, and once more the yell of Hell was heard. As soon as it ceased, the charioteer loosed his horses' heads and they started at a full gallop for the summit of the Fiery Throne.

Upon reaching the level of the dais upon which the Throne stood, the driver brought his horses to a halt and backed the chariot so that the tail of the car was within easy landing distance of the same. Satan—the horses standing motionless as though carved in black marble now—as though propinquity to the dreaded seat of Satanic Majesty awed even their fiery natures—Satan slowly stepped onto the dais and slowly mounted the Throne. Before seating himself, he made a slight motion of dismissal with his right hand to the charioteer, who answered with a military salute and instantly gave his horses their heads who instantly started in full career, heading skyward at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Their speed was terrific—they went, this time, at the rate of at least sixty miles an hour, and in almost less time than it takes to tell it, the chariot and its horses were lost to view.

Satan, who had, with the entire Host, watched the departure of the fiery chariot, then slowly reclined upon the Fiery Throne. No sooner had he done so that its flames shot out, and the lofty pyramid became a pyramid of flame. Once more the yell of Hell was heard, but instead of its termination being followed by deathlike silence, it was succeeded by a chorus of male voices, chanting a battle hymn. The chorus was invisible. It seemed made up of at least a thousand powerful male voices, accustomed to singing in the open air. It was a perfect battery of sound—a massed battery, which seemed to be standing on every step of the pyramid of flame—judging, that is to say—from the sound—the direction from which the sound came—on every step, and at each of the four points of the compass—on each of the four sides of the pyramid—that is to say.

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The words of the battle hymn were such as to move the most unwarlike—provided only he was not a coward—to thoughts—even to desire—for war. I shall reserve them for a future occasion when I am communicating material to be turned by you into rhyme in a future Canto. Let it suffice to say that nothing I ever heard or read on earth made war so attractive—so *compellingly* attractive. This battle hymn lasted some five minutes. At its close, the fiercest, most prolonged, most impassioned of all and several the yells of Hell I had heard, split the air, showing that the words of the battle hymn had searched the very souls of the Host of Hell—it being remembered that each word was distinctly audible to the remotest confines of that vast array. Thereupon, Satan bowed his head with an Olympian slowness and solemnity, and there immediately appeared before him—upon a platform—some three feet below the surface of the dais upon which the Throne rested—three Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Sin.

It must be understood that things in Hell are done instantaneously and invisibly; the cause, that is to say, is invisible; the result only, is apparent. Where said Ambassadors *hid* themselves, or came from before they appeared upon said aerial platform, I am not permitted—as yet—to divulge to mortal ears. That is for a future occasion—near or remote, as the case may be. Let it suffice to say that said Ambassadors *did* appear in mid-air, and instantaneously, upon the completion of Satan's Olympian nod. The platform upon which the Ambassadors stood was of solid gold. Its width some twenty-five feet—its depth the same. The platform was six inches thick of solid gold. The gold under the feet of the Ambassadors, for the entire length and breadth of the platform, was carpeted in crimson velvet—not velvet-carpet material, but actual velvet—velvet three inches thick.

(In other words, my revered and increasingly interesting Uncle, alleged, if you will tolerate a remark from a faulty mortal, the Ambassadors were “on velvet.”)

I *will* tolerate it, Archie, but—frankly speaking—I hate to do so. I loathe and despise your tendency to slang. But knowing full well that slang is the very breath in the nostrils of the degraded “damned mechanical” age in which you live

and move and have your being, I forgive your questionable taste, and, with a sigh, move on.

In the centre of the platform, which was surrounded by a railing of pure gold four feet high, composed of four rows of round gold bars an inch in diameter, attached at intervals of some six feet to pillars of marble, six inches wide, and six inches deep—in the centre of the platform was a table of ebony, inlaid with gold. This table was some six feet square. Upon it were rolls of parchment, done up in red tape; three ink-stands of solid gold; three diminutive jars of solid gold, containing shot of gold, and in each of which stood a pen of solid gold, made to represent a goose quill; a seal of gold, six inches high, and on a small gold tray, a stick of black sealing-wax. Nothing else found place upon this platform. There were, of course, no chairs, since no Ambassador can sit in the presence of Royalty when Royalty is holding a state function, such as the present.

I shall now essay the difficult task of depicting the countenances of the Ambassadors. I say "difficult" for the reason that none but a most profoundly experienced eye—experienced in the practically unknown, or rather lost, art of probing human nature—could have detected the villainy lurking beneath the intellectual, dignified, courtly, handsome faces, and powerful figures of the three Ambassadors. They were clad in Roman armour with the red paludament, or long cloak-like robe, of the Roman General, draped over it. They wore helmets, and had swords at their sides. All were clean shaven. All were men of apparently fifty years of age, judging from the gravity of their countenances, but not a gray hair—not a sign of age was visible. Upon their appearance before him, Satan once more bent his helmetted head in an Olympian nod. The three Ambassadors thereupon drew their swords, and gave Satan a military salute. Satan acknowledged this with a second slow nod, during which the Ambassadors returned their swords to their scabbards. The Ambassadors then advanced to the extreme edge of the platform. The central Ambassador then said in suave tones:

"Your Imperial Majesty, we are sent hither by our Royal Master, who desires to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with your Imperial Majesty, against Jehovah."

Thereupon Satan, after a pause of some thirty seconds,

replied in tones so cold they chilled my very soul—and bear in mind every word uttered by the Ambassadors or Satan, although the tone was an ordinary conversational one, reached—by magic—the ears of every member of that mighty Host—thereupon Satan replied:

“What are the reasons for said alliance?”

The leading Ambassador perceptibly winced at this direct thrust, and, for a moment, was at a loss for a reply. Quickly recovering his suavity of manner, however, the said leading Ambassador retorted in the most confident—but at the same time respectful tones—the tones meet to convey ideas to an Emperor:

“If your Imperial Majesty please, the bruited reports that the world is approaching its end, by which, of course, I mean, that the Millennium, which for one thousand years precedes the end of the world, is about to begin.”

“What interest have I in that?”

“The interest, if your Imperial Majesty please, that the Book of Revelation at least hints that Satan will be bound for said period.”

“The Book of Revelation is the most unrevealing book in the entire Bible—in the combined Scriptures. This is, of course, intentional upon the part of Jehovah—Whose ways—of necessity—are mystery. Without going into the source of my belief, I am confident that nothing of the sort will take place—I being Jehovah’s Public Prosecutor.”

“But, if your Imperial Majesty please, is there not a shadow of a doubt in your Imperial mind that your Imperial Majesty may be mistaken in the premises?”

“Not the faintest shadow.”

“In that event, we, as Ambassadors of our Royal Master, declare war upon your Imperial Majesty, upon the ground that your Imperial Majesty is irrevocably hostile to our Royal Master.”

“I do not desire war with your Royal Master, provided the same can be avoided without loss of honor, dignity, or prestige upon my part. Therefore, pray return and consult with your Royal Master, and bring me the result of your conference.”

“We shall do so at once, an it please your Imperial Majesty.”

Instantly the platform disappeared. In the interim—a short half-hour—before its reappearance, the same chorus sang new verses of the said battle hymn. Upon the reappearance of the Ambassadors Satan nodded as before, with the same response upon the part of the Ambassadors. Thereupon Satan said, in the same deadly chill tones:

“What is the reply of your Royal Master?”

“The reply, an it please your Imperial Majesty, of our Royal Master, is as follows. That our Royal Master doubts strongly the accuracy of your Imperial Majesty’s conclusions regarding the binding of Satan for a thousand years, and therefore has this to propose. Our Royal Master does not ask your Imperial Majesty to recede from your Imperial Majesty’s position, but merely to meet our Royal Master half way. As follows. Provided affairs on earth assume an extraordinary aspect within the next five years—this year being the year 1912—by which is meant, provided—for example—a world-wide war should arise which might indicate the approach of the Millennium, *from its horror, its magnitude, and the indication that it is a foretaste of the Wrath of God*—provided such a war arises, our Royal Master demands that your Imperial Majesty prepare for the worst. Which, being interpreted, means that the prophecies, vaguely hinted at in the Book of Revelation, are about to be fulfilled, and your Imperial Majesty bound, preparatory to the practical extinction of the power of your Imperial Majesty, for one thousand years. In a word, that your Imperial Majesty will take steps to safeguard your Imperial Majesty’s power by forming the only alliance possible in the premises, namely, with our Royal Master.”

“Tell your Royal Master—and report as soon as convenient his reply—which I and my Host shall await here in our Imperial Audience Chamber—tell your Royal Master that I shall be only too happy to comply with his learned and profound suggestion *provided only* that within the five years succeeding the outbreak of said world-wide war, *it shall appear palpably, and beyond the least shadow of a doubt, that Jehovah has either changed His nature, or lost His power*—by which is meant that the forces in said world-wide war—which stand for vice, more or less thinly veiled, for rapine—for robbery—if not all three—all wars, *on one side or the other* conceal vice,

rapine or robbery—*by which is meant that the forces which stand for the said three objectionable elements, to-wit: vice, rapine or robbery, shall have within the next five years, from the—at present unknown—year of the outbreak of war after 1912, have, beyond the least shadow of a doubt, gotten the victory over the forces to the contrary—to the contrary of vice, rapine, or robbery.*”

“We shall report your Imperial Majesty’s remarks to our Royal Master, and report the result at the earliest possible moment.”

Thereupon the platform sustaining the Ambassadors disappeared and—for some thirty minutes—the aforesaid chorus entertained the Host. At the end of this time the Ambassadors appeared. Their spokesman said: “We exceedingly regret to announce to your Imperial Majesty that our Royal Master finds it impossible to comply with your Imperial Majesty’s demands. It is not worth while to go into the details. Let it suffice, we respectfully submit, your Imperial Majesty, to know that our Royal Master rejects your Imperial Majesty’s *pour parlers*, and declares war upon your Imperial Majesty forthwith.”

Whereupon Satan smiled in a sarcastic manner, and replied in the same chilling tones: “It gives me pleasure to record the ultimatum of your Royal Master. I shall do my best to merit the verdict of History in the conflict which will now ensue. Adieu.”

Thereupon the Ambassadors bowed, and the platform disappeared.

February 1, 1918.

As before intimated, every word uttered by Satan or the spokesman of the Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Sin, was audible throughout the entire length and breadth of the vast Audience Hall. Upon the conclusion of Satan’s aforesaid remark, a death-like silence possessed the mighty Host. It rested like a brooding care—a raven-winged, ominous weight, upon the dauntless souls of those fearless and battle-loving warriors. For you must know, that the forces of the Kingdom of Sin are—not to go too fully into details—at least twenty-five time more numerous than those of Hell.

(Is that twenty-five times more numerous, may I ask?)

You may. It is. To offset this hideous preponderance you must know that each warrior—not officer—who is even more redoubtable—but each warrior of Hell is equal to at least fifteen warriors of the Kingdom of Sin in strength. This is owing to the superior *morale* of the warriors of Hell. Also to the severe—to put it mildly—training and torment each must undergo before rising to the proud height of being enrolled as a warrior of Hell. It is, among other reasons, owing to the increased length and severity of the training and torment aforesaid, that the Kingdom of Sin is so much more popular than Hell—that twenty-five souls choose the former—in preference to the latter—to one soul choosing the latter. The officers—each officer—is equal to at least twenty-five warriors of the Kingdom of Sin—and the officers of the Kingdom of Sin have no superior strength to the warriors thereof. To support the superior morale of the fearful inferiority in numbers of the soldiers of Hell, it has been decreed by the Book of Fate—which Book holds the decrees of Jehovah, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit from the foundation of the world—that a spiritual force should support the soldiers of Hell in combat, provided—and in mathematically exact proportion to the same—provided that the spiritual condition of the forces of Hell is normal—provided also that the thoroughness of the training for the combat is commensurate with said normal spirituality of the forces of Hell. By which is meant, first, that there is absolutely not a vestige of anything resembling spirituality to be found throughout the length and breadth of the confines of the Kingdom of Sin—far from it. Whereas in Hell, no man and no woman remains—after they have paid the penalty of their sins, or crimes, or both, in the flesh—unless—as already indicated, he or she has a tinge of poetry, or romance, at least, in their mental and moral make-up—besides being unqualifiedly both mentally, morally, and physically brave—and this admirable trait is as necessary for the aspirant for Hell, of the fair sex, as it is for the sterner sex. In the Kingdom of Sin moral courage is at a generous discount, but physical courage is not—physical courage is almost—certainly within seventy-five per cent—as pronounced among the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Sin—male and female—as it is in Hell. I shall not attempt to touch upon the check and balance system by which moral courage brings

physical force in its train, in moments of great danger—in moments when physical courage is giving ground to overwhelming odds, or what not, of a like nature; nor on the mysterious inrush of spiritual force, translated into terms of physical force, of course, to be available against preponderant physical force—preponderate numbers—the mysterious inrush of spiritual force at crucial moments, proportionate to the thoroughness of the training for combat, and proportionate to the normality of the spiritual forces of Hell—said check and balance system is the most delicately complicated thing imaginable, and it would merely confuse and puzzle you were I to attempt to detail it until I have initiated you further in the mysteries of the human heart as laid bare—in a Collegiate course—on the blackboard, supported by maps and diagrams of that mysterious and highly interesting organ, the heart. Of course, I use that term symbolically for the soul—as already premised. Therefore let it suffice to say, the troops of Hell are *always* in *half* training, of a physical nature—like that of a member of a University crew on earth—or even of a pugilist—in *half* training, for war—which is almost constant between Hell and the Kingdom of Sin. Also, the troops of Hell are in honor and duty bound to be in at least as strict *moral* as they are in physical training at *all* times. When this is the case—since two weeks intervene between a declaration of war and the first overt act of war—the inception of hostilities—there is ample time, considering that we are speaking of demi-gods—of men who have passed triumphant through the fires of Hell and Purgatory—for the troops of Hell to increase their half training to *hard* training—both physical and spiritual, with the result—provided physical and spiritual were normal when the hard training began—that in two weeks the forces of Hell can increase their “punch”—to drop into your favorite—and occasionally powerful, as well as ornamental—slang—can increase their force from fifty per cent. to ninety-five and frequently one hundred. If such is the case, victory is mathematically certain to perch upon the banners of Hell in all battles with the Kingdom of Sin. But if not, *not*. In the event of considerable portions of the troops of Hell having been either lax in physical training—below half training, two weeks before hostilities began—or lax in spiritual training, as already indicated, then Hell is as mathematically

certain of defeat as she was before of victory. For the mere superiority in numbers upon the side of Sin will bring the said results about—*all* warriors of Sin being expert swordsmen and spearmen, and physically dauntless. It is exceedingly rare that such a thing transpires, but it is always hanging in the offing—to use a nautical term—always on the mind's horizon, and therefore the cause for the dread silence hanging like a pall over the Host of Hell at the acceptance by Satan of the declaration of war by Sin, is not far to seek. In a word: the physical courage backed by a superiority twenty-five times as great as Hell, as regards numbers, upon the part of Sin, makes it merely necessary for the troops of Sin to keep in only *one quarter* training—and that of a purely *physical* nature, in the short intervals of peace, and also train *hard* for the two weeks immediately preceding hostilities in order to vanquish Hell—provided Hell is, as aforesaid, below normal. You will readily see, from my more or less searching analysis of the complicated situation, that—to once more borrow some of your slang—Hell has to do all the “guessing,” whereas Sin has only to keep one quarter fit, in times of truce or armistice, and then train hard for two weeks before the inception of hostilities, in order to beat Hell, *unless* Hell has been doing her *strict* duty.

At the end of full five minutes' pause, the voice of Satan was heard dominating the air of that vast Hall.

He rose from his Throne—from his aforesaid couch thereon—to speak.

The dais—as was the entire pyramidal Throne—was of solid gold, but the dais had this variety, that its surface was made up of a pavement of ordinary sized bricks, composed of emeralds. The simple purple woolen rug, which draped the crimson leather mattress surmounting the golden couch, which rested upon a carpet of emeralds, made a contrast as artistic as it was striking and characteristic of the underlying simplicity—as regards taste—not intellect—of Satan, in whose marvellous mind splendor and simplicity march hand in hand.

He began in low tones, carrying—owing to the magic inherent in the Hall of Audience—to the remotest member of that vast and serried Host—and slowly, gradually, increased their force until the concluding sentences rang out like a clarion—a blast from a silver clarion. He said:

“Principalities, Powers, Officers and Warriors, Lords, and Grand Feudatories of Hell, together with your dauntless retainers: It grieves my inmost soul to have to accept the terms of our inveterate enemy the King of Sin. But you are all too loyal to our mighty Chief—to Jehovah Jah—to, for one moment, entertain the treasonable and treacherous proposition of making war on Him. I know the pains and toils you must all submit to in order to overcome the vast hordes of Sin. I sympathize—and regret—with you the stern necessity which compels me to accept the gauge thrown down by the Ambassadors of our enemy. But deeply as I sympathize, deeply as I regret, I am convinced that at the termination of this bloody and relentless struggle—the most desperate that the world has ever seen—our world, as well as the upper world—we shall emerge victorious, and you all, my lords and retainers, know what such a victory will mean to each and all of us—what of increased prestige, increased self-respect, increased spoils of silver, of gold, of jewels. I shall not ask you to listen to me any longer, and shall simply say, in conclusion, that, now that I have shown my feeling for your approaching toils and cares—I allow myself the pleasure of saying that I *exult* in the outcome of the negotiations of Sin, I *long* for the day when I may feel my charger bounding under me, fiery for the fray; and nothing can equal the joy with which I will charge at the head of my cavalry at the redoubtable leader of the Hosts of Sin.”

Nothing that I can command in the way of language can begin to convey the uproar—the tumultuous tempest of sound—which spouted like invisible geysers towards the crystal roof of the Hall of Audience—fifty miles high—upon the conclusion of Satan’s brief and simple address to his troops. Such being the unvarnished fact, I shall content myself by saying that it even appeared to astonish his Satanic Majesty; his sombre countenance lighted in a smile as the vast roar rose and fell, in wave succeeding wave.

I should here state that the forked flames, accompanied by thunder, shooting from the Fiery Throne, are self-regulating—are regulated by the harmonious magic dominating the Hall of Audience. When silence is needed, for the sake of harmony, or when a thunderstorm from without is in progress,

no sounds come from the Fiery Throne—no forked-flames productive of thunder ever show their tongues. Therefore, of course, when Satan spoke—or after speaking—while the Host considered his words, no forked flames appeared.

After the uproar had lasted at least five minutes, Satan rose from the Throne and advancing slowly to the edge of the emerald dais, raised his right hand. As if by magic, the sound ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Satan, smiling, said in tones almost cheerful in their *timbre*:

“Principalities, Powers, Officers and Warriors, Lords, and Grand Feudatories of Hell, together with your dauntless retainers: If anything could add to the joy of approaching combat which now thrills my soul, it would be the warlike spirit of this mighty and redoubtable Host, which just a moment ago made the welkin ring as it rode the waves of sound—as—in two weeks—this Host will ride the waves of battle to victory.”

Satan thereupon slowly backed to the Throne—the couch thereon—and reclined. Not a sound followed his last words. Suddenly the same cherubim which had blown the terrific blast at the inception of the gathering of the Host of Hell, appeared from the nearest end of the Hall of Audience—the end facing Satan on the Throne—flying at terrific speed. No sooner had the mighty being appeared than a second unutterable blast shot from his trumpet. So swiftly did he fly that no sooner was the blast emitted than the cherubim had disappeared like a whirlwind, flying over the rear of the embattled Host. No sooner did this transpire than a shout went up from the entire Host equal in ferocity and carrying power to anything in that line I have recently attempted to disclose.

February 2, 1918.

Whereupon, Satan rose from the Throne, and advancing slowly to the edge of the emerald floor, once more raised his hand. Silence like unto death instantly ensued. Whereupon the Lord of Hell said in tones as chill as the blast from the Boreal Pole in mid-winter: “It is utterly unnecessary for me to insist upon the most rigid training in the short interval between now and the joining of combat. You all know the pains and penalties, the fines and imprisonment—to say nothing of the loss of military rank—following in the train of self-in-

dulgence, remissness, or lack of ideality in aspiring to fit yourselves for the honor of supporting the glorious banner of Hell against the countless and redoubtable hosts of the vast Kingdom of Sin. You know from highest Peer to stalwart foot-soldier, that it is not I who have made the dreadful list of penalties and punishments following like Nemesis and the Furies in the wake of lack of unselfish devotion to the Ideal—absolute donation of one's whole soul to the cause of patriotism—without, of course, jeopardizing that most precious of all possessions—the soul. You all know that said grim and awful list of retributive justice—hounding down each delinquent as the shadow of a man follows a man—is the work of Destiny sanctioned by the God whom we all serve and willingly obey—the God of Battles—the Man of War—Jehovah Jah.” The titles of omnipotence so thrilled the warlike assemblage that—bursting all bounds of restraint heretofore observed so rigidly when Satan was speaking—each member of that vast, disciplined, serried Host, brandished his sword or spear aloft, and waving their weapons in unison, began a Battle Hymn to Jehovah Jah, accompanied by bursts of thunder and flashes of lightning. For as the volume of sound of these fierce voices rose and swelled, mounting skyward to the uttermost confines of the crystal roof covering the Audience Hall, the air suddenly became sulphurous—by which is meant the yellow hue sometimes seen in the sky before a fierce summer thunder storm—settled upon the hitherto cerulean blue of the firmament seen through the crystal as clearly as through polished plate glass—and a deadly, ghastly, ominous sheen was thereby thrown over the rich armor and gleaming weapons of the vividly coloristic Host. Whereupon, lurid bolts of lightning—zigzagging for miles in length—shot across the sky, followed almost immediately by the most appalling crashes of thunder my ears ever were startled with; the yellow tinge thereupon deepened to a sombre darkness, suggesting approaching night. It brought to my mind the scene when the Tables of the Law were delivered to Moses on the Mount. As the darkness increased, so did the frequency and intensity of the flashes of lightning—so did the horrible bursts of thunder, which seemed to growl ominously before bursting into a soul-chilling blood-curdling roar. But even above the burst of thunder rose the marvellous strains of the Battle Hymn from the throats of

five million determined, drilled, disciplined, and immortal men. There was something utterly inspiring in the effect of this vast concourse of sweet sounds. For in Hell every man has as sweet a singing voice and as strong, as is strong and sweet his speaking voice. The same is true—most naturally—of the gentler sex. Nothing of the sort is true of the Kingdom of Sin—there the percentage of singing voices is rigidly that of this world—which is to say, rare indeed. But since Beauty is one of the Ideals kept most frequently before the soul's eye while undergoing torment and torture in Purgatory—the promise of voices as sweet as the nightingale and strong as a clarion blast are promised each aspirant who has the ideality, the character and the love of beauty to support him during the hundred years—or less—mine was well inside ten years—of Purgatory—only fifty to a hundred years is the stint of the average, selfish, worldly-minded, more or less, unprincipled society man, or business man, or professional man—and suffices for all but the most callous and desperate cases which require from one hundred and fifty to three hundred years of Purgatory—three hundred years is the absolute limit. But since Beauty is one of the Ideals kept most constantly before the soul's eye in Purgatory—beauty of face—beauty of figure—beauty of voice—and last, but not least, beauty of character—it logically follows that every man or woman who aspires to and achieves Hell is the happy recipient of a voice which would net him a million in the operatic world on earth. There was something utterly inspiring in the effect of this vast concourse of sweet sounds. *Let it suffice to say that it made a man—not an absolute craven—long for battle as a lover for his mistress's arms.* The thunder and lightning acted as an accompaniment to the music of the Battle Hymn—breaking in upon its harmony in crashing chords of thunderous discord, which merely served to accentuate the melody preceding the onrush of the thunder, and immediately following thereupon. This thunder and lightning—I afterwards learned—is the direct Representation of the Presence of God Almighty in Hell. It is the only form in which He appears there—as He appeared in the days of old—as the Shekinah—or visible glory of Jehovah—rested in the form of a cloud over the Mercy Seat. So, at mighty moments, He appears in Hell. It is unnecessary to dilate upon

the unutterable confidence the violence of the thunder and the terrifying vividness of the lightning, inspired in the martial breasts of these followers of the Man of War. It assured them that after all, in the final analysis, they had back of them the Supreme Power of the Universe, and therefore, no matter if the forces of Sin *did* outnumber those of Hell, twenty-five to one, the result would be a victory for Hell, provided that each did his best. Some fifteen minutes of this terrific thing sufficed to end the Battle Hymn as well as the thunder and lightning. Whereupon Satan—who had stood erect at the edge of the emerald carpet during the said outbursts of man and the elements—the flames from the Fiery Throne meanwhile standing out in even more magnificent relief, if possible, against such a background as I have been at some pains to describe—whereupon, Satan raised his hand once more, and in an instant the same silence as before, ensued. He said: “Principalities, Powers, Officers and Warriors, Lords, Grand Feudatories of Hell and dauntless retainers of them and me: I salute you. I revere the stark courage manifested in the spontaneousness of enthusiasm thus displayed. I am proud to be your Chief, and I am as confident as that I now stand on emeralds, that the victory will be ours. Now comes the time to separate and train for the feast of blood—the combat so soon to be begun. Adieu.”

Instantly everything and every being in the Hall of Audience vanished. The flame died from the Throne, and nothing but fifty miles square and high of space met my amazed gaze.

To conclude—or rather start to conclude the prose contingent of Canto One. The Great War being now in its fourth year, it is very meet and right that I should say something concerning the fate of those killed in battle, and of those who die of wounds received in battle, and of those who die of sickness when on duty at the front—or contracted at the front.

February 3, 1918.

This applies not only to your friends, the Allies, but to your enemies, the Central Powers.

(Is that “but to your enemies, the Central Powers,” may I ask?)

You may; it is. God sends his rain on the just and the unjust. The people of the Central Powers are culpable in a

somewhat minor degree, compared with their rulers—but I admit, *are strongly, deeply culpable* for supporting through their political representatives the infamous policy of rapine, murder, and arson, initiated by William II, of Germany. *In the first place*, every man who dies for his country saves his soul alive—no matter what the blackness of his crimes before his death. There is but one exception to this rule, and that is in the case of men given to unnatural vice. For them, there is no salvation, since there is no repentance or shadow of repentance possible in the hearts of such bestial villains. But even in the case of these—fortunately, more or less rare individuals—the fact that they *did* die for their country mitigates at least fifty per cent. the unutterable pangs each must undergo before being annihilated—as described in “Hell,” pages 28-29, and thrown—what’s left of them after that interesting process—into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

To resume—and touch no more upon the lost or their fate—at present, at least. It of course, is optional with each soldier, after death, as to which of the various Zones of Paradise—of Heaven—he aspires to—or—if none of them attract him—it is optional whether he elects Hell, the Underworld, the Kingdom of Sin or the Land of Cockaigne. Here is a new side light on things below decks. There is a certain chamber into which each man and woman is led after—but not before—he or she has paid the penalty in fire, blood and sweat, for their sins—or possibly crimes. Thither he or she is led upon the day of graduation, and before he or she starts out on the sometimes painful, toilsome and even terrible road of achievement—the achievement of the goal of his or her desires—his or her future abode for all eternity. I shall not take time to go more into detail upon this complicated head at present. Sometimes, owing to the more or less virtuous life he led on earth, plus his record in previous incarnations on earth—sometimes owing to an heroic act he did on earth, plus a life free from selfishness, etc., enable a man or woman to keep straight from Purgatory into Hell. But that is decidedly rare. Usually no man or woman gets higher than the Kingdom of Sin by merely wiping out their scores on earth, and from five to ten more years of effort are needed to achieve either the Underworld or Hell. The various Zones of Paradise require even more strenuous work, tho’ not necessarily

more time. But said years are—so-to-speak—post-graduate years in the College of the Soul—the discipline—the—so-to-speak—heretofore *prison* discipline—is a thing of the past, and the life is full of pleasant things and totally free from punishments or torments or tortures. It is followed, too, in a different Zone of Purgatory. It is, in a word, a course of five or ten years of moral, intellectual, post graduate training as different from Purgatory as is day from night.

Into this wonderful chamber—which, at the proper time will be minutely described—marches the proud recipient of the crown of golden laurel leaves each man or woman receives from the hand of Satan as he or she stands before the Prince of Darkness, throned in the College of the Soul—as that mighty marble structure is called—in which the study of the human heart is pursued as is geology or mathematics, on earth—and from which male and female, good, bad, and indifferently *must* graduate, before they are permitted to leave purgatory—it is the key to the knowledge of Good and Evil—if after graduation they err, they do so intentionally, and with their eyes wide open. Here, in said mysterious and sombre chamber into which each enters alone with his or her keeper—whereupon the keeper retires forever—the keepers are women for both sexes—here is shown him or her as he or she gazes into the vast magic crystal, containing the womb of the Future—here is shown him or her the fate of his or her loved ones on earth—by which is meant, which goal, as aforesaid, each loved one will elect to achieve. Thus—to cut an infinitely long story—and complicated as long—short: the “graduate” sees in succession what goal his father, mother, sister, brother, wife, or sweetheart, elects to aim at after death—always, of course, supposing each is yet on earth. The experience gained in said mysterious chamber—whose name I shall not now mention—often acts as a determining factor in deciding a man or woman to undergo the toils, sometimes pains, and even terrors, necessary to achieve the goal his or her sweetheart aims—or rather—will after death—aim at. It also sometimes acts as a revelation in showing him that his parents—one or both—his brothers and sisters, sweetheart or wife—or husband—according to the sex of the gazer into the awful crystal ball aforesaid—are not what he or she supposed them to be, and that far from occupying the same goal with

them, he or she would bend every energy to escape therefrom. I have said enough to indicate the pure interest Satan takes in affording each graduate every possible incentive to make the best and wisest choice regarding his or her future career. What has been said of relatives applies to intimate friends as well.

In the second place, every man who dies for his country is enrolled, after death, in a Legion of warriors known as *The Patriots*. This mighty legion has immunities, privileges, emoluments and honors of an exceedingly high and valuable nature, not necessary to go into at this late hour, but fully described at the proper time.

In the third place, every man who dies for his country cuts in half the torment and torture he has to undergo to expiate his sins or crimes on earth, and at the same time, shortens the time necessary to train up to said expiation by fifty per cent.

In the fourth and last place, every man who dies for his country receives the title of *Hero*, which is written after his name or pronounced after his name whenever his name is publicly pronounced. To save time, and also to save modesty, the word *Hero* is never written by the hero *himself* after his name—or by people—except on official occasions—writing to him: the capital letter beginning the word merely is used. Thus: James Black, H.—the letter being always followed by a period, indicates that James Black died for his country, and was therefore a member of the Legion known as *The Patriots*—the glorious Legion, aforesaid—and was, therefore, entitled to write “H” after his illustrious name. Those who are wounded in battle for their country receive no title nor emoluments after death—the glory they receive for their wounds from their grateful people on earth, being sufficient—but they do cut down the torments and tortures after death in geometrical ratio, with the suffering their wound or wounds cost them on earth. There is one exception to this, and that is the case of those military or naval martyrs who lose both eyes in the damnable modern warfare now raging, or are otherwise *facially* disfigured. These military or naval martyrs are enrolled after death in a Legion known as *The Veterans*, and have the word “Veteran” written or spoken on official or state occasions, after their names—otherwise, as above, contracted

into the letter "V"—capital "V." Precisely the same benefits of *every* nature accrue to a Veteran as to a Hero—to cut a long detailed repetition short. The same is true of male or female nurses, of stretcher-bearers or ambulance drivers.

Lastly, all military crosses, orders, titles, etc., won in war, remain the property of the fortunate recipient after death.

I now propose to close the prose contingent to Canto One of "Hell And The Infernal Comedy."

(Many thanks. On the whole, my dear Uncle, alleged, I have had so much Hell on earth in my legal campaign of twenty years' duration, and still raging with no hint of a let-up, that when my time comes—on the principle that Hell gone through on earth—directly, and *pro tanto*—just by so much—mitigates the Hell one has to go through *in* Hell—that therefore I shall get a remarkably light sentence when I mount that marble dock and face that grim judge. Bear in mind, I shall have to face no screen pictures of myself and maiden under an umbrageous tree, or wife of friend lured from loyalty—any more than you, my respected Uncle, alleged, had to. On the aforesaid principle, I shall mount that marble dock with equanimity, and am frank to say so attractive is the picture you paint of Hell that I should not in the least mind going to Hell.)

My adventurous young friend, let me assure you that you will be received with open arms.

(No *double entente* there, I trust—no "string" attached to that, may I ask?)

You may. That is for me to know and you to find out.

(Ah!)

February 6, 1918.

(I should like to communicate with the spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller, alleged, if the same is permitted.)

(X-Faculty) : It is; and you may do so at once.

(Many thanks).

(Uncle Tom, I should like to communicate with your matchless Consort—to use your striking phrase—with your full permission).

Well! Well! An anchorite like you desirous of communicating with a female spirit. Well! Well!

(Well, what about it? I don't see anything so out of the

way in that. You know my philosophic interest in the human soul. Said soul is two-fold—male *and* female. I therefore, having got a most satisfactory lot of material for meditation, during the remainder of the winter, concerning the soul of the sterner sex, now—from a desire for balance—a desire for harmony—turn towards the spontaneous outpouring of a female soul, who has passed through the fires of Hell, and has found her ideal, and is thankful).

Very prettily put. So prettily put that I shall refrain from bantering you farther, and forthwith suggest to my supreme-among-women, to deign to communicate with one of the most scandalously brazen of his sex—by which I mean, one of the most desperately hardened—by a fight of twenty years against throned iniquity—throned tyranny—one of the most desperate, hardened, and hopeless members of the body-male—so-to-speak.

(I except to your language, as we lawyers say, but gladly *accept* your permission to exchange ideas with the sharer of your joys and woes.)

The Princess de la Moskowa will now—I having subconsciously and instantaneously obtained her gracious permission so to do—the Princess de la Moskowa will now deign to communicate with one of the most faulty, but persevering of his sex.

(I again, and once more, and with redoubled emphasis, except to, and accept your scandalously libellous language. May Her Highness deign to proceed—*one moment!* Being a female, I shall omit—for fear of rousing the tigerish, vindictive, spirit, latent, more or *less* latent—in *all* female hearts—I shall omit the saving word “alleged” in dealing with your flower-like Consort—if your jealousy will admit so distant—no pun intended—a compliment, and shall give her her full title, and never once cast the shadow of a doubt over the veracity of her utterances).

You do wisely, my young friend—you do well. Her Royal Highness—for that is her title—my title being His Royal Highness—Satan, having no heirs, and wishing to distinguish me above all men—Her Royal Highness will now deign to communicate with the Hermit of “The Merry Mills.”

(Many thanks, my venerable Uncle, alleged. Many thanks).

Mr. Chaloner, my heroic and matchless Consort, the Prince of the Moskowa, Marshal Ney, of the Napoleonic legend, has recently intimated to me your desire to communicate with me, and his consent thereto. I therefore take pleasure—knowing what a loyal and affectionate friend you were of the Prince, during his most miserable, wretched, and beggarly incarnation as Thomas Jefferson Miller, of the Manhattan Club, in the City of New York—I therefore take pleasure in complying with your request.

(Permit me to thank your Royal Highness most deeply for your gracious words).

Before starting out on this more or less lengthy unveiling of the experiences of us women in the Place of Departed Spirits, let me say one thing. This place is never called what you think it is. This place is called Valhalla. Our enemy's abode is called Philistia, and it is only reasonable to assume that we ladies—to say nothing of the men—would make a powerful protest against our abode being called by any such malodorous name as you suppose. Hence, it has been graciously permitted by Jehovah that the name of this place be Valhalla—the Southernmost people—broadly speaking—with the Northernmost.

(Most poetically appropriate, if you will graciously permit me to break in).

pleasure in so doing. To resume. As the Prince has intimated to you, the full, consecutive description of the entrance and progress through Valhalla of a female soul will be communicated to you later on, and turned by you into sonnets. But in the meantime—knowing the vast strides female emancipation has assumed on earth—and therefore, the very natural interest of your female readers as to their lot in Valhalla, I am permitted by Destiny—as well as by my august spouse—to reveal at least something of what we women suffer in Valhalla.

In the first place, Valhalla is far, far, far more female than male. By which I mean, first, Satan, our glorious Prince, King, and Emperor under Jehovah and the Blessed Trinity, Satan has a far higher regard for the heart and character of women than he has of men.

(Oh!)

You may well remark. His Satanic Majesty has a pretty

general contempt for the male portion of the human race—for its moral cowardice—its thick-skinned selfishness—its laziness—and its almost utter lack of ideality in any form whatever.

(Those are very bitter words—if you will pardon my frankness, your Royal Highness).

I frankly admit the accuracy of your criticism, Mr. Chaloner. To resume. Such being the case, Satan has arranged the laws and regulations of Valhalla to consort with the natures, impulses, and even idiosyncrasies of the fair sex.

(Well! Well! Well! I am delighted to hear that. The best friend—the most utterly sympathetic—as well as non-narrow-minded—I ever had, was my Mother, who died when I was but twelve years old, and from whose loss I have never recovered. Therefore, any arrangement agreeable to her—to her sex—would suit me—always excepting the physical, radical difference between the sexes—to put it veiledly-mildly).

Satan being a male, the aforesaid difference is allowed for.

Such being the case—you understand, of course, from what the Prince has told you, that nothing of this sort obtains until Retributive Justice—“an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth”—has had its dreadful and prolonged day—until, as he somewhat slangily terms it “the piper has been paid.” This ominous phrase is as deplorably true of us women as it is of men. This phrase demands the uttermost requirement of the law of retaliation before said law sinks its dreadful head. When all accounts have been fully squared, then—and not until then—the sway of woman in Valhalla begins.

The Prince has already informed you of the tremendously complicated make-up of man. How a man can be made up of three or more men—each of the three separating, before the Day of Judgment, before the final resurrection of that man, into three other—three, at least—personalities. Now, with the female soul it is even more strikingly complicated. It is seldom, indeed, that a female soul is composed of less—frequently more—than six female individualities.

(Princess, you lift a veil of mystery hitherto shrouding the actions of various females I have met in my accentuated career).

I daresay, Mr. Chaloner, that I do. To resume. When the final personality of the six or more personalities emerges

from the very welter of confusion, cross-purposes, and conflicts, characterising the life of that female soul while on earth—then and not before, that female soul meets her heart's desire. This is very natural, for, until this separation of the multiple souls into one separate distinct, and unique soul, it is a practical impossibility for that soul to know her own mind.

(Indisputable, your Royal Highness. With five or more female souls, each, all and several pulling in opposite directions).

Such being the case, it is very rare indeed that husbands and wives on earth rejoin their mutual relationship in Valhalla—or even in that abominable spot, the Kingdom of Sin, or those gradations, lesser in intensity, personality and power—or in those gradations of Valhalla and Philistia, yclept the Underworld, and Cockaigne—or, to be strictly accurate, the Land of Cockaigne. This is not so sad as at first it may appear. Thus. The third part of A (male) is really and actually sympathetic to and attracted by the third part of A (female). The same is true of B (male) and B (female) as it is of C (male) and C (female). Therefore, the sublimated, perfected form of A (male) and A (female) meet in Valhalla—say—and are happy ever after—only too glad of the permanent absence of B (male) and B (female), and C (male) and C (female). The same reasoning holds true of any other fractions of the male or female soul; any male fractions not balanced by female fractions in the male and female soul, as above lettered, find their Soul-Mates elsewhere. In a word, harmony in the Universe—*ultimate* harmony—that is to say—harmony in the next world, after the horrid torments and trials of life in the world are happily past—harmony is the ideal of the Creator of this beautiful and majestic—if complicated—Universe. He has arranged things *ultimately*—not now, *bien entendu*, not in your world—but ultimately—*so that harmony will be achieved by every couple*—not only in Valhalla, but in Philistia, the Underworld, and the Land of Cockaigne. I think I have said enough for one séance, Mr. Chaloner, don't you?

(Far from it, Princess, far from it. Pray be gracious enough to proceed).

Well, since you are so very insistent, I shall conclude with a brief love story in Valhalla, which occurred to a very dear friend of mine—one of my Ladies-in-Waiting.

THE ROMANCE OF MARMADUKE AND LUCILE.

This lady is a very lovely girl indeed—all women are lovely who have “graduated” in Valhalla—as well as chosen Valhalla or the Underworld as their abodes—physically, mentally, and morally lovely. This lady is one of the loveliest beings you ever laid eyes on. She was married, in life, to a man she thought she adored, but there were traits in his character which shocked and affronted her. She set it down to the ruffianly nature of man and made no more to-do about it. Now, in their married life, there was a secretary of her husband. Her husband was a millionaire American, of great national prominence, not only in the legal world, of which he was a leading member, but in the financial and social worlds, as well. A secretary of her husband occupied a most confidential relation with him. This secretary was a man of good family and collegiate education, but without means. He was some thirty years of age—the junior by some five or ten years of her husband—who, again, was her senior by some fifteen years. My friend, whom I shall call Lucile—though that is not her name—was, in a perfectly honest, loyal manner, attracted by the individuality, character, and intelligence of—to select an entirely fictitious and equally fanciful name—of Marmaduke, the Secretary. The Secretary was a great admirer of the personality and fame of Lucile’s husband, and never for a moment raised an unhallowed eye to Lucile.

All was perfectly loyal, pure, and correct. Frederick—to again drop into anonymity—the husband, appreciated the talents and character of Marmaduke, and never a breath of suspicion or jealousy entered his soul. Time went on. Five years of success in law, affairs and then politics, had placed Frederick in the proud position of United States Senator, from a populous Eastern State, ensconced in Washington for six years—in one of the best planned houses for entertaining in Washington, with Lucile looking lovelier than ever, and Marmaduke more indispensable to him than ever.

One day, Marmaduke unexpectedly encountered Lucile in:

the library of Frederick, as he was entering to sort some State papers. The Senator was at the Capitol. The secretary he employed, officially at the Capitol, was a bright young man from the West—tactful, resourceful, and industrious. The Senator had decided not to take Marmaduke away from the work of legal and financial affairs with which Marmaduke was so efficiently familiar. Hence, Marmaduke had a work-room immediately adjoining the Senator's library, while he slept and took his meals in the house, as usual. Marmaduke—with whom an almost reverential respect for the wife of his respected employer was characteristic—bowed hurriedly, and was about to withdraw—until Lucile should have left the room—when she said, in the silvery voice, so characteristic of her serene and kindly soul: "Oh, Mr. Grantham" (that name too is utterly imaginary) "Oh, Mr. Grantham, pray don't leave. There is something I want to consult you about."

Marmaduke bowed, and stood still, wondering what in the world Mrs. Sternold (another fictitious name) could possibly have to consult him about—she being one of the most fashionable women in Washington—one whose time was so taken up with entertaining that she needed, and employed, a young girl from the South—of first rate family and education, but no means—as her Social Secretary. Marmaduke waited for Mrs. Sternold to speak. He did not wait long. Lucile came across the room, and impulsively laying her hand on his arm, pressed him into a large arm chair, against which he had been standing, at the same time seating herself swiftly in a straight-backed chair at its side. Surprised at this utterly unprecedented act of spontaneity upon the part of his cold and aloof mistress, Marmaduke seated himself, looking up into Mrs. Sternold's face inquiringly.

"The matter is about Gwendolyn," she began—the latter being the first name—fictitious—of course, of her Social Secretary—"She has been insulted by a very prominent Congressman—a man notorious for his love-affairs which leave his wealthy and fashionable wife entirely unaffected—she being bent upon going her own way—and at the same time keeping up appearances, and keeping house for him—as he is upon going his. This Congressman happened to call here recently *en famille*, when the Senator was at the Capitol, and only Gwendolyn and I were present—you had gone to New York

on business for the Senator. The way in which this Congressman—whom I detest—happened to do such a thing, was this. The Senator, as you know, and he, are of opposite political parties. A bill promoted by the Senator was coming up next day for the final vote in the House. The Senator knew it was going to be very close. So he asked me to write the Congressman to call, two hours before luncheon—a note by a special messenger—before he left his house after breakfast, the next day. He said he knew the Congressman admired me from afar—had told a mutual friend that he had seen me on the street, or at a theatre, or at the White House, and had only a bowing acquaintance, which he would very much like to ripen into something more interesting—but knowing my reputation, and my affection for, and admiration for my husband, he despaired of any such good fortune. The Senator confided to me that he had known of this *penchant* of the Congressman for several months, and had determined to use the knowledge in a manner which would redound to his—the Senator's—advantage, quite as much as to the disadvantage of the Congressman. He, having perfect confidence in my loyalty to him, proposed to use me as a decoy to lure the Congressman at the last moment, and before he could have time to pair himself with another would-be absentee from the vote in the House of Representatives—to lure the Congressman at the eleventh hour. He told me that he would leave it to my woman's wit to word the note, but that I must be sure to make the prospect attractive—be sure to state that I would be alone at the hour named, except for the presence of a young woman secretary, whose duties would only permit her absence from her work for a short while.

I made up an excuse that I wanted his advice about a certain stock investment. That the Senator was opposed to womens' operating on the Stock Market. That I had heard—whether true or not—that he—the Congressman—was a most successful operator in Wall Street, and therefore would he be so very good as to take pity on a defenceless woman and give her some of his expert advice, so that I might wire my broker that very day, before the market closed. My note had the desired effect. The Congressman appeared punctually at the hour named—ten, a. m.—and I received him in this very room. Gwendolyn was seated at the desk by the window, writ-

ing, when he entered. Her back was turned towards him, and being, as you know, very shy, she scarcely turned her head when I introduced him casually to her, and at once plunged into my fictitious stock transactions. I *have* dabbled in stocks, and rather successfully, so I knew the professional jargon perfectly. The Congressman listened with ears attent, and admiring gaze riveted on mine—if you will permit so flattering a statement about myself. The Senator had told me that the vote was absolutely certain to be taken between 10:30 and 11 a. m. So by eleven, I began to grow less voluble, and offered him an opportunity to put in his oar. At that very time, Gwendolyn rose to leave. As he turned he caught his first full view of her charming face and graceful figure. The effect was instantaneous. He was like a man electrified! He rose hastily and inadvertently advanced towards her, saying hastily: 'Can't I help you with that bundle of papers?' There being no bundle of papers, merely an official envelope in her hand, Gwendolyn blushed crimson at this utterly unexpected advance, and shaking her head, and muttering an inaudible No,' she hastily left the room. The Congressman, no longer detained by me, soon arose, after hastily giving me what turned out to be excellent advice, and took his leave. My object had been accomplished. The vote had been in favor of the bill by a majority so small that the Senator's tactics proved his political generalship. The Congressman never suspected anything, and never called again, being entirely *épris* of Gwendolyn.

Well, about two weeks ago, he met her as she was leaving the house for the regular afternoon walk I make her take after her work is done. He accosted her very respectfully, and asked if she objected to his accompanying her on her walk—that his Physician had recently prescribed daily walks for him, and as he hated walking alone, she would be doing a charitable thing in permitting him to accompany her. She reluctantly and bashfully assented. He encouraged her to walk until they had reached the wood at the outskirts of the City, in which Pierce's Mill is situated. No sooner had he entered this lonely spot than his manner became more familiar, and the first thing she knew, he had taken her hand, and was

kissing it. She instantly withdrew it, and turned to run away. He, seeing the mistake he had made, instantly resumed his former respectful and distant air, and she—noticing this most desirable change—relaxed her gait to a walk, but towards—no longer away from—the town, and made no objection to his continued company. Being a man of the world, he very soon recovered his phlegm, and the walk home was without incident—if without interest.

Now, I have decided to take you into my confidence in this matter instead of the Senator—since he has something approaching a soft spot in his heart for the Congressman, since he hoaxed him so.”

Marmaduke appeared somewhat nonplussed at this, and made no reply, looking into the fire silently. After a pause, he said: “I shall take it upon myself to settle this, but will not tell you what I shall do until I have accomplished it, since I do not want to have you in any degree implicated by foreknowledge.”

Lucile thanked him, and left the room.

About a week later, she picked up an afternoon paper, and saw on the front page, first column: “Fatal shooting affray on the Avenue. Congressman Swannard and Marmaduke Grantham, Private Secretary to Senator Sternold, exchange shots at close range with fatal effect. Cause of the encounter shrouded in mystery.” Horrified, Lucile’s tear-dimmed eyes swept through the newspaper account to learn that witnesses testified, at the hastily summoned Coroner’s Inquest, that morning, that Grantham had been observed pacing to and fro at the foot of the Capitol, scanning the faces of all passers-by. He suddenly halted upon seeing Congressman Swannard approach, and waiting until the latter was within easy speaking distance, said a few words to him with a stern expression of countenance. That thereupon, the Congressman retorted with an angry expression of countenance. Whereupon, Grantham had lightly slapped Swannard’s face with the back of his hand. Whereupon, Swannard had swiftly drawn a weapon from his hip-pocket, but not so swiftly but that Grantham—who had apparently anticipated this action—had drawn one as well—

so that both shots rang out almost simultaneously—and both men dropped dead, each shot in the heart.†

The effect upon Lucile was fatal. It preyed upon her mind so that she finally—after a few weeks fruitless effort at the concealment of her remorse—confessed to her husband that she—unwittingly—was the cause of Grantham's death; she having enlisted his services in what eventuated in a deadly vendetta. The confession did her no good. All efforts upon the part of her husband to divert her mind by travel and change of scene, proved fruitless—although he, immediately upon her confession—closed his house for the season and took Lucile to Europe. In six months she died from that old fashioned complaint, a broken heart. She left Gwendolyn independently wealthy in her will, to at least do what she could to further the comfort of the girl for whom Grantham had so nobly laid down his promising young life.

Now, Mr. Chaloner, appears the advantage I have as a short-story writer over earthly short-story writers. For—whereas with my sisters in the craft on earth—death ends it all, and drops a tear-stained pall over the love and rapture of life—with me the real love and rapture but begins with the dropping of the pall.

(You surely have an enormous advantage, Princess. Pray proceed).

† 5 A. M., 1-18-1919. 1-17-19 N.

(I should like to communicate with the alleged spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller, if the same is permissible.)

(X-Faculty): You may—and consider that I am he, in order to save time—the hour being late.

(Many thanks. Uncle Tom, I should like to communicate with your matchless consort if you will pardon the unconventionality of the hour, it is; "to a point of information").

Certainly, Archie. Pray proceed.

(Many thanks. Princess, I being about to send your enchanting romance through the press, I should like to observe—with your gracious permission—that I opine that the Washington, D. C., end of same is *camouflage*—as of course any such sensational occurrence as what led up to the romance, *below ground*, of "Marmaduke" and "Lucile" could be instantly run to earth in the files of the Washington newspapers, and the real names of "Marmaduke" and "Lucile" exposed.)

Your perspicacity is in this instance to be rewarded, Mr. Chaloner, without delay of circumlocution. Yes. The whole *mise-en-scène* is fictitious, but *not*—let me impress upon your doubting mind—*not* the main facts, strictly relative to the romance.

(Many thanks, Princess.)

The life of Marmaduke Grantham, on earth, having been utterly free from reproach—starting out with an honored name, but just enough money to put him through the University—an orphan with no relatives near or remote—he had no time—nor had he the inclination—to do anything after obtaining his degree but stick closely to the profession of journalism, at which he was making his mark in a large city—from the truthfulness as well as the philosophic depth of his thumb-nail sketches, of the prominent men he was sent to interview. It was these characteristics, supported by a lucid and mordant literary style, which attracted the Senator to him, and led him to offer him—at a most tempting salary—several times what he was earning with his pen—the Private Secretaryship. Therefore, the sentence Grantham received upon mounting the marble dock, and facing that grim Judge, was three years' study of the Soul—intimated to you by the Prince. The fact that he had so chivalrously espoused the cause of a helpless young gentlewoman—knowing full well the probable consequences of his act—since Swannard was from the West where in his early youth, he had had some shooting affairs never satisfactorily explained—in which, on two separate occasions, his opponents—and there were two of them—met their death—the fact that Grantham had laid down his life for another, when that life was just flowering into a prosperous career—since the Senator was becoming more and more dependent upon him, and had made him a Director in more than one large undertaking which he controlled—this salient fact, coupled with his blameless—though far from religious or “goody goody” life—*ipso facto*—his sentence being served—his three years of Collegiate study of the human heart of man as of woman—free—in his case—his said sentence—from any pains, pangs, or torments—his aforesaid unselfish heroism in espousing in so knightly a fashion the cause of a defenseless gentlewoman, *ipso facto*, made him an officer of the Hosts of Valhalla, an officer corresponding in your world, with that of Colonel—with which went a splendid income, and country estate of palatial scope, and a town house in keeping therewith. And now comes the bearing of the romance on my story.

Lucile too had an unusually easy time in the dock—as light a sentence as Grantham's. Her life was fully as free from

selfishness, deceit, hypocrisy, or malice—to name but four grave sins in Valhalla—though far more devoutly religious than Grantham—as his. The repentance over the consequences of her innocent suggestion to Grantham—she had not the slightest idea it would lead to anything more than a passage of angry, scathing words—such as she knew Grantham—from his afore- and journalistic work—to be master of—or at the improbable worst, the passage of a few blows—her repentance—having been so deep and sincere as to kill her, through the suffering it caused her—having, in a negative way, made her rôle almost as heroic in the untimely tragedy as was Grantham’s—gave her, *ipso facto*, the equivalent—to be in time fully explained to you by the Prince—of a commission among the Soul-Mates of the officers and warriors of the Hosts of Valhalla, with jewels and revenue to match.

Now, upon the termination of his sentence and her sentence, each entered the Chamber described to you by the Prince, to gaze into the Crystal Ball before deciding what aim each would pursue—one of the various Zones of Paradise, or Heaven—or Valhalla—or the Underworld—the Kingdom of Sin or the Land of Cockaigne never entered their calculations, since each is merely an inferior understudy—so-to-speak—of Valhalla and the Underworld. Grantham had no human being that he cared for or who cared for him enough to make him expect to find, on gazing into the Crystal Ball, that any man’s or any woman’s destiny crossed his. I do not wish you to think from this, Mr. Chaloner, that he had no friends. He had many; but none who were woven into the warp and woof of his life—so-to-speak. What was his surprise, therefore, in looking into the mysterious Ball of Fate, to discover the loveliest being he had ever met, beckoning to him. He leaned forward entranced. He studied the ravishing features intently. After a time, he began to perceive a dim likeness to someone whom he felt he had known somewhere—but when, or where it was, or who it was, he knew not. Suddenly, after he had ransacked his memory to no purpose,—and nothing is given up by the Crystal Ball on such momentous, epoch-making occasions until the Force which governs and controls the pictures seen in the Crystal Ball is aware that the gazer *has* exhausted every possible avenue of memory or conjecture

in the effort to place the face seen in the Crystal—after that time aforesaid, suddenly, a dark cloud veiled the Crystal. Gradually this cloud took on a reddish hue. Finally it lifted and Grantham saw an exact replica of the meeting between him and Lucile when she had asked him to champion the cause of Gwendolyn. Instantly he recognized the face he was seeking; it was Lucile's, but Lucile idealized—almost deified, so gloriously, so divinely beautiful and spiritual had her face and faultless figure become during the months of agony of soul on earth, supplemented by three years's study of the roots and ramifications of that dark Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—the human heart—the human soul. Instantly the picture in the Crystal became enveloped in a rosy cloud—which, slowly lifting, disclosed Lucile before a portrait of Grantham as he was at the time of the tragedy—a magic portrait such as love-lorn damsels and heart-hungry youths (remember nearly everybody is young on arriving in Valhalla, and remains so) receive without their knowing how—find—on a sudden, adorning the wall of their bedrooms in Valhalla, painted in oils, and by the hand of an artist of the very highest rank. The expression on her face was one of the profoundest melancholy, mingled, however, with the most passionate, devoted love. She sighed. Tears gathered in her eyes. She slowly drew near the portrait, and pressed her lips upon his—the portrait's—forehead. That instant, Grantham felt a mysterious something at work in his heart. This mysterious something swelled and grew with the rapidity of thought, until his own being was on fire with a love such as he had not only never experienced in his life on earth, but never dreamed he was capable of ever experiencing. No sooner did the expression of Lucile's face change from sorrow to rapture, than this conviction that he loved Lucile as she appeared to love him, entered his heart. She pressed kiss after kiss upon the lips of the portrait. No sooner had she done so, than she suddenly shrank back from the picture—her face paling. She glanced in a frightened way about the room—her bed-room. When she had completed a survey of the room—each of its four-walls—there suddenly appeared in the wall behind her a large mirror. In this mirror nothing was, at first, visible beyond a white cloud. Slowly the cloud rolled away, disclosing two figures side by side on a lounge. The figures were those of a

man and a woman. They were each in evening dress. The room was evidently a library. Grantham saw Lucile start suddenly; he gazed scrutinizingly at the room and recognized the library as that of Senator Sternold. Next, he noticed Lucile start twice in succession, as she recognized the man and woman as her former husband and Gwendolyn. The three years had scarcely changed the Senator, while they had increased the beauty of Gwendolyn, filling out her too fragile figure to more healthful proportions. She looked radiantly happy. He looked supremely so. Grantham then turned to regard Lucile. At first, there was a look of surprised jealousy in her gaze at seeing another woman usurping her place at her former husband's side. Each held a hand of the other. Slowly her expression gave way to quiet contentment, followed by an expression in which—to use a rather humorous phrase—the words: "Bless you, my children" seemed struggling for means of utterance.

The struggle seemed to bear fruit. For instantly on the wall, by the side of the mirror, appeared a screen on which the following words appeared, in bold, black type: "Daughter, search now thy heart and see if there lurketh aught of love for the man thou beholdest in the arms of another. Thy thoughts, as they race through thy soul, will depict themselves upon this screen, so that thou mayest have no slightest doubt as to thy heart."

Instantly, the following sentences followed each other in lightning-like rapidity upon the screen:

"I do not love you, Frederick, as I once *thought* I did. When I thought I loved you—before I knew what real love is—even then, points in your character jarred me at times, so as to shake my love to its foundation. But, thinking that all men were like that, I made the best of it, and tried to forget it. But now, since the heroic act of Marmaduke in laying down his life at the bare expression of a wish from me to espouse the cause of an insulted girl—now that I know what chivalrous unselfishness means—my heart has demanded higher things than you, Frederick, honestly, generously, and loyally as you loved me—can supply. I love Marmaduke, and him alone. and woe is me that this is so—since my love for him can he never know."

With that, the screen and mirror vanished, and with a

despairing glance at the portrait of Grantham, Lucile threw herself face downwards upon her bed, buried her face in the pillow, and burst into a passion of stormy sobs which rocked her beautiful frame. The misery this caused Grantham brought about a spontaneously marvellous result. Suddenly, Lucile raised her head as though listening. She slowly raised herself from the bed, and drying her lovely eyes, once more turned her head slightly to one side, as though listening. Suddenly, the walls of the room rolled away, and were intantly replaced—together with all that went with them in the way of furniture—by the walls of a drawing-room in a palatial building. The bed on which Lucile had thrown herself instantly changed into a sofa. Suddenly the door of the room opened, and a female servant in the dress of a Greek, entered and presented Lucile with a wax tablet on which—after removing the cover to protect the characters from defacement—appeared the following words:

“Daughter, prepare thy soul for joy.”

No sooner had Lucile read these astonishing words than the maid-servant vanished, and to his unutterable surprise, Grantham found himself, actually in the flesh—of at least what gloriously takes the place in Valhalla, of that frail element—clothed, as usual, in his garb of a Roman officer of high rank—bending over the shrinking form of Lucile, who—drawing her robe more closely about her—hid her blushing and amazed face in the pillow decorating one end of the sofa.

Grantham, his heart swelling with joy and pride, and wonder at the marvellous experience he had been blessedly permitted to undergo in the past hour or so—gazed about the palatial room, while Lucile was recovering herself. He saw that it was a palace of the Roman type, of marble, superbly furnished with the most beautiful paintings and exquisite marbles—statues—about the walls and floor. A fountain was making a silvery tinkle as it splashed in a marble basin in the centre of this magnificent apartment. His natural interest in the surroundings hastily satisfied, he swiftly ceased regarding the room and once more fixed his passionate gaze upon the shapely back of the neck of Lucile—her face being still hidden from him. He was standing within some two feet of her. Noiselessly, he followed an irresistible impulse, and without a sound, or a

creak from his silver cuirass, he leaned gently forward and swiftly pressed his lips upon her lovely neck. It was verily as magical in its effect as the kiss which awakened the "sleeping Beauty!"

Recumbent Lucile suddenly shot—but not ungracefully—bolt upright, with flaming eyes and frowning brow. Grantham, horrified at what was apparently—judging from its effects, at least—an unutterable blunder upon his part, shrank backwards a full pace and hung his head in sorrow. He respectfully remained in the same position—his eyes to the floor—awaiting his doom from the flaming Goddess of Wrath whose lovely bosom was rising and falling stormily beneath her maidenly robe. Slowly and sternly Lucile measured the bowed and motionless figure of Grantham—from the top of his short, light curls, to the yellow soles of his sandals. Slowly she took in his splendidly graceful and muscular figure—the classic regularity of his stern features, now shadowed by a cloud of palpable mental pain and bitter regret. She concentrated her stern, inquisitorial gaze upon his features—his eyes being bent on the ground, she could not see—and probed his very soul by the silent intensity of her hostile look. The evident pain and regret of Grantham slowly sank into her angry heart. So soon as it did so, her beautiful features relaxed. Her bosom ceased to stormily rise and fall. After a little, she sighed softly. Nothing that had ever entered the listening ears of Grantham made such divine music as that soft, timid, little sigh. Wisely, Grantham moved not. Wisely, he gave his lady-love all the time needed—all the time she wished—in which to recover her maidenly poise after the monstrous, the scandalous, assault from the rear. He did his best to keep the joy out of his countenance, but with small success. Lucile, upon sighing, had inadvertently glanced at Grantham to ascertain whether or no he had heard the treacherous sigh—treacherously betraying the state of its mistress's breast. She could not fail to note the severely controlled joy—the desperately strangled ecstasy which painted itself on Grantham's now radiant—but still lowered—countenance. Once more a treacherous sigh escaped her. This time, Grantham's overburdened soul betrayed him, and a stormy, a profound sigh, burst from his armoured breast. At the sound of this fugitive sigh—unwilling—evidently—from its gasping, hasty na-

ture—Lucile breathed once deeply, but allowed no sigh to escape. Her face was now calm, without the least shade of anger.

She waited for some sign or word from Grantham. None came. A shade of impatience shot across her face, and she frowned slightly. This done, she smiled, and bit her lip *for smiling*. This done, she said: "Well, Sir Hang-Dog! How long are you going to stand with your head hanging down in that wretched fashion?"

The bantering tone in which this encouraging command was uttered drove the last vestige of woe from the soul of Grantham. But once burnt, twice shy. He determined to severely distrust any and all impulses of his as regarded this fascinating creature in future. He therefore said, in mournful tones, and without in the least changing his attitude: "Because, if you please, Maiden" (the usual term of polite address in Valhalla when a female does not possess a known title, and is unmarried) "because, if you please, Maiden, I am ashamed of my recent act, and fear to meet your gaze."

"At that, I am not surprised, Sir. I never had such a shock in my life here. How on earth—or rather, how in Valhalla—we being in Valhalla, and no longer on earth, of course—how did you come to commit such an overt offense to my maidenly self-respect—to my dignity as a Maiden of Valhalla—to say nothing of my being in the train of her Royal Highness, the Princess of the Moskowa—La Maréchale Ney?"

"Because, Maiden—but I *dare not* give my reason."

"*Dare not*? Is there a verbal insult lurking therein as rank as the physical one which has so recently occurred?"

"No, Maiden—far, far from it. No insult, I do assure you. Only the cause would—I am overwhelmingly convinced—wound and anger you."

"That is a far from sufficient excuse, Sir, for seeking to hide the cause of your outrageous act. I must insist on my right according to the Laws of Valhalla—of course, known to you—to know the *cause* of the outrage in order that I may judge whether the cause excuses—no, *that* is impossible—*nothing* could excuse—but possibly—however improbably, palliate the effrontery—*or* whether I must call for a champion—according to the Laws of Valhalla, to avenge me on you for your ruffianly act."

“Since you put it in that way, Maiden, since you make me stand and deliver—so-to-speak—the cause—on pain of a duel to the death with your champion—according to the Laws of Valhalla; since you leave me no possible alternative but to speak or fight—I must perforce choose the latter—and fight.”

“What! Fight in such a desperate cause? Fight under a charge which will brand you as the biggest boor in Valhalla—and *you* an officer of the Legion—judging from your cuirass? You are aware, Sir, that in cases of this gross sort, his Satanic Majesty is not satisfied with the defeat or death of the delinquent, but demands degradation in rank as well—losing at least one grade in rank.”

“I am aware of that sad fact, Maiden.”

“And yet you persist in your obstinate—your desperate course of silence.”

“I needs must, Maiden; my honor—from the light I have gained on the situation since arriving in this room—my honor will not tolerate any explanation of my act, upon my part.”

“You speak in enigmas, Sir.”

“Unhappily, Maiden, I am forced so to do.”

Lucile looked vexed and perplexed. A silence fell between them. Grantham had assumed an attitude of graceful—, but respectful—ease, and kept his eyes no longer on the floor, but sadly upon the stormy countenance of Lucile. After a time, she bit her lip and said: “There is some mystery here. There is something behind all this—something which, as yet, at least, I cannot fathom.” A pause. She went on: “You enter this apartment, and take a most monstrous liberty with me, whom you have not laid eyes on for three years—and whom—when you last knew me—was the wife of another—the respected wife of another man. Now, Sir, on what grounds do you account for your extraordinary conduct?”

“Maiden, I infinitely regret, as I before said, it is utterly impossible for me to give my grounds.”

“Stop one moment—you use the word ‘grounds.’ You then at least have—or fancy you have—‘grounds’ for your conduct. If you mean what you say—and in Valhalla all *must* mean what they say—you must have—or fancy you have—‘grounds’.”

Absolute silence upon the part of Grantham.

"Come, Sir. I see. You dare not deny the truth. You dare not deny my deduction above, that you either had grounds, or fancied you had."

Silence.

"You know, silence gives consent in Valhalla, more even than elsewhere."

Silence.

"I shall accept your silent admission of the correctness of my deduction, Sir, and move on to the inevitable and *ghastly*—pray mark that unusual word—*ghastly* conclusion. You admit, have admitted frankly—if silently—that I gave you, or at the very least you fancied that I had given you—grounds for kissing me upon first sight—in other words, grounds for insulting me. Now prepare for the *ghastly* conclusion. If a maiden gives—or acts so that a man fancies—even *fancies* she gives—a man grounds for thinking he can insult her with impunity—can kiss her—can take an outrageous liberty with her—a kiss on first sight is an outrageous liberty any man with the first instincts of a gentleman will admit—then, my dear Sir, that maiden must be what is unknown to Valhalla—that maiden must be what was more or less vulgarly termed on earth—a loose character."

"Maiden, I conjure you not to press this further—you tear my heart by your fearful words. I am innocent, no matter how guilty your inexorable logic makes me appear. There *is* mystery back of this—there is something your powerful mind cannot fathom—but that 'something' removes all blame from you—leaves you pure as ice."

The unquestionable emotion under which Grantham was labouring—the equally unquestionable sincerity and utter conviction of his words—served to increase the wonderment of Lucile.

"In the name of mystery, what is it, Marmaduke?"

The name evidently escaped her lovely lips unwittingly; she blushed furiously upon uttering his name. But the magic of his name, pronounced by those chaste and haughty lips thrilled Grantham to the very soul—swept away his pride—made him risk a second rebuff—possibly more savage than the first. He summoned his courage, and murmured in low, faltering tones: "Because, Lucile, I love you."

The beautiful being before him dropped her glorious eyes

at these words. A delicate blush suffused her cheeks, slowly mantling them as the colour of a rosy sunset stains snow. Neither spoke for a moment. Slowly she raised her eyes to his, and as slowly extended to him her right hand—as a Queen might do to a subject. Slowly Grantham, as before a Queen, in the olden days, dropped on one knee and bowed his head reverently over the little hand. The moment his lips touched her hand, she said in a voice as low as sweet: “My hero! My lover. *At last!*”

Grantham sprang swiftly to his feet, and taking her hand and drawing it to his heart, held it there. She seemed to melt as he did so—a dreamy look crept into her eyes. Grantham, still holding her hand, slowly, cautiously, keeping his eyes fixed upon her own, bent forward—watching for any change of expression from their dreamy languor—as his lips approached hers—ready, at the slightest sign to retreat.

No sign came. No change took place in those starlike, love-laden orbs, now gazing lovingly—if timidly—into his own—eager, impassioned, but cautiously, warily watchful eyes. At last, their lips met, and the honey of her lips entered his very soul. They remained thus, in silence—broken only by the silver tinkle of the fountain—for some moments. Slowly, she withdrew herself from his embrace, and said shyly—in a whimsically natural tone—after the stormy, deadly, emotions, she had experienced at his hands in the past hour:

“How did you get in?”

Grantham smiled—a smile as quaintly natural and whimsical as her expression had been, as he said:

“To save my soul, I don’t know.”

Once more, she regarded him critically—a look of fleeting doubt swept over her lovely countenance.

“But you know,” she said, “these are the Imperial Quarters. His Satanic Majesty occupies the central and Imperial Palace. Marshal Ney and his Consort and her Ladies-in-Waiting—of whom I am one—occupy the left hand palace, while the Imperial Guard occupy the right hand palace. No one but the occupants of these two palaces is permitted to come within a quarter of a mile of these premises, under pain of fine, imprisonment, and rough handling by the current, which, as you must know, takes the place of a police force in Valhalla. And yet, you calmly present yourself in the Audi-

ence Chamber of the Ladies-in-Waiting of the Princess de la Moskowa!"

"My darling—if you will permit the term—" a gracious bow—softened by a fleeting but sweet smile—was Lucille's response—"My glorious darling and future consort—the latter follows the former as a matter of law in Valhalla"—a second gracious bow, softened by the swiftest, shyest smile Grantham had ever seen—"My darling, I shall now make a clean breast of it. Sit down, and let me take your hand, as I recount the marvel—for that it is."

At this prospect, the feminine curiosity—tempered by three years of Valhalla—of the lovely Lucile rendered her as eager as a child over a promised fairy story. She gracefully seated herself, and actually nestled against the cold cuirass of her war-like lover as he took her hand, and unfolded his marvellous tale.

"You must know, my sweetheart, that today was the day appointed for me to make my choice—having graduated—for my future scene of activity. Whether to strive upward for the lofty abodes of Paradise, or remain under the banner of the Prince of Darkness. The choice, as you probably know, is preceded by a visit to the Chamber of the Magic Crystal, and a séance at gazing into the Magic Ball. I do not know whether maidens have the same privilege that was graciously accorded my fortunate self this day—the happiest day of my life—"

"Maidens *do*—frequently—that is to say, the Chamber is visited by many of us maidens, but—strange as it sounds—not all. We are kept in ignorance as to whether or not we are to be permitted to visit the Chamber until the very last moment—until the moment preceding our meeting with our Soul-Mates. Sometimes—generally—I understand, the Soul-Mate is discovered by the Crystal at the séance; but in some cases—as, for example—*mine*"—with a shy smile—"I was looking forward—hoping to be invited to visit the Chamber, when, lo! and behold! *you* appeared! Your coming, Sir, was, however, preceded by a message from my former keeper—bless her loving and tender heart—to prepare my soul for joy. This I mistook for an invitation, soon to be sent me, to gaze into the Magic Crystal. It is absolutely prohibited for one who has gazed into the Crystal to mention—or even hint in the

vaguest fashion—at what he or she saw there. To this iron-clad rule, there is but one exception. A maiden may tell her lover what she saw; or a lover his sweetheart. So no one but the initiate—those married or espoused—know what the Mysterious Chamber holds in the way of possibilities of surprise or wonder. All that the novices know, is that it marks—what is seen there—the turning point in each man or woman's career who goes in there.”

“Thank you, my darling, for so graciously informing my ignorance. Now, prepare for a surprise which I trust may be at least a fraction as sweet to you as it was to me. I saw—on first gazing into the Crystal—a charming maiden make a gesture as though beckoning me. I could not say that I caught her eyes—but merely that she was looking in my direction. Nor can I say positively, that she actually—intentionally—*beckoned* me. But I saw her make a movement with her right hand which resembled a beckoning motion. When this occurred, I saw only the maiden—no background except a dim, cloudy one—no scenery. This changed immediately into a room—a bed-room. On the wall was a portrait in oils of a man. The maiden stood before it, looking at it. She then grew sad, and kissed the forehead of the portrait. She later, after weeping, kissed the portrait on the lips. A mirror then appeared on the opposite wall, in which a couple were sitting. A screen next appeared beside the mirror upon which a line was written. Shortly thereafter, more lines began to appear with great rapidity upon the screen, and—my Queen and darling among women—it was in consequence of what I read there that I was guilty of the—otherwise outrageous—liberty I ventured upon on entering this most blessed apartment—I finding myself here on the close of the above sweet scene. Do you forgive me?”

The face of Lucile, during this circumstantial account of what her lover knew of the inmost and secret workings of her woman's heart, was a study as complex, as varied, as it was charming. Surprise, anger, shame, modesty, chased one another across her face as clouds across a flowery landscape. At the end, she hung her blushing head, pressed her lovely face against her lover's corslet and burst into tears.

Grantham groaned inwardly at this—to him—appalling spectacle. He was wise enough not to open his mouth. He

contented himself by quietly stroking her lustrous hair and tenderly straining her lovely body against his heart. Gradually the sobs ceased—only at long intervals did one burst from her tightly closed lips. Her little hands wound and unwound a tear-stained handkerchief—now rolled it into a hard little ball—now unrolled it and stretched it absent-mindedly to its fullest length. But when a sob *did* arrive it surprised—startled her so—that it sounded almost like a hiccough! This thrilled and secretly amused the keen—though perfectly controlled—sense of humor possessed by Grantham. His very soul yearned over the tender thing in his arms, suffering so—and so remote from any aid he—the innocent cause of all the suffering—could bring. After a time Lucile took Grantham's left hand timidly. He still preserved a Sphinxlike silence, but steadily continued his ministrations aforesaid.

After timidly stroking his hand a few times, she said, in a voice scarcely above a whisper: "Marmaduke, do you still love me?"

It required Marmaduke's entire reserve of self-control to avoid a burst of laughter at what appeared to him so absurd a question. He instantly crushed humor to the extremity of his heels, and said in a voice as low and hushed as her own: "Never, so help me God, so much as at this moment."

A pause, followed by a shy but half satisfied, half happy little sigh upon the part of Lucille.

"Marmaduke, what do you suppose the world would think could it know of our extraordinary—our mysterious, wooing—or, rather, of *my* wooing *you*?"

"It was the very object of his Satanic Majesty to prevent any such catastrophe, my darling, that induced him, with his usual profound consideration for the feelings of others, to so surround the divulgence of anything seen in the Crystal Chamber, with pains and penalties, that no instance exists, to my knowledge, of its infraction."

"I thank you, Marmaduke, for recalling me to my better self—my sterner, less childish self. My last question was an empty one. So, my patient and heroic lover, take me in your arms, and kiss away the signs of these foolish and rebellious tears—hold me to your dauntless breast that I may feel that in spite of my childish anger, unreason, and folly, you love your Lucile as deeply and permanently as she loves you."

With these sweetly repentant words, the lovely being opened her rosy arms and threw them with an impassioned, impulsive gesture, round the stalwart neck of her lover.

Well, Mr. Chaloner, this *has* been a séance, and I hasten to assure you that I appreciate the assiduity you have shown in following my humble story. I shall—from time to time—to vary the sterner stuff communicated by my Princely Consort—venture to tell you more. I can assure you, Valhalla is the place for romance—for romantic lovers, of both sexes. The warriors ready to die for honour or the wave of their sweetheart's white hand—the maidens ready to send their lovers to their death in an heroic or just cause. Until then adieu!

† (Many thanks).

Midnight, 17. February 8, 1918.

(I should like to communicate with the spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller, alleged).

(X-Faculty): You may do so, and immediately.

(Many thanks).

(Uncle Tom, I congratulate you upon the possession of as charming a consort as—to judge by the output of her graceful pen—any warrior ever boasted of—worthy of the “bravest of the brave” himself.)

Well, well! Whoever would have supposed you are the same party who recently dubbed me a “hoary old rogue!”

(I have apparently succumbed to the charm of la Maréchale Ney—eh?)

Apparently. But let me assure you I fear no rival—*none*.

(You are safe from me, Uncle, alleged, I can assure you—certainly at this distance).

You barefaced reprobate—but I know your principles, and that that is a crime no man can lay at your door—whatever, and however red your others may be. Well, what can I do for you—to use a phrase prevalent in our circle in my day?

(It struck me last night that the only thing left untouched, referred to in “Hell”—published in 1912—was the Academy

† This Romance continued, page 223.

of the Soul—or whatever the title is. I should very much like enlightenment upon that interesting Institution—with your very kind permission and assistance).

“After you, Gaston.” Lord! How mild we have suddenly become!

(The softening influence of the fair sex injected into the former hurly burly of our interesting correspondence, I attribute it to).

This being the case, I shall call upon my matchless Consort to pour oil upon the turbulent waters of your stormy soul—from her gifted and sparkling pen.

(Do so, my venerable friend, and I shall indeed be your debtor—*indeed* I shall).

Look here, my young friend, if you don't drop that namby pamby, “Miss Sissy” tone, I shall stop communicating—you make me sick.

(All right, you hoary old villain, let it go at that. I shan't offend again—and fire away, or I shall fire something at you that will make you pull in your horns).

Enough said. I am now sure that it is you indeed and not another at the end of the pencil. Of course, I can see you, but your extraordinary, Chesterfieldian language made me almost doubt my excellent eyesight. So here goes.

You must know, my inquiring young friend, that the Academy—or College†—of the Soul is not open to men *and* women—no co-education in Hell *if* you please—co-ordinate education in the shape of studying in the same Academy, there is; but it is in the female branch of the Academy of the Soul that the fair sex carry on their pursuit of knowledge, and how to conquer their own temptations and guard against those thrust at them by the sterner sex. The male and female sections of Hell, by which I mean the Purgatorial sections, of course, are separated by a gulf as impassable as that separating Dives from Lazarus. To resume. I shall take the Academy of the Soul—male section—of Hell to begin with, and not touch upon the female section, until you have reached that section through the progress of “The Infernal Comedy”—until you have taken up the entrance into Hell and punishment of the fair sex, as I

† See page 35.

promised you would be the case in the opening lines of the "Comedy." I shall not go into details as to when the Academy of the Soul is entered for the first time by the sinner—for that would be touching on the province of the "Comedy"—as already explained. So I shall plunge *in medias res* immediately.

The building is of black marble, picked out with gold—an excessively sombre but rich effect—blocks of black marble interspersed with smaller blocks of solid gold. The architecture suggests that of St. Peter's in Rome—only the proportions are better—by which I mean, that the effect of the superb dome is not lost by the extreme depth of the nave. The size—roughly speaking—is *ten* times that of St. Peter's, seating a hundred thousand students with ease. Of course, the dome is proportionately higher than Michelangelo's masterpiece. It is something soul-chilling to first glimpse that majestic and monstrous pile. It is something even more so to enter it and see the army of cowed and white-robed penitents at their task. I shall omit any approach to the subject—as indicated above—not wishing to take the cream off your future poetic work by turning it into a twice told tale—and for that reason, shall make the description more of a sketch than a finished canvas. I can see from here that you hunger for another romance from the pen of my matchless Consort.

(Frankly, I do. But no offense to you, my venerable friend—none in the world).

It would make the Princess of the Moskowa smile to hear her vigorous and stalwart Consort dubbed your—or anybody else's—"venerable friend"; but let it go at that. I shall hasten to my work so as to oblige you, for as *you* have already observed, you are at a safe distance from that entrancing and bewitching creature, and, as *I* have already observed, I fear no rival.

To resume. Where the high altar is in St. Peter's, is a high blackboard, yards and yards long, and yards and yards high. The interior of the Academy of the Soul is furnished with benches, or rather, wooden chairs—ebony chairs with cushions of cloth of gold—shaped precisely like those of Columbia University, New York, in your day—with the wide right

arm, wide enough to enable the student to take notes in a note book rested thereon. Aisles run at right angles through the Academy at every twenty-five rows of seats. The Academy faces due north. The aisles run north and south from one end of the Academy to the other—an aisle every twenty-five seats apart, and the aisles also run east and west from one side of the Academy to the other—an aisle every twenty-five rows of seats apart. There is absolutely nothing in the way of furniture in the vast hall beyond the seats. A dais raised three feet from the ground affords a platform for the Instructors to stand on when either demonstrating at the blackboard, or lecturing seated at the regulation college desk in the center of the dais. By the center of the dais is meant that portion of the dais in the centre of each column—so-to-speak—of seats, twenty-five seats wide and deep as the building itself. Now magic comes into play. By magic it is arranged so that not a sound uttered by one Instructor is heard beyond the confines of his column of seats. The same magic operates, which, at the Saturday night banquet described in the "Comedy," prevents the sound waves from the theatrical stage on one side of the Banquet Hall conflicting with the sound waves from the theatrical stage on the other side of the Hall. The aisles are five feet wide, and not a sound from east or west ever enters an aisle running north and south—nor do any sounds made in any aisle running north and south move either east or west. Thus, on occasions, sinners can stop and converse in the north and south aisles without fear of disturbing the Instructors or their hearers. There are no windows in any side or front or rear walls—the light falling from above by magic. The light is more like lamplight than daylight, but one can see as distinctly by it as by daylight, and it is softer to the eye than electricity. When I say the light falls from above by magic, I mean just precisely that. The light falls from above, but what it comes from or where it comes from no one can discover from looking at it. There are no visible apertures in the lofty dome—though there *are* apertures there—not seen—for ventilation. It is just as though there were a vast lamp overhead, shedding its rays, only one *sees* no lamp.

There is no heat from the light—the vast building requires

no more heating than St. Peter's in which, as you have heard, the temperature is practically the same winter and summer. On the side walls are charts showing the various sections of the soul—the human heart taken spiritually—not physically. These charts when needed present themselves by magic to the Instructor desiring them—or any of them—and attach themselves to the blackboard—again by magic—so long as needed, then remove themselves by magic to their accustomed place on the side walls.

As I have before observed, magic never appears in Philistia, the Underworld, or Cockaigne. Personally, I and the Princess of the Moskowa are authorized to employ it in *private* in our Palace in the Underworld, but not before the servants. For example. When the Princess and I are sitting by our fire, and there are neither guests nor servants in the room—ladies-in-waiting on the Princess of course, excepted—it can be freely employed before them since they are all maidens of the very highest rank in Valhalla, who only sojourn in the Underworld because the Princess does, and only when she does, and who return with her and myself upon our frequent trips to Valhalla—when neither servants nor guests are present, the fire is a perpetual pyrotechnical display of the first water—strictly confined in its scintillating gem-like coruscations to the wide open fire place, of course, and not endangering the beautiful robe of my matchless Consort by sparks. Should a servant enter, the fire—before his or her entry—as the case may be—of itself, by magic, resumes the appearance of a *non-magical* fire.

Again, in taking off that beautiful robe, should only a lady- or ladies-in-waiting—but no servant—be present, magic would assist—otherwise not. To resume. The regular academic course is three years. For very bad sinners the course is extended to four or five—or even six years—never more. But the average course, the course for a man who has neither injured himself nor anybody else criminally—broadly speaking, to be more detailed in the “Comedy”—is three years, of six hours a day, three in the morning, three in the afternoon, six days in the week. Sunday is the only holiday. There are holidays on the great Christian festivals, such as Christmas

and Easter, and certain other festivals, religious or national, not necessary to go into now, which make an average of a holiday a month the year round—a holiday on a secular day and exclusive of Sunday. Thus Easter Monday is celebrated as a secular holiday, no one works on that day. Easter Sunday, of course, is Easter Sunday, Work begins at ten a. m. for three hours, with an hour's intermission, and then from two to five. The study and preparation is done in the cell each sinner occupies until graduation. Each sinner is watched and assisted by his loud-voiced conscience, as indicated in the opening sonnets of the "Comedy." Study hours are from seven to ten. The names of the classes are as with the usual American University—Freshman, Junior and Senior. The Freshmen occupy the left wing—so-to-speak—of the serried Host of aspirants, after cessation from torment and torture and "doing time" in Purgatory; the Juniors the centre, and the Seniors the right wing.

I shall take my first day in the Academy. My keeper, the lovely being who had visited my penitential cell every thirty days for half an hour's conversation—as described in Canto One, of the "Comedy," concerning our "Manhattan Club" friend—had gradually prepared my mind for what I was to learn at the Academy; while my loud-voiced conscience aforesaid, had daily schooled me from the first moment I entered my cell. Imagine my joining a throng of white-robed penitents—penitents in garb, if not in soul, at least—and wending my way to the beautiful but sombre portals of the Academy of the Soul. Punctually at ten, the huge doors swung inward, and the army, one hundred thousand strong, entered solemnly and seated itself. Every seat was occupied. The Instructor was in military garb—that of the Judge in Canto One of the "Comedy." All the Instructors were garbed alike, and all resembled one another in the sternness and austerity and military harshness of intonation—harshness from shouting commands in the open air.

I was directed by my conscience, aforesaid, who in public merely whispered to me, to take the first seat to the extreme left of the first row of chairs. Magic enables the man at the extreme rear of the hall to hear as distinctly as the man in the front row of seats. The Instructors do not speak louder

than a Judge on the Bench. The Instructors all wear swords at their sides and helmets on their heads. No Instructor was visible on any portion of the vast dais when the army aforesaid, seated itself.

The seating of the vast Host was done with amazing celerity and silence. The muffled tread of their sandalled feet was the only sound breaking the stillness as they marched in. Conversation is strictly prohibited in marching to the Academy. In marching away it *is* permitted, and for cause. On occasion, sinners are permitted to converse in the aisles during the lecture, but only for cause—as will be explained later. So soon as the host was seated, and a writing tablet, such as is used on earth, with a lead pencil placed on the writing arm of each chair, by each sinner—comparatively few notes are taken, and tablets therefore are employed instead of note books—so soon as the Host was seated, a bugle blast echoed with a soul-stirring thrill through the cavernous confines of the vast space. Immediately from a door—the face of which formed part of the vast blackboard, and was indistinguishable from the blackboard—opposite the centre of each column of seats—emerged the figure of a Roman legionary officer. The Host rose and gave a military salute as the Instructors strode forward “in line of battle”—so-to-speak—each keeping step with other, and the line of Instructors perfectly “dressed”—as the military expression is, that is to say, perfectly even from wing to wing—to which salute each Instructor gave an answering one with his hand—not drawing his sword. The line of Instructors marched to the desks some fifty feet from the blackboard, and each gave utterance to the following formula—so-to-speak—at least so I eventually learned, for tho’ we could see the line of Instructors, we, of course, could hear the voice only of our own. Said formula, to-wit: “Order is the first law of Hell. Let order enter your minds. Be seated.” Thereupon the host seated itself, and the day’s lecture began. The Instructor of my column of seats then said:

“Sinners, you, who for the first time face your hearts as they are, with fear, listen to my drastic words. The heart is the *cloaca maxima*—the common sewer—of all vice, of all lust, of all crime, of all venality, of all treachery, of all cowardice, and of all cruelty and selfishness. The heart is the mouth of

Hell—using Hell in the sense it is vulgarly used in the world above ground—whereas the Kingdom of Sin is what is meant to be typified. Since Hell is high and aspiring, whereas the Kingdom of Sin is low and vile. Hell holds Purgatory, into which you neophytes have more or less recently arrived for the purging of your sins and the payment of your crimes or shortcomings on earth. But Purgatory bears no more vital relation to Hell than does a jail to a city in which it is situated—do a chain of jails to the Government which owns and operates them on earth for the preservation of civilization and property. You people are so many convicts until you have ‘done your time,’ *when your past is forgotten and forever blotted out of your lives*, and your future is as rosy as your aspiration, supported by your perseverance and courage and intelligence, cares to make it. I do not propose at this our first lecture, to go too deeply into the construction of the human heart. That will come later, and be fully detailed. Let it suffice to say, that the heart—the soul, of course, I mean—is a figure constructed by the interplay of forces of Good and Evil, operating upon the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle whose sides, namely the base and the perpendicular, are equilateral. In order to demonstrate quickly the truth of the above statement, I shall now order brought hither from yonder side-wall, the necessary apparatus.”

No sooner had these words been uttered, than a most extraordinary geometrical figure soared swiftly through the air, from a bracket on the western side-wall of the Academy, upon which it had been reposing, and placed itself gently and noiselessly upon a platform, which as suddenly and magically appeared—rising from the floor of the dais—to receive it. The said figure was some six feet large—speaking extremely roughly. It was the famous *Pons Asinorum*—the “Bridge of Asses” of Pythagoras—jocularly so dubbed by Collegians, from the memory of man—which is to say—that proposition in Geometry—the first really difficult one—hence, the jocular name—which declares that: “The square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides”—*developed in cubes*. Which is to say that the cube of each side of said right-angled triangle had been given—had been erected into a solid, containing

the cubic contents of each side—said contents in liquid form. *In a word, three tanks had been built on each side of said triangle*, whose dimensions were equal to a figure, all of whose sides—length, breadth and thickness—were equal to the length of the line making each side when said triangle was drawn on a plane—on a flat surface. If the perpendicular was, say, four feet long, a *cubical body*—as above described—whose dimensions were four feet in all said above described directions—*now appeared as representing the perpendicular of said triangle*. The same was true of the base as it was of the hypotenuse of said strange figure. The material composing the sides of said figure, was crystal—as pure as plate glass. And now another strange sight was observable. The cube of each side of said triangle contained a liquid—and strange to say—each liquid was of a different colour. The colour of the liquid in the cube of the perpendicular was milk-white. The colour of the liquid in the cube of the case was blood-red. The colour of the liquid in the cube of the hypotenuse—or side opposite the right angle—formed by the juncture of the base or bottom line, and the perpendicular, or upright line—the colour of the liquid in the cube of the hypotenuse, was sky-blue.

The liquid resembled in clearness the liquid in the mammoth glass jars formerly seen in all apothecaries windows, as a sign of their craft—as barbers' poles were formerly the invariable sign of that silent and sphinx-like fraternity.

So soon as the vessel was installed, the stern, military tones of the Instructor once more dominated the air:

“The action of the various-coloured liquids in this receptacle, accurately portrays the struggle engendered in the human heart by the conflict between the forces of Good and Evil. Of Heaven, as represented by the God-sent, Conscience; and of Sin, as represented by the Temptations which assail the human heart during each moment of each hour in the waking day. The liquid coloured red, represents Temptation—roughly speaking—Sin. The liquid coloured white represents the Conscience. The liquid coloured sky-blue represents Logic—or Common Sense—divorced from aught *but Logic*—divorced from Religion as it is from Ethics—as it is divorced from Self-Interest in *any* form—either of fear or favour.

I shall first describe how the said three forces operate or interplay—how the three separate forces of Virtue—coloured white—of Sin—coloured red—of Logic, or Common Sense—or, *their crown and flower*, Philosophy—coloured sky-blue—indifferent alike to Virtue as it is to Sin, so long as neither Virtue nor Sin impinges upon its calm, abstract philosophic domain—as far removed from Religion, or, speaking more strictly, from Religious practices, as it is from evil practices, Common Sense or Logic holds severely aloof from the perpetual, hourly, conflicts between the White and the Red—between Conscience, and Temptation or Sin. It never joins one side or the other *unless* and *until* it sees clearly that one side or the other is so pushing its side—the *success* of its side in said conflict, of course, is meant—Religion, Ethics, or Sin—that it is *overdoing it, and taxing the patience of Logic, and Common Sense*. Upon which Philosophy (by which is meant Logic and Common Sense) leaves its skyey, snow-clad heights and, for the nonce, enters the plane of Mundane affairs, and takes sides in said conflict between Religion and Temptation—or Virtue and Sin—as one chooses to regard the problem: and *invariably forces a victory* either for Logic and Common Sense—in a word Philosophy—or, at least, for that side of the conflicting forces aforesaid which for the time being at least, carries the banner of Logic and Common Sense—or—in case such a shockingly unnatural alliance should occur as that between the forces of Virtue and the forces of Sin—of Conscience and of Temptation—for the temporary and sole purpose of defeating the advent into the struggle of Logic and Common Sense—in the event of which said unheard of Unholy Alliance, Logic or Common Sense could at least *prevent a victory*, by not only *one* of its—*then* opponents—but by *their combined forces*: from the saving fact discovered by the mighty Pythagoras—that the *square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides*. Therefore, Logic or Common Sense can “hold up” for all time any combination between Conscience and Temptation—since Logic or Common Sense equals the *combined* forces of both Virtue and Sin—*equals the sum of the squares of the other two sides*. Q. E. D.

I shall now elucidate the above possibly more or less com-

plicated explanation of the—frankly speaking—unutterably complicated workings of, and combats between, Conscience and Sin—Conscience and Temptation—by starting the Magical Forces at my command to work in the receptacles containing the said three colours. Before doing so, I shall observe that there is a tube along the lower side of the hypotenuse of said triangle, which is the plain of combat between the forces of Good and Evil. At the word of command from myself, announcing that the combat between Good and Evil—between Conscience and Temptation—is to begin—a struggle resembling that between the rush lines in a football match begins between the Whites and the Reds—between Conscience and Temptation. Each side opens a duct at its corner connecting with the plain of combat, and immediately two jets of white and red liquids boldly sally forth from the said sally-port in each tank. They meet in the middle of the plain of combat. Between them is a water-tight compartment, or door, which is closed and remains so until I give the word, when it will roll up on itself. So soon as this takes place, so soon as I say ‘Go’—the two columns of liquid—impelled by magical forces—rush at each other, supported from the rear by the full force of the remaining liquid in their tanks. *The magic nature of the liquids prevents their mingling—prevents their colours mingling—thus, a solid column of white liquid—solid, of course, as regards colour is meant—meets a solid column of red liquid, and struggles each to push the other back to its tank. Should the Reds succeed in pushing the Whites back to within one-tenth of the length of the Whites’ half of the plain of combat then—as a sign of Victory—from that moment, the magical nature of the two columns changes to this extent; that for every fraction of an inch the Whites give ground from their own—from the aforesaid ‘one-tenth line’—for each inch or fraction of an inch conquered by the Reds—one-tenth of an ounce of red liquid is permitted to mingle with and stain the colour of the white. If the Reds push the Whites the entire remaining distance to the Whites’ sally-port, and, the Whites retire therein and shut the sally-port, and thus shut out the victorious Reds, the White column that enters the sally-port will be a red and white Column—showing the sign manual—the hall mark—of the victorious Reds.*

The same holds true should the Whites push the Reds to their 'one-tenth line' and clear through—up to, that is to say—their sally-port.

Should, on the other hand, the conquered Whites rally themselves and push back the Reds from within—*any* point within—the 'one-tenth line' to beyond the said line, then, by magic, the hostile stains are instantaneously removed, and not a drop of red liquid is to be found in the White column.

On the other hand, should there be no rally, but White be forced within her sally-port for refuge, then the combat at once ceases, and the Red-tinged column—by magic—remains *in statu quo*—remains red-tinged, altho' surrounded by a tank of white liquid. The record for the combat is then taken, and a red mark is charged against the Whites.

The same is, of course, true in the event of a victory for the Whites—a white mark is charged against the Reds.

Now let us suppose that the realm of Logic or Common Sense has—in the spiritual combat between Conscience and Temptation thus mechanically described—or bodied forth—that Logic or Common Sense has or have been outraged by the arguments pushed forward by the Whites—by Conscience. Then—and not before—does sublime Philosophy—whose right and left arms are Common Sense and Logic—move from her remote fastnesses, and take an all-powerful—if not all-determining—hand in the spiritual fray.

When this is the case, a sky-blue sally-port appears and opens—by magic—at any desired point on the plain of combat, and a sky-blue column hurls itself with overwhelming force upon the van of the hitherto victorious column of the Whites—or Conscience—supposing it to have been the Whites who—metaphorically speaking only of course—as above explained—invaded the Blues' territory—and drives the former victorious White column helter skelter home—and away from the hard-pressed Reds—back into their own—the White— tank. Or a sky-blue column hurls itself with overwhelming force upon the van of the hitherto victorious Reds—supposing it to have been Temptation or the Reds, which trespassed upon the territory of Common Sense or Logic—and, drives back the column of Reds, from the Whites' end of the plain of combat, crushed and beaten to the Red tank.

This result is inevitable: since the liquid in the tank of the hypotenuse—the tank of Common Sense—is twice as voluminous as the liquid in the tank of Conscience—the tank on the perpendicular of the aforesaid right-angled triangle—and also twice as voluminous as the liquid in the tank of Temptation—since the tank of Conscience is the same size as the tank of Temptation—the tank on the base of said right-angled triangle—since—as aforesaid—the base and perpendicular are of the same length—are equilateral.

So soon as the Blues push the Whites a fraction of an inch beyond the Whites' aforesaid 'one-tenth line' the same magical change occurs and the White column is mingled with blue.

Lastly, to wind up this somewhat complicated section of today's toil in the Academy—or College—or University—or—to be more sublime—the Temple of the Soul. Let us suppose that Philosophy—or at least, one of its arms aforesaid—Common Sense or Logic—is outraged by the trespasses of *both* Conscience and Temptation upon its realm. Then in that somewhat unusual case, Philosophy by its irruption into the conflict, *can produce a drawn battle—can prevent either Conscience or Temptation from carrying the day*. This is done by the Blues entering the plain of combat—since the contents of the Blue tank equals the combined contents of the Red and White tanks.

You will naturally wonder how anything but a drawn battle can result from a struggle between Conscience and Temptation—the White tank being exactly equal in bulk to the Red. *The reason is that there are Supernatural Forces at work behind the bulk of each tank*. Thus. The Forces of Sin are behind the tank of Temptation, while the Celestial Forces are behind the tank of Conscience. *As one or the other tanks succeeds, the strength of that tank's side increases. Conscience does not weaken, but Temptation grows stronger*. More Fiends rush up into the heart—to leave the mechanical apparatus for the nonce, for the actual—and overwhelm the forces of Conscience, so soon as Conscience has begun to be forced to give ground—fighting desperately—but forced to give ground. By the same reasoning even the superior—in size—tank of

Philosophy or Common Sense, can be defeated and driven off the ground by the overwhelming force of Temptation. *But* this can never be the case with either Conscience or Philosophy, with either Virtue or Common Sense, *unless* and *until* the *ego*—to be described shortly—or personality of the man or woman—throws its weight into the scales of combat, and says—consciously or unconsciously—‘I would like to see Temptation win this combat.’ That is the “open sesame” to an inrush in overwhelming force of the Fiends of Sin, who sweep not only Conscience, but Conscience *in alliance with* Common Sense, back to their tanks in defeat. Conscience can always drive back Temptation, or at least, hold it at bay—not allow it to gain one inch in the struggle on the plain of combat—unless the *ego* desires and distinctly wishes Temptation to win. When the above catastrophe occurs, Temptation’s Forces are immediately so increased in numbers that Conscience is forced—is overwhelmingly forced—to give ground—fighting desperately and consistently all the time—but her battle-cry is lost—is drowned—in the roar of the on-coming, momentarily increasing, hordes of Sin.

It frequently happens that a man or woman’s weakness of will-power precludes their *following up* a clear victory of Conscience over Temptation—a clear driving back to their tank of the Forces of Sin—but that, of course, is an entirely different situation from the one here portrayed; which is purely and simply a contest between the Forces of Conscience and Temptation, and—in case Conscience or Temptation in the heat of combat invades the domain of Philosophy—trespasses upon Common Sense in their zeal of combat—then—in said event—a three-cornered fight between Conscience, Temptation and Common Sense takes place.

In a word. An exact Spiritual and Philosophic picture, exact moral problem, is presented to every man and woman on earth—is limned on the so-to-speak screen of the mind—when said problem is in course of being solved by a contest between the Forces of Conscience and Temptation, or Conscience supported by Common Sense, against Temptation. Conscience can always withstand the assaults of Temptation—can always point the path to Purity, or Salvation, or Unselfishness, or what not—particularly—since—should Conscience—

so-to-speak 'slop over'—the clarifying hand of Common Sense is always there to steady and support or correct Conscience. *It is only when the man or woman consciously or unconsciously voices his or her desire and says—consciously or unconsciously—'Go in Sin and win!'—that Sin—or Temptation—does, as aforesaid, sweep Conscience and Common Sense off the plain of combat.*

When I say Forces of Sin, I speak broadly. It is sometimes the Forces of Sin, and sometimes the Forces of his Satanic Majesty which operate the tank of Temptation. Sometimes a temporary—*only* temporary—alliance between them—between Hell and the Kingdom of Sin—for the purpose of testing—of trying-out—the soul of the man or woman in question—is absolutely necessary. In which event the combined forces of Hell and of Sin are under the command, *sole* command, of Satan or one of his Chiefs. The vile passions, the dishonest passions, are all part of the forces of the Kingdom of Sin—Satan will have none of them in Hell. *But on earth*, when it comes to trying-out a man or woman, it sometimes arises that *unspeakable* sins have to be summoned from the Kingdom of Sin, in order to *ascertain* just how far said man or said woman will go *under proper temptation*. In which lamentable event, Satan sadly summons the said unmentionable Fiends from their abode in the Kingdom of Sin, and orders them to set to work on the man or the woman.

The proof of what I say regarding Conscience and Temptation being Celestial and Sinful—or at least Infernal—Forces is indicated even to man on earth—from the following indisputable facts. *Each is automatic—each acts before thought, or even volition, can occur in the mind of man or woman on earth.* Let any man look into his heart—or any woman, for that matter—and he or she will find my words viridic. In a word, there is Something in every man and woman which thinks on the side of Virtue, and Truth, and Honesty, and Justice, for him and her, without giving him or her the trouble or—in fact—the *time*—to think on the subject. This Something invariably hands up to the man or woman the problem, in issue, *solved*, without the least effort on their part. This is invariably *supplemented* by a Something which thinks on the side of Sin, and Mendacity, and Dishonesty, and

Injustice, and said Something works overtime—so-to-speak—to support the arguments for Sin, and Mendacity, and Dishonesty, and Injustice. A *third* Something now comes on the scene, and thinks as logically and as earnestly and vigorously on the side of Common Sense—irrespective of abstract Virtue, abstract Truth, abstract Honesty and abstract Justice, as well as irrespective of abstract Sin, abstract Mendacity, abstract Dishonesty, and abstract Injustice. I said advisedly ‘abstract’ Virtue, ‘abstract’ Truth, etc., and their counterparts ‘abstract’ Sin, ‘abstract’ Mendacity, etc. For when *concrete* Virtue, or its counterpart, *concrete* Sin touches the personal equation—so-to-speak—impinges upon the party’s well-being in this world—and—if it is a crime that is in contemplation—the *well-being of his soul in the next*—Philosophy—which is simply sublimated Common Sense—recognizing the *possibility* of there being a soul in man—an immortal soul—as well as the *possibility* of there being a life beyond the grave—in which Virtue is, more or less tardily rewarded, and Vice, more or less, tardily punished—if *concrete* Virtue, or *concrete* Sin impinges upon the well-being of the man or woman in question, in this world or the next, *then* this ‘third Something’ comes forward and *automatically*—as above described—presents the solution of the problem regarding the Common Sense side thereof—without the slightest thought or effort upon the part of the man or woman. *Thus man and woman have three Supernatural Forces at work in their minds*, spontaneously, and without either action or volition upon his or her part. All a man or woman has to do is to decide which of the three *Forces*’ results it will accept and *follow*—that is all. That requires—the following up, of course, I mean—that requires *will-power*, which, as aforesaid, *is an entirely different proposition*. But *the solution of every problem in life, no matter how minute, no matter how large, is worked out on the screen of every man and every woman’s mind, for said man, and for said woman*. It is for them merely to choose which of the paths thus pointed out to them he or she will select.

I said above: ‘Philosophy is simply sublimated Common Sense.’ This phrase badly needs explanation. When I used the word ‘Philosophy’ I meant it in the *pure and undefiled* sense in which the mighty Socrates—the King of *all* Philoso-

phers, either before or since—used that word, and taught that science. I do *not* mean the way in which his glorious disciple Plato taught. For—except when Plato reported Socrates' words and acts—Plato expanded his—*Plato's—personal* idea of what Philosophy *should* be—or—if you wish to strain a point—what Philosophy *was*. From that day to this every man following philosophy, has evolved, from his own mind, a system—peculiar to him—which he has dubbed—and his followers have dubbed—'Philosophy.' *That is all moonshine.* That is scarcely better than a *bet—certainly* little better than a highly intellectual, very dull romance. *That was not the Socratic Philosophy—that was not the Socratic method.*

You gentlemen, from the upper world—you recent arrivals—will naturally secretly sneer at my complicated—more or less complicated, at least—apparatus, now before you, and murmur in your hearts: 'What in Hell does this rigmarole mean?' Well, gentlemen, it means just this. That I have just described to you what goes on in the Palace of the Soul on earth, which is the skull. *The skull is the Palace of the Soul.* The skull is symbolized in Hell by the College of the Soul, by Michelangelo's mighty dome surmounting this colossal structure, in which you now are. This is unconsciously presaged on earth by the vulgar phrase applied to the forehead and thereby the skull—'The Dome of Thought.' Michelangelo's dome is thereby—totally unconsciously—presaged.

I have just described to you—of course, using more or less mechanical—more or less obvious—means for that purpose—I have just described to you, gentlemen, what takes place in the head of every man and every woman—above the level of an idiot, and not insane—on earth. To make the gruesome picture complete I must add the only unknown factor—the X-factor—in the problem. To-wit: the male, or female, *ego*, or personality—severely and strictly divorced and separated from any and all *mental* attributes or talents. The *ego*, in the above sense, is the man or woman divorced from his or her mental *ability*. In a word, the *ego*—in this restricted—*utterly restricted*—sense—more nearly represents the term, '*the heart*,' than anything else on earth—or *under* the earth, where we now are, gentlemen. The '*restricted ego*' represents purely and simply, the *desire* of the man or woman.

The desire to, or, for *what?* Why, the desire to see Conscience, Temptation, or Philosophy—or, at least, one of Philosophy's arms aforesaid—Common Sense or Logic—*win*, in the deadly and daily, hourly, '*minutely*' struggle displayed before it in the dark, mysterious confines of the Palace of the Soul. By this, of course, is meant, so soon as Conscience, Temptation, or Philosophy have developed their arguments sufficiently for the man or woman to know what's going on—what it's all about. Now, so soon as the *ego* has begun—to use a familiar but homely phrase—'sit up and take notice' of what is being developed upon the dark moving-picture screen—so-to-speak—of the mind, before it—then—more or less carelessly, more or less unconsciously, according as to how much or how little the problem in spirituality—as above portrayed—interests, or appeals, to the man or woman—then does the man or woman begin to take sides with either Conscience, Temptation, or Common Sense, and desire to see one of the three—or, if complicated—two of the three—either win, or at least, fight a drawn battle. Whereupon the man or woman—I shall use—confine myself to—that term to represent the aforesaid '*restricted ego*'—whereupon the man or woman, consciously, or unconsciously, as aforesaid, sides, and casts his or her vote for one of the three—or *two* of the three—as aforesaid. So soon as *this* occurs, the problem, so far as the man or woman is concerned, is signed, sealed, and delivered. From that moment, the Book of Doom concerns itself no more with him or her—all that the Book of Doom records is the exact *colouring* of the aforesaid combatants, Conscience, Temptation, and, now and then, Philosophy. *The colouring of said combatants decides the growth of the human soul for said day*—or *portion* of a day—since the man or woman has thrown in *voluntarily*, his or her lot, with White, Red, or Blue, or any two of them, on any given occasion. Therefore, at the end of the aforesaid day, the soul-growth—either *celestial* or *sinful* growth—but *growth*, nevertheless—by which is meant *progress* in one direction or the other—therefore, at the end of the aforesaid day, the colours, red, white, or blue, or any combination of the same, are recorded for all time against the name of the said man or woman. This affords a more or less simple, and *self-registering*, daily record, as aforesaid, of each man or

woman born into the world. Of course, the *detailed* subject of the combats for the day between Conscience and Temptation and Philosophy, are simultaneously and automatically recorded in the Book of Doom—which misses nothing which transpires in the skull—or anywhere else, for that matter. Thus, it requires no very powerful intelligence—nor very spiritual—nor very virtuous—nor very honest—nor very truthful—man or woman to discern that the Book of Doom has a pretty distinct ‘line’—to employ a jocular term—upon the aspirations—*which term covers all the above terms*—of every man or woman on earth.

Now, gentlemen, I shall not detain you longer, beyond allowing the Forces which support Conscience, Temptation and Philosophy to have full play. But before I initiate said interesting demonstration, I must remind you gentlemen that you are all and sundry in expiation of your sins—or possibly crimes—on earth—in Hell. Therefore, this is no moving picture for your amusement. Far from it, gentlemen. It is the bitter beginning of the hardest three years’ unremitting toil you have ever experienced—I care not what your life on earth may have been. I care not whether it was that of coal miner, conscript, or convict.

Before starting the apparatus, I must explain what problem is *en jeu*—as the French say—what is before the court, as the English and Americans say. The problem is as follows. Before introducing the same, I shall remind you once more that you are in Hell—or in the Purgatorial section thereof—at least—and therefore in a vicinity in which there is no mincing matters—no ‘prunes and prisms,’ no namby pambyism, no ‘Miss Sissy’ work of any sort, kind, or description. The problem is as follows:

A certain American youth of the highest social standing and large wealth, was, in a certain prominent American city, confronted, in the Freshman year of his Collegiate course, with the following spicy problem. He was an orphan. He was an athlete. He was sufficiently studious to desire to avoid ‘conditions.’ Otherwise he cared not for Collegiate honors. Well, he being of a full-blooded, healthy, nature; and being also of a distinctly romantic—a distinctly poetic nature—leaned towards the fair sex. He was a youth of unusual pru-

dence. Being an orphan, he had thought things out for himself, and had decided that the one great, overwhelming, threatening danger, was, at least, for him, a *premature marriage*—by which is meant a marriage before he was old enough to know his own mind in that—the *most vitally important*—cast of the die, any man—or woman, for that matter—is permitted to make, in that great ‘gamble,’ termed life. He therefore determined to avoid society—so-called—except just sufficiently to keep in touch with the *débutantes* of each year, so that, in the extremely unlikely event of a *débutante* up to his unusual standard, coming upon the social *tapis*—he should be in a position to pay court to her, and so capture her—or at least, aim so to do. Meantime, being a lonely soul—and a passionate one—he comforted himself with what are poetically termed ‘light-o’-loves.’

Time passed. One day towards the end of his Freshman year, his conscience attacked him, thus. ‘You are a *miscreant!* You are following a course which leads to but one end—damnation. You are impure.’ Our young friend was sore perplexed. He was unusually conscientious—unusually under the dominion of his conscience. Therefore, he immediately said—inwardly: ‘My conscience upbraids me. Therefore, *I must be wrong.* I shall “cut women out”.’

Having an unusually powerful will, he did so. He did so for some two months—at the most terrible cost to his own physical, and personal, and heart-comfort. None the less, he did so. At the end of two months, he found to his dismay, that it had become absolutely impossible for him to concentrate his tempestuous and impassioned mind upon a book, for so much as ten minutes, without the mental vision of an alluring—and entirely sympathetic—female form obtruding itself. This went on for some two weeks. At the end of which time he was in despair—between ‘Hell and high water’—as it is termed. He was afraid to lose his soul—but—to be quite frank—he was more *immediately* concerned about losing his examinations—about smirching his excellent record—for a ‘gilded youth’—of ‘no conditions.’ He therefore took advantage of the purest chance. One day in the train, plying within the city limits, he met a cousin by marriage of his—a distinguished physician—for whom he had always had a lik-

ing, and by whom he was equally esteemed. He said: ‘....., I am in the of a hole. My Conscience upbraids me for going with women, and therefore I have “cut women out” for over two months. The consequence is that I can think of nothing else *but* women. What am I to do? I have never yet got a “condition”—but I surely shall—for I can do no work under the present *régime*. What shall I do?’ His learned cousin replied, with an older and more experienced man’s smile: ‘Revert to your former ways.’ Our young friend thanked him, but continued: ‘My conscience says I should combat such irregular desires by either rolling stark naked in the snow, or walking ten miles daily.’ To which his learned cousin smilingly replied: ‘If you are such a d——d fool as to risk your life by rolling stark naked in the snow, I wash my hands of you—you are beyond the reach of reason—you will die of pneumonia the first thing you know, and *then* where will you be? *Secondly*, if you are fool enough to attempt ten-mile walks, with all the work piled on top of that a Collegian must do—to say nothing of your Collegiate and social duties—you will be so played out, that—when night comes—instead of study—the only thing you will be fit for will be bed. Therefore, I negative the ebullitions of your Conscience as being strongly impracticable.’

Whereupon our young friend followed his learned cousin’s scientific—and eminently philosophic—advice. The result was, he achieved his dual object. He never was smirched with a “condition,” nor did he marry prematurely—tho’ he did eventually “have a try” at that difficult game.

The weak spot in our young aspirant-for-salvation’s game was this. He was blessed with a superlatively lovely and religious Mother, who had so stamped her personality upon her adoring son that she tinged his very Conscience. Now, gentlemen, I know not whether in your mundane experience you have taken the time and trouble necessary to plumb the subject. If not, take my word for it, the female heart is *not* the hand—to mix *intentionally* the metaphor—to hold the tiller—the wheel, it is called in modern times—for a male barque, over the stormy Ocean of Life. The reason for this is this. *Woman is the High Priestess of God*—it is from our Mothers that we men gather, what of religious principles we

do gather, and hold to in life. It is not—emphatically *not*—gentlemen, from our Fathers *that we gather such celestial flowers*.

Women—as men—being but human—*overdo* their distinct parts in life. Consequently, a Mother's view of life is about as different from a normal son's, as are the Northern and Southern Poles apart. A woman's view of life—in *the premises*—is an utterly impossible—an utterly untenable one. She has no more idea of the storms of passion raging in many men's hearts *daily*—if not *hourly*—than she has of sin—as men and *not* women know it. I mean, of course, women of sheltered lives—as it is now called. A woman's heart is *receptive*—*not* productive—*not* creative—in the physical sense. A man's is the *exact* opposite. I do not mean the semi-emasculated hypocrites who ape the natural purity of woman, and succeed only in reaching a more or less emasculated dumb-show thereof. Therefore, a woman's view of a young man's life, *before* marriage, (I except Divinity Students, worthy of their exalted calling) *not after* marriage—for *provided* a wife is loving and sympathetic—loyalty demands that a man having made his bed must lie in it—*therefore a woman's view of a young man's life, before marriage, is an absurdity*.

I shall now operate the apparatus, and then dismiss you.”

Well, Archie, you are no more bored—I do most profoundly assure you—than am I, at being forced by Destiny to unveil the Philosophic and Scientific side of the struggles daily taking place in the soul. As a proof of which, I shall drop the veil over the description of the action of the Magical Forces in the aforesaid “cubed” Pythagorean proposition—and—as an extra sign of my sincerity—ask my matchless Consort to assume the pencil—to take the taste of all this Religion, Science, and Philosophy, out of your affronted mouth. Adieu.

(Many thanks, Uncle, alleged. You could say nothing could please me more).†

THE ROMANCE OF MARMADUKE AND LUCILE
(Continued).

February 12, 1918.

My dear Mr. Chaloner, my woman's heart, which my heroic Consort has so drastically dissected above, is only too eager—to put it somewhat mildly—but too willing, to assume the pencil, and beguile your tempest-tossed soul with a romance.

(A thousand thanks, Princess, a thousand thanks. It will be as dew-drops on Sahara. Pray be good enough to proceed).

February 14, 1918.

You must know, that in Valhalla there is a rule which necessitates the suitor for the hand of any maiden therein, to announce the fact. That is to say, so soon as a suitor has entered the lists for a maiden's affections—whether he has been already accepted—as was Marmaduke by Lucile—or whether he has just then and there taken it into his head to pay court to her—the same procedure obtains. To-wit: it is announced in the Hall of the Court of Love—which will be immediately described—that so-and-so—giving his name, station, rank—if he holds a rank in the Hosts of Valhalla—and title—if

† "The Merry Mills", Cobham, Virginia,
February 28, 1919.

(I should like to communicate with the spirit of Thomas Jefferson Miller, alleged.)

(X-Faculty): You may do so, and immediately.

(Many thanks. Uncle Tom, on reading over "Hell"—published in 1912—I note a slight discrepancy. You say—page 67—that your nurse told you—*in re* visits to your penitential cell—"I shall see you for several hours each day". Whereas—"according to Hoyle", in Hell—nurses only visit penitents for, say, half an hour a month. How about it, may I ask? How did you come to make such a wild statement, may I ask?)

You may. It was as follows. It occurred at the end of an extremely long séance, when you had been at work for page after page. I did not wish to jar your sympathetic soul by starting counter-currents of disapproval, by letting you know that *all I saw of a female face was half an hour once a month*—and I taking the rôle of pupil to Professor at that! So I—as you would say—*camouflaged* the fact, knowing that the future would—as it *has*—detect it, and bring about—just what it *has*—the above explanation.

(Many thanks).

he has one—it is announced that so-and-so has determined to pay court to so-and-so, describing the maiden of his aspirations—giving her name, station, rank—if she holds one in the female branch of the Hosts of Valhalla—and title, if she has one.

I shall now make good my boast, and describe that superb—that utterly ideal—Institution, the Court of Love—one to each Earldom. An Earldom corresponds in size and population to a County on earth—the executive legal officer of which is not—as on earth—a Sheriff, but an Earl—appointed to the post by the Emperor. It is a Court corresponding—but I lower and degrade the ideal Justice, Logic and Learning dispensed by the Judges of the Court of Love, in comparing it with that *cloaca maxima*—that sewer of injustice, fallaciousness and ignorance—to use no harsher—no more criminal terms—but I lower and degrade the Court of Love in comparing it to the highest—the most revered—Courts in any country under the sun which shines upon earth—so I shall avoid doing so, and say that it is a Court in which all affairs of the heart are heard. In Valhalla, there is no such thing as a Court of Appeals—the only appeal is to the Emperor—to Satan—and so wise, upright, logical and learned, are the Judges appointed by His Satanic Majesty, that an appeal has *never yet* taken place. The idea of no appeal—no appellate branch—is founded upon the following indisputable logic. To-wit. It is admitted—even upon stupid, sinful, illogical and ignorant earth—admitted in practice by the action of the Appellate Courts—that no one—no Judge of a higher Court—can be in so strong a position to know the *facts* in any given case, as the *Trial Judge*. Speaking as I am, to a lawyer, it is unnecessary for me to either dilate upon this axiom or support same by argument or examples.

(Quite unnecessary, Princess. Pray proceed).

The only possible theory upon which an appellate branch of a trial court is tenable is the following double-headed—and highly unflattering hypothesis—to-wit: the trial court is either *ignorant* or *corrupt*, or *both*. By corrupt, I do not mean *vulgarly* corrupt. By *vulgarly* corrupt, I mean a Judge who can be bought like so much merchandise—by the mere

presentation to said Judge of his price—in the coin of the realm. *Francis Bacon—later Lord Verulam—was such a character as I describe, was a venal and corrupt Judge of the old school—so-to-speak—the antique school of corruption—to whom it was merely necessary to present a purse of gold sufficiently heavy to tip the scales of Justice either way.* But such prostitutes of Justice—to mix the sex metaphor for a moment—as Francis Bacon—are now—happily—in practically all countries on earth, a thing of the past. By “corrupt,” therefore, nowadays, I mean a Judge who can be “influenced”—as the vulgar term hath it—either by the prestige of the lawyer opposing that side of the case which represents Law, Justice, and Right, or by the wealth, or social or political prominence—or all three—of the *parties* opposed to Law, Justice and Right. *Otherwise it is a work of supererogation to take two bites at a cherry—to have two Courts do one Court’s work.* Rome ruled for hundreds of years, practically all Europe—with the exception of semi-barbarous Russia—all Northern Africa, and all Asia Minor—something no nation has ever done since—and Rome knew no Courts of Appeal. There was only one possible appeal—to Caesar—to the Emperor. Therefore, not only logically but historically, there is no such thing as a Court of Appeals in Valhalla.

To return now to the description of the Court of Love. It is presided over by a bench of five Judges. Three men and two women. The male members are all of the rank corresponding to a full—by which is meant, none of the lower grades of said rank—General, on earth. The females hold the same rank in the female branch of the Hosts of Valhalla. The males and females *must have* found their ideals, for in Valhalla—tho’ not always on earth—the soul’s ideal of the opposite sex is always mathematically certain of being capable of being found. There is no such relationship—naturally—*between* the male and female Judges. In other words, the Judges—both male and female—must be mated—the word “married” or “marriage” is never employed in Valhalla—to do so is an extreme breach of etiquette—the word “marry” or “marriage” being in extremely bad odour, from the poignant experiences of the *vast majority* of the dwellers in Valhalla—concerning the shackles of boredom and chains of ennui, standing, in their memories, for those two aforesaid

terms. Pray understand, Mr. Chaloner, the relations between the sexes is as strictly guarded—to put it extremely mildly—in Valhalla, as on earth, and there is no such thing as promiscuity upon the part of *either* sex, as, unfortunately, there is too often on earth, upon the part of married people. A ceremony unites lovers in Valhalla, *with the blessing of God*, as a ceremony, marriage, unites lovers on earth; but said ceremony has no name. Said ceremony consists in appearing before the full Bench of the Court of Love—the bride decked in veil and orange blossome—as on earth—the groom in armor. Whereupon the said Bench pronounces them Soul-Mates. There are no bridesmaids, and no matrons-of-honor. Nobody is in Court upon said auspicious day but the bride and groom. And—for reasons fully described in Canto One of “The Infernal Comedy”—the aforesaid unions are not only permanent—not only *eternal*—but are passionately desired to so be by both the maiden and her lover.

Having thus exhaustively gone into the situation, I shall now briefly touch upon the reasons for the extraordinary proposition—to mortal ears, at least—of the necessity—the strict and invariable necessity, according to law—of the suitor for the hand of a maiden of Valhalla, giving public notice thereof in the Hall of the Court of Love. The reason may possibly make you smile at the complex character of the female heart. The reason is as follows:

On earth, many maidens marry a man because they fear he will—or at least *may*—be the best—the most attractive and most eligible—suitor coming their way in the Vale of Tears. It requires no argument, Mr. Chaloner, to support the hypothesis, that the above is a most terribly dangerous base upon which to found the rapturous—but also extremely difficult, complicated, and dangerous—compact of marriage.

(None, whatsoever, Princess, pray proceed).

Therefore, Mr. Chaloner, it should require no argument to support the proposition that a maiden, in the ideal, but very real Valhalla, at least, should have as wide a choice of suitors as the spacious confines of that blissful—but war-like—abode. afford.

(None, Princess. None.)

It should be unnecessary for me to observe that the choice

is entirely confined to the "unattached"—to those warriors—for in Valhalla *all* men are warriors—who are not yet mated; for once mated in Valhalla, one is *forever* mated—and willingly—*passionately* so. But since the mating is for eternity, each man and each maiden desires to *know* that he or she is *positively sure* of his or her own mind—as well as of the vast variety regarding choice the spacious reaches of Valhalla afford—before casting in her lot with one. I should also remark that the same etiquette obtains in Valhalla regarding the *intermarrying* of members of the same Collegiate year, as in an American University governs social intercourse. Freshmen consort with Freshmen, as on earth; Juniors with Juniors, and Seniors with Seniors, *only*. The same holds true in Valhalla. As on earth—upon state occasions—so-to-speak—when the entire University, assembles—all classes—Freshman, Junior, and Senior, meet in a body, and march in a body to the *campus*, and from the *campus*. But never, in the entire life of a University student, is there any really free intercourse between members of the aforesaid different classes. Now, in Valhalla, since all men as well as all maidens, are graduates of that sombre but majestic Institute, the Academy—or College—or University—or Temple—of the Soul—a spirit of *camaraderie*—an *esprit de corps*—is engendered in each division corresponding to three years in said dread University. Of course, the maidens and the men study on different sides of the Gulf—the Gulf separating the male from the female Sections of Purgatory—but upon state occasions, as aforesaid, the sweet girl graduates and warlike male graduates meet in common—the aforesaid Gulf being bridged with marble, decked with roses, upon said auspicious occasions. Therefore there is an *esprit de corps* between the graduates of the College of the Soul of the same years. To reduce this from a lengthy to a concise explanation—all thro' eternity groups of—roughly speaking—nine or twelve years—*Collegiate* years—groups of Freshmen, Juniors, and Seniors of the same Academic Course—groups extending from the time the Senior in the first cycle was a Freshman, to the time the last Freshman was a Senior—groups fraternize—but only upon state occasions. Otherwise, no social intercourse

whatever is kept up—all meetings are purely military and formal. There is but one exception to this rule, and that is in the case of relatives—outside the said Collegiate cycle—and friends made before or after said cycle; this comprehends friends made on earth, for no friends are made in Valhalla outside said Collegiate cycle. Since the size of the classes is so enormous—some one hundred thousand for the three classes, as aforesaid, it was absolutely necessary to make the aforesaid rule to prevent a man or maiden's dissipating his or her personality—so-to-speak—by even *considering* making intimates of one of his or her sex—when such a generous choice as one hundred thousand—and several times *more* than that when the Collegiate *cycle* is taken into consideration—is offered, from which to choose friends or companions of their own sex. But within the said nine to twelve year cycle a *restricted* intimacy is observed upon state occasions.

You may wonder at the apparent coldness of the above programme. But, my dear Sir, you forget that a Honeymoon situation—to put it sweetly, delicately and mildly—*forever* obtains among the maidens and warriors mated in Valhalla.

(I had forgotten that, Princess).

Therefore it requires no argument to support the proposition that “honeymooners”—to employ the overworked, mundane term—neither require *nor* desire extraneous amusement, entertainment, social intercourse, or whatever you choose to term it—there is only *one thing* they desire, and that is to be alone.

(Correct, Princess).

Therefore, the rare occasions of the stately meetings of the said graduates of the College of the Soul are totally free from anything in the remotest degree resembling flirtatious “offerings,” or flirtatious “acceptances,” upon the part of the opposing sexes.

(Palpably so, Princess. Everybody has got just what he—or she—wants).

Now, within the restricted limits of the strictly and Academically limited, Academic intercourse—there is one class which is looked upon askance by all mated maidens and warriors, and that is the class of *unmated* warriors—no matter to what Academic class they may belong. The unmated war-

riors are looked upon as outlaws by the mated warriors and their lovely mates. So soon as "mated" the former outlaws become noble members of the Host of Valhalla. But until then, they are regarded—*figuratively* at least—as outlaws. Therefore the choice the maiden has to make is among "soul-outlaws." Now, since everything in Valhalla is governed by the Law of Beauty and Romance—as well as by the Law of Purity and Justice—it is natural to suppose that the opprobrious term "outlaw" is never publicly, at least, bestowed upon the dauntless and aspiring host of the "unattached" in Valhalla. Far from it. All mated couples recognize the fact that the male member of each of said couples was once an "outlaw." The unmated male members of the Host of Valhalla are merely "outlaws" in the experienced eyes of the mated male members thereof. I opine, Mr. Chaloner, that the above premise will require no argument.

(None whatever, Princess. None *whatsoever*).

So far, so good. We now recur to where the—*not* bans—but *woings* are cried in the Hall of the Court of Love. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, but on no other days, the woings may be cried in the Court of Love. As follows. Before the opening of the Court for the said days—at nine o'clock—the court opening regularly at ten o'clock, a. m.—a Herald, in tabard and full Mediaeval regalia, enters the Hall of the Court of Love—a marble structure of commanding size and proportions—and after sounding three notes on his golden trumpet, announces: "The warrior * * * declares his determination to sue for the hand of * * * challenging all competitors to mortal combat."

Nothing further transpires upon that day—Tuesday. But upon the Thursdays and Saturdays, say, of said week, the following Thursdays and Saturdays—very much may transpire. Thus. A bulletin containing the above—and as many of the above as may be on the cards—for Valhalla is a big place, and so many as five hundred challenges may be placed on a single day—five hundred different *original* challenges—a bulletin as above described, automatically transmits itself to each bachelor in Valhalla, of the same Collegiate year, as above described, by magic, and at once. Thereupon, each

Bachelor—of *Arts*—of course—since each bachelor in Valhalla is a Bachelor of the University or College of the Soul—and hence a Bachelor of Arts—thereupon each Bachelor of Art hies himself to the Hall of the Court of Love on the following Thursday.

Let me now assure you that with all your worldly experience you will smile or sigh—let me now assure you that you must conjure up visions of Ashby-de-la-Zouche—of “Ivanhoe”—in order to do justice to what ensues.

(Pray proceed, Princess. “Ivanhoe” is my favorite romance).

At promptly nine o'clock the lady in question appears in the Hall of the Court of Love—alone and unattended. For the following specific reasons. His Satanic Majesty understands pretty thoroughly well the heart of man—to say nothing of the heart of the fair sex. Therefore, if the prospective bride were accompanied by bridesmaids—or a solitary matron-of-honor—Satan would know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the following problem would present itself to the mind of the aforesaid aspirant. To-wit. “*Ahem!* Which is the most alluring—the prospective bride, the bridesmaids *or* the matron-of-honor?” I conclude, Mr. Chaloner, that to a man of your proved perspicacity, it is unnecessary to dilate upon the psychological situation further.

(Unnecessary, Princess).

For the above reason the bride appears in the Hall of the Court of Love totally unaccompanied, except by the nimbus—or glory—which, until mated, always surrounds the head of a maiden in Valhalla

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when alone; by which I mean when no female is with her. The aforesaid halo differs from the conventional halo seen in sacred paintings—where it takes the shape and character of a bright golden ring of light—and—instead—resembles, precisely the *corona*—or luminous circle—round the moon—sometimes seen. In other words, the light of the nimbus in Valhalla is a pearly, silvery one, rather than a golden one—at dusk or at night—while in the day time it is precisely like a circle of dark grey cloud. If the maiden is in a lighted room at night

the halo again assumes the cloudy effect aforesaid. If she is by herself by day or night, the halo is absent, but instantly springs into life upon the entrance of a man or other creature, not a maiden or matron. This halo is much more than ornamental, it is defensive as well. By which I mean, that should a man or an animal alarm the maiden, it at once *shocks* the man or the animal as tho' he or the animal had received a tremendous discharge from a battery of electricity; and unless the man or animal ceases instantly to alarm the maiden, the halo automatically increases instantly its force of shock and the man or animal receives nothing less than a thunder-bolt. All living creatures in Hell, except when killed specifically for sustenance, being immortal, the man or animal instantly comes to life again and retires—or continues getting struck by lightning with fatal effect—until man or animal decamps. It is, therefore, perfectly safe to trust the prospective bride merely to the protection of her halo in the Hall of the Court of Love, when subjected to the gaze of a troop of prospective suitors, as they respectfully regard her, and file by.

To resume. As I observed further back, you must conjure up visions of the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouche, depicted in "Ivanhoe," in order to do justice to what ensues upon the filing past of the troop of prospective suitors. It is strict etiquette that no suitor presents himself until five minutes *past* nine in the Hall of the Court of Love. The maiden, therefore, has time to seat herself upon the ivory and gold throne erected in a niche in the side wall, in the exact centre of the Hall, approached by six marble steps, each step one foot high, before a trumpet blast outside announces the arrival of the suitors. Being a maiden of Valhalla—being a faultless creature who has passed through Purgatory—possibly the flames, torments, and tortures thereof—*for women, generally speaking, are far less sinful than men—and, as a rule, have less to pay upon entering Purgatory*—being a maiden of Valhalla she is perfectly calm and self-possessed, even when by herself, when seating herself upon her throne, before the irruption of the future mortal combatants. She is gowned in the regular Greek costume, already described in the "Comedy." Her halo lours threateningly over her lovely head—its dove-coloured

grey giving warning to all of the opposite sex of the lightning lurking in the womb of that virgin thundercloud. She composes her robe with a graceful and easy gesture, and then assumes an erect attitude, as she sits on the gold and ivory throne. It should be observed that she does *not* look at a solitary suitor, but keeps her head and eyes to the front. The silence is broken by the shrill blast of a trumpet. The mighty doors swing open, and a column of warriors enters. I shall now take up the thread of the romance of Lucile and Marmaduke, and describe what took place, the first Thursday following Marmaduke's proposal to Lucile.

The following glittering, but ominous array of warriors wound like a huge serpent through the entrance doors. At its head stalked Marmaduke, his sword drawn, and at the carry, his shield on his left arm. Being an officer, his helmet, cuirass, greaves, and shield, were of solid silver. The column advanced in Indian file. Next to Marmaduke was a succession of five officers—so proved by their silver armour. Following them came fifteen warriors in simple steel armour—proving them to be either Legionaries or Phalangerites—private soldiers in the Legions or Phalanxes of Valhalla—both the Legion and Phalanx being employed in Valhalla—or non-commissioned officers therein. This did not mean that they were not in *every* sense eligible as Marmaduke, but *either* that they had not been with the colours—had not served in the Legions of Phalanxes so long—or that, up to that moment, at least, they had not achieved Marmaduke's martial fame. Upon reaching the spot on the marble pavement of the Hall of the Court of Love opposite the gold and ivory throne Marmaduke halted and raised his sword to the salute. After making the salute, he advanced at the regular military pace at which he had entered, until he disappeared from view at an exit at the end of the Hall. This brief pause afforded the officer behind Marmaduke time to study—with the swiftness and searching profundity which nothing but a term in Purgatory imparts to the human mind—the face, features and form of Lucile. Thereafter, he did as had Marmaduke. The same was true of the twenty possible aspirants to the hand of Lucile.

Upon emerging from the Hall of the Court of Love, each

aspirant struck with his sword—provided he still aspired to the hand of Lucile—a light blow upon a golden shield—a shield of solid gold—hung at the aforesaid exit, upon a post, or pillar, of marble, and encountered within fifty feet upon leaving the Hall of the Court of Love. The Challenging-Pillar, as it is called, is in an outer and private Court of the Court of Love, surrounded on three sides by a high marble wall—the Court of Love forms the fourth side—which shuts out all gaze. As this was done, a Herald standing by shouted the name, etc., etc., of the aspirant. Thus: “..... (giving the usual and aforesaid description) challenges to mortal combat, Marmaduke Grantham, officer in the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla, in a contest for the hand of Lucile Sternold, Lady-in-waiting to the Princesse de la Moskowa.” During this ceremony the challenger, Marmaduke—in the above instance—stood by himself, his sword drawn and at the carry—fifteen feet away from the said shield.

Of course, no man courts “mortal combat,” even tho’ he be in Valhalla, and know that he will be restored to life the moment after his death. For the reason that the *death agony*, notwithstanding its short duration, is something not even the stoutest hearted warrior in all Valhalla, sneers at. For, as indicated in the “Comedy,” brief as said death agony is, it is amply sufficient to admit of a *life-time of torture*. By which is meant the concentrated essence of the torture experienced in a lifetime. No *man*—my dear Mr. Chaloner—to say nothing of my own sex, can be more aware of the aeons of pain lurking in the above description—no man—nor woman, at least who has traversed the pains, penalties and torments and tortures of Purgatory—than can I. Therefore, it requires, I can assure you, the starkest courage for a suitor to court death by challenging the man who is *on record* as willing to court it, in order to make his claim to his sweetheart’s hand good.

Now, I should explain two things before proceeding. *First*. Not one word of what transpires in the Hall of the Court of Love ever leaks out! By which I mean, *not a maiden, not a matron, not a warrior*—ever knows—or hears of—what transpires in the Hall of the Court of Love. Since mated warriors and mated maidens have achieved their heart’s desire, why, Mr. Chaloner, should they be invited to gaze upon

male and female hearts in the throes—in the—for the female, at least—terror of a scene which is but the ante-chamber to mortal combat for her lover?

(No reason why, Princess).

Therefore, no matter how broadly bruited abroad the proposed nuptials of a maiden in Valhalla may be, not a creature, not a male nor female, knows of them, *except* the male aspirants—those daring mortal combat—for her hand. This is achieved thus. The said “bulletins” concerning proposed nuptials are conveyed, by magic, to all bachelor quarters in said Collegiate cycle—but nowhere else, and never referred to by a human being thereafter. Of course when I use the term “human being” it is purely figurative—since these are immortals and no longer human beings—but the phrase is a strong—a forcible one—in your mortal ears, and therefore, from time to time, I employ it—with the above rather obvious explanation.

Furthermore. In order to forever guard, in the utmost secrecy, the aforesaid challenges and combats, it is absolutely forbidden, by the etiquette of Valhalla, for a maiden to *ever* ask, either her—possibly temporary and tentative—suitor, concerning whom he entered the lists of mortal combat for—for what maiden he challenged—or even, later on, her Soul-Mate. This is done on the principle that it is *none of her lovely business*.

Upon the same principle, it is contrary to etiquette for a suitor—or even a Soul-Mate—to question—or even *mention* in the vaguest way—to his Sweetheart or his Soul-Mate—which latter is, of course, his Sweetheart, when mated—concerning the suitors, their names, and the combats had over her. If a maiden or a warrior is rash enough to brave this rule, she or he—figuratively—is actually incontinently “knocked out”—as above described—upon breaking—or rather *starting* to break—said deadly dangerous rule. She incontinently falls off into a 24 hour swoon. He, as incontinently, is knocked out by said policing Current—from a blow on the point of the jaw—and both are dead to the world for 24 hours thereafter.

To resume. So soon as Marmaduke had struck the shield hanging from the Challenging-Pillar, and assumed his station fifteen feet therefrom, he awaited with interest the development of events—the discovery as to just how many of the

20 Phalangerites or Legionaries—their officers, non-commissioned officers, or men—aspired to the hand of Lucile. He did not wait long. He had scarcely taken his station when a very tall and heavily built, extremely powerful man—the officer following him—strode to the Challenging-Pillar, and struck the golden shield a resounding blow. The Herald thereupon shouted “The Earl of Marliton, Commander of the Tenth Legion of Valhalla, challenges to mortal combat Marmaduke Grantham—Officer in the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla, in a contest for the hand of Lucile Sternold, Lady-in-waiting to the Princesse de la Moskowa.” Thereupon the Earl of Marliton took up his station on the other side of the Challenging-Pillar—fifteen feet therefrom—opposite to Marmaduke. The second officer following the Earl instead of striking the Pillar, merely saluted the same with his sword, and marched slowly past it and out of the Court—in token that he did not challenge. Strange to say, the entire remaining quota of four officers and fifteen non-commissioned officers, or men, did the same.

The reason for this extraordinary melting away of the torrent of prospective lovers was manifold. *First*, it had nothing whatever to do with the personal charm of Lucile. It was caused entirely by the dread accompanying the name of the Earl of Marliton. *Second*, no prospective lover knows—until he arrives actually at the gates of the Court of Love—who his competitors are. All competitors arrive by magic—that is to say by employing the said Current, which instantaneously conveys them from any one spot in all the wide domain of Valhalla, to any other. This is done for the sake of secrecy as well as for the sake of speed and convenience. The exits of all prospective suitors are as swift and silent and invisible as are their arrivals. Therefore a prospective suitor—to employ a sporting phrase—“throws up the sponge” when he finds opposed to him a rival of the redoubtable record of the Earl of Marliton—of which more anon. There is nothing in the least derogatory to the courage of the prospective suitors in so doing, for the following reason. He—not being an accepted lover—does not care to be humiliated—to say nothing about being killed—by challenging a man whom he knows—from the man’s record—to be his superior, in the Art

of Fence. Now it will at once occur to you that it is rather hard to make the winning of a maiden depend upon one's skill in the Art of Fence. Upon examination it is *not* so hard.

In the first place, all these challengers—except Marmaduke—are *interlopers*. None of them—presumably at least—has proposed personally, for the hand of Lucile. They are mere Adventurers-in-Love—to employ the phrase common in Valhalla—as unmarried men are adventurers in love—so far as married women are concerned—but too frequently—on earth—to say nothing of the married. There are as already dimly indicated, no “triangular aspirants”—so-to-speak—in the Field of Love in Valhalla—no unattached—no unmated men—angling for catches in the shape of other men's wives—as is the case but too frequently on earth. *The “matrimonial triangle” is utterly unknown in Hell.* The lady does not desire it, and the gentleman will not “stand for it”—to use a slang, mundane phrase—he will kill any intruder upon his hearth-stone, and the Laws of Valhalla see to it that the defender of his home has enough magical force supplied him—enough magical skill and strength supplied him in the day of retribution—the day of combat—the day of avenging his outraged—or *would-be*—outraged rights—to overcome any champion in Valhalla, no matter what his fame—no matter what his prowess might be. So soon as one of these Adventurers-in-Love finds a maiden to whom he proposes, the situation is entirely changed, and he becomes, *ipso facto*, regularized, and is no longer an Adventurer. In case two or more men have proposed to the same maiden the case is different to the following extent. The maiden is required to plainly state to the two, three, or more aspirants—who have actually proposed to her for her hand—*for eternity*—the maiden is required to state *which* of the two or more aspirants is the “man of her choice.” She must do this the moment—that is to say, within one week—more than one man has proposed to her. I, of course, employ “man” for “immortal” here. *And she must do it to each aspirant.* The moment she has done so, the chosen lover becomes the “man of her choice” in very truth—and the one, two, or more aspirants are, *ipso facto*, reduced to the status of Adventurers-in-Love. Now the accepted lover has supplied him, by the Ideal and Romantic Laws of Valhalla,

sufficient extra force—as well as sufficient extra skill—in fence to enable him to receive, when necessary, any amount up to fifty per cent more force and skill than he formerly had—or when necessary—even more—in relation to the Adventurer-in-Love. Therefore, if an accepted lover was within fifty per cent. of the strength and skill of the most formidable Adventurer-in-Love opposed to him, the accepted lover would equal the Adventurer, and the same holds good regarding any degree of inferiority in strength or skill. Thus, even if the accepted lover has less than fifty per cent.—at the beginning—of the force or skill of the Adventurer-in-Love, the Just and Ideal and Romantic Laws of Hell furnish him with sufficient magical force and skill, to equal the Adventurer. It is, therefore, plain that no matter what the ordinary and usual superiority in feats of arms an Adventurer-in-Love holds over an accepted lover, this superiority disappears under the Ideal Laws of Hell.

Force and skill being equalized, there only remain Courage and Ideality to be thrown into the scales to win the day—for one or the other—for the accepted suitor or the “Adventurer.” Of course, the maiden need not accept the Adventurer—even if he *does* conquer—but *since simply Courage and Ideality are the tests—are what turn the scale towards victory*—it gives the maiden pause, when her suitor is beaten. *Before resuming the actual thread of the romance of Lucile and Marmaduke, I shall “stress” the point that on earth Ideality is a butt for sneers—whereas in Hell it is the very atmosphere we all breathe.*

To resume. Before describing the meeting between Lucile and Marmaduke, I shall say a word about the Earl of Marliton. This redoubtable individual was—to reckon in mundane figures—and strictly figuratively speaking, of course—some thirty-five years of age. He had, therefore, been in Valhalla for thirty-five years—a very extended time for a man to be there without finding a maiden to suit his fancy—for *all* maidens in Valhalla are—as has already been indicated—perfectly beautiful, according to the most classical Greek type, and also perfectly charming. I might as well add at this point the fact that all men and all maidens *know everything*—know all there is to know in History, Science, Philosophy and

Religion. This happy consummation most devoutly to be wished is achieved by magic. By a ceremony analogous to the "Gift of Tongues" described in the New Testament. The day *before* graduation from the Academy—or College—or University—of the Soul—each man and each maid is endowed with *all knowledge*.

(Princess, provided—you will pardon my frankness, I trust—your statements are—ahem! viridic—you make me wish, more strongly than ever that I now occupied a post in Hell.)

Certainly I shall pardon your very frank doubt as to my truthfulness—I know what you have been through by way of lies—I also know how disgusted you are with the world and how it is "run." I also know how you dislike the drudgery necessary for the accumulation of knowledge upon earth. I, therefore, fully sympathize with your above startling—from a worldly standpoint, at least—*cri du coeur*—as the French admirably put it. To resume.

Therefore *all* men and *all* maidens know as much as there is to know, as above described, under the sun. Therefore there is free play for personality—for individuality. All men and all maidens being equal as regards learning, it simply resolves itself into a question of how each man and each maiden avails himself or herself of their knowledge—*handles* the serried forces of Learning—so far, at least, as developing their personalities in conversation is concerned—to say nothing of their attitude towards life in general.

As has been said, the Earl of Marliton had been in Valhalla for thirty-five years without finding his heart's desire. His prowess in arms—in generalship—which his rank implied—as well as his prowess in state-craft—for in Valhalla the two are inseparable—as formerly they were in ancient Rome—all called aloud for a partner, to share his triumphs. But the Earl of Marliton was extraordinarily *difficile*—as the French have it. As Commander of a Legion of seven thousand warriors, he stood necessarily high in the councils of the Emperor—for artillery being banished from warfare in *all* its forms—*all* missile warfare, great and small, being banished—artillery being banished from all forms of warfare in Hell—and therefore in its rival the Kingdom of Sin—the individual—the *man*—assumes a value utterly unlooked for on earth, where a man

is merely food for powder—provender for artillery, and a target in which to place bullets. And seven thousand swordsmen—or spearmen—depending upon whether a soldier is a Legionary or a Phalangerite—a member of a Legion or a Phalanx—seven thousand experts in arms in Valhalla, equal in military value and importance an army corps on earth of at least three times that number—an army corps of twenty thousand men. It is an historic fact that ten Roman legions could resist a force of one hundred German barbarians—the Romans being fencers, while the Barbarians, tho' possibly equally brave, and probably far larger, taller, and heavier—were unskilled in the use of the sword.

As Commander of a Legion, the Earl of Marliton sat at the Table of Peers at the Feasts in the Banquet Hall of Valhalla, the “high Capital of Satan and his Peers.” In a word, the Earl whose wealth as Earl as well as Commander of a Legion, was enormous, was about the most eligible *parti* in all Valhalla.

So soon as the troop of prospective suitors had filed past the Challenging-Pillar, saluting it as they did so, and out at the sally-port of the outer court of the Court of Love, Marmaduke, according to etiquette brought his sword—which had heretofore been at the carry—to the salute, saying as he faced the Earl of Marliton: “Earl of Marliton, Commander of the Tenth Legion of Valhalla, I recognize in you my rival for the hand of Lucile Sternold, Lady-in-waiting to the Princesse de la Moskowa. According to the Laws of Valhalla, I shall meet you in a *combat à l'outrance*, one month from today—said day not being a Sunday.” (If a Sunday, the combat fell upon the day following).

So soon as Marmaduke had spoken, the Earl of Marliton, after bringing his sword to the salute, said, in a heavy bass voice: “Marmaduke Grantham, Officer of the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla, I accept your challenge for the hand of Lucile Sternold, Lady-in-waiting to the Princesse de la Moskowa, and one month from today will meet you in a *combat à l'outrance* for the hand of said maiden.”

Whereupon the Earl stalked out of the outer court of the Court of Love. Thereupon, Marmaduke followed. The mo-

ment the prospective suitor emerged from the outer court—the moment he opened the door of exit therefrom—*he became invisible*, and instantly was wafted by the Magical Current whence he came.

So soon as Marmaduke had marched to the limits of the outer court, he, calling upon the magic force of the said Current, hied him to the abode of the fair Lucile. He could not have done so had not everything been in harmony—which is to say, had not Lucile been ready and willing to receive him. Had Lucile not been ready or willing or able to receive him he would not have been moved an inch by the Current. Whereupon he would have instantly known that his visit at said time would have been—for some reason—inharmonious or impossible. He would, therefore, at once have wished himself back at his quarters, and would have arrived there instantly.

Upon entering the aforesaid stately drawing room with its tinkling fountain in the centre

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Marmaduke found Lucile awaiting him, seated upon the same sofa as formerly. Her face was grave. She knew that Marmaduke had been in the Hall of the Court of Love, and *why* he had been there. She was, therefore, anxious to know how many, and who, the rivals were—or was. Marmaduke eagerly strode forward, disembarassing himself as he did so of his shield and helmet—leaving them by the base of gold, a foot high, surrounding the fountain. Lucile extended her right hand to him with a gracious, but at the same time, somewhat reserved and distant, gesture. Marmaduke instantly dropped on one knee and respectfully kissed it—with as much respect and reverence as he would that of a Queen on earth. For the beauty, learning, brilliancy and wealth of every maiden in Valhalla—to say nothing of her cloudy halo—inspire something extremely akin to awe, in the breasts of all *accepted* suitors—since the union is for eternity—and since each knows that satiety is forever barred from their *ménage*—from their home. What is a maiden but a Queen—to a man at least, in Valhalla—a warrior ready and willing to risk his life to win her—what is a maiden of Valhalla but a veritable Queen—

the Queen of Love? Thereupon he rose, and Lucile, now smiling sweetly, as though the passion in Marmaduke's salute had delicately entered her virgin soul, and was softly glowing there—melting the ice of her maidenly dignity and reserve at this—only the second—meeting in Valhalla—thereupon he rose, and interpreting Lucile's smile to mean permission to sit by her side, he did so. Thereupon Marmaduke gently took her right hand and held it between his own. Lucile blushed and smiled. Marmaduke thereupon—keeping a cautious and inquiring eye upon her exquisite face—slowly essayed to raise the little hand to his handsome lips. There, however, Marmaduke reckoned without his host. There, Marmaduke found he had made a tactical error. For Lucile frowned swiftly, and started to withdraw her hand. Thereupon Marmaduke instantly released her hand and sighed. Thereupon, Lucile brought her hand back to her lap and allowed it to repose there. Thereupon Marmaduke sighed even more heavily than before, looking moodily at the marble floor, over which—here and there—were spread magnificent oriental rugs. Lucile's heart appeared really touched at the abject attitude of her lover, and sighed out of sympathy. She then timidly, slowly, extended her hand until it rested upon the left hand of Marmaduke—lying dejectedly upon his knee. The effect was electrical—but only inwardly so—for the wary Marmaduke was now thoroughly on guard against doing anything in the slightest degree contrary to the maiden coyness of his lady-love—whose value in his adoring eyes had, if possible, been enhanced by the superlative compliment to her beauty and charm implied by the entering the lists for her hand of the redoubtable Earl of Marliton.

Marmaduke resisted the thrill of joy imparted to his heart by the light but tender touch of Lucile's rosy palm. He stoically retained his dejected attitude. Lucile, slightly surprised at his apparent stolidity, glanced timidly at his sombre countenance, his eyes resolutely bent on the rosy rug at his feet. Lucile then slowly, timidly, began stroking the back of Marmaduke's well-formed hand—glancing up at him as she did so. Still no response. A slight cloud drifted slowly across the lovely face of Lucile and she began to decrease the

speed of the strokings. So soon as the alert Marmaduke noticed this—his handsome, dark gray eyes fixed on the rug—he slowly heaved a sigh of evident feeling and turned his face towards his lady-love. Lucile thereupon dropped her eyes, and also ceased to stroke Marmaduke's hand. Marmaduke then slowly placed his right hand upon the tendril-like fingers of Lucile's little hand, and allowed it to rest there, sighing as he did so, and withdrawing his gaze. Lucile thereupon sighed in her turn. Marmaduke then turned his curly head—well-shaped and closely cropped—in Lucile's direction. Lucile's lovely grey eyes were still cast down. Marmaduke then said slowly: "My Sweetheart, the die is cast—the combat is set."

Lucile instantly raised her eyes and dismissing all semblance of coyness, coquetry, or anything remotely resembling sex-antagonism—sex-combat—allowed her sweet woman's heart to find utterance in tone, look, gesture, and voice, as she hastened to ask—raising her eyes to Marmaduke's face—anxiety depicted upon her lovely countenance—

"Oh, Marmaduke! Tell me who he is—or they are."

Marmaduke's heart expanded with joy as he noted the spontaneous love and anxiety in this simple sentence. He stroked her hand silently for some five or ten seconds. Then he smiled proudly. He said: "As I am about to dare death with the most dreaded and redoubtable unattached warrior in all Valhalla, I respectfully suggest that I be permitted to sip the nectar from this little hand."

As he spoke, knowing the inevitable effect of his ominous words, upon Lucile's tender heart, Marmaduke, bold and daring gambler as he was, "banked"—so-to-speak—thereon and slowly—giving Lucile all the opportunity in the world to withdraw her hand, if she so desired—and with his handsome eyes once more riveted on the rosy rug under his sandalled feet—slowly raised her hand to his lips. Marmaduke's number in the Lottery of Love—so-to-speak—won. He had guessed correctly. The fear in Lucile's heart now fully overmastered her maiden coyness. She merely cast down her eyes once more, sighing softly, and to Marmaduke's amazed delight—contentedly.

Marmaduke then said slowly—punctuating each word with a light but lingering kiss on the hand: “The—Earl—of—Marlton.”

“What! The Earl of Marlton!”

“No less.”

“The most confirmed—the most embattled woman-hater in all Valhalla?”

“The same.”

“A man who—so far as anyone knows—has never before—in the thirty-five years he has been in Valhalla entered the lists of mortal combat for a maiden’s hand!”

“None less.”

“And, Marmaduke, my *darling*”—Marmaduke started inwardly *only*—inwardly *only*, at this glorious word—the self-control he was master of—from his three year course in Purgatory standing him in sufficient stead to enable him to utterly subdue and rout—utterly *vanquish* the terrific impulse engendered by this word from his proud Mistress’s lips—the terrific impulse to throw his arms around her—Marmaduke started inwardly at the utterance of this sweet word—the crown and flower of all love—but outwardly showed no sign—continuing to fondle and caress Lucile’s dainty hand. Lucile resumed:

“And Marmaduke, my darling, the most redoubtable warrior among the entire unattached Hosts of Valhalla—the most deadly adversary in all tournaments—the most feared among the unattached warriors, by the Hosts of Sin!”

“That is the man.”

Marmaduke had studiously kept his eyes upon the floor during the above dialogue. He now for the first time raised them until they met the concerned and impassioned gaze of Lucile. He then said—still retaining her hand—but holding it between his own, instead of caressing it—in order not to interfere with his utterance—he then said in calm tones:

“My own precious darling, I glory in the superb opportunity afforded me of heralding forth—figuratively speaking—the glorious opportunity of putting upon the Secret Records of Valhalla the fact that *first*: you were sought by the most noted woman-hater of his time; *second*: that I was the accepted suitor in the combat.”

“But, Marmaduke, I fear for you! The fame of the Earl

of Marliton is something tremendous—no unattached warrior stands so high—either among the Legionaries or with the Emperor in all Valhalla—as does the Earl of Marliton—so high as a terribly deadly antagonist in the tournament or battle—I mean.”

“I know that, my darling of darlings, and in that very fact do I most rejoice. Listen, my own. You know that my fame among the Legionaries is as high as any in Valhalla, of my rank?”

“I most certainly do.”

“You know that I sit at the table next below that of the Peers in the Banquet Hall of Valhalla.”

“I do—you and I have been here about the same length of time—therefore I have been in the Ladies Gallery at the feasts in the Banquet Hall of Valhalla, being one of the ladies-in-waiting of the Princess de la Moskowa—where the ladies sit during the feast to listen to the Music and hear the speeches—later—of the Emperor and his Peers and Warriors.”

“Therefore, my Sweetheart, you know that I am in the direct line of military—the highest, that is to say, of course—preferment.”

“I do.”

“Therefore, I am not an adversary to be despised by even such a champion as the Earl of Marliton.”

“I also admit that. But still, Marmaduke, I *fear*. He is so much more experienced than are you in these terrible combats, in which death and all its entailed terrors hangs like a thundercloud over each thrust you make—each blow you give with your sword.”

“I admit that, Lucile. I readily admit that. But, at the same time, I am not only ready, but—*upon the sanctity of our love*—I am *eager* to meet him in the lists. I am fully aware of his ominous record of ‘Kills’ in the Tournaments, where valour meets valour, irrespective of love of woman, under the eyes of the Emperor and the Imperial Court. I am but too fully aware of that sinister list of opponents sent down to the Valley of the Shadow. Still I do not fear. *Marliton is not so swift as I*. I know that from watching him in combat—in tournament. His great bulk and height animadvert against swiftness—strength and skill are his strong points.

Now in *our* combat, by the Laws of Valhalla, strength and skill are equalized."

Lucile nodded affirmatively, and happily. Her hand actually closed upon Marmaduke's, and gently squeezed it. Marmaduke continued: "Were it a tournament now, I should—at *this day and date*—say that the odds were four to one on Marliton, as opposed to your devoted lover. Eventually, when I have been in Valhalla some ten or fifteen years longer, the odds will be greatly reduced—or I am a much mistaken man. But in the Lists of Love—not in tournaments—in the Lists of Love, where our quarrel will be fought out to the death, the Earl of Marliton's bulk and height—strength and reach—will be equalized by the laws of Valhalla as aforesaid. Therefore, it reduces itself into a struggle—into a contest—between the courage and ideality of Marliton and myself. On those two grounds I am silent. I simply urge, my Sweetest, that I do not shirk the encounter."

Lucile immediately turned her flower-like face towards Marmaduke, and, paling slightly, said, in an almost inaudible voice: "Marmaduke, you may kiss me."

As she spoke, she half turned her face away, so that not her exquisite mouth, but her rounded cheek was presented to Marmaduke. The happy lover swiftly availed himself of the lovely opening—swiftly imprinted a long and impassioned salute upon the velvety cheek of his love. This over, Marmaduke continued, now in a vibrant, confident voice:

"My darling, you cannot imagine how I glory in this marvellous chance—this chance which throws the Earl or Marliton across my path in *combat à l'outrance*. You, of course, from attending tournaments in the train of the Princess de la Moskowa know that if I defeat the Earl I immediately acquire a corresponding rank and a corresponding fortune—not his rank as Commander of a Legion—but his rank in the Peerage of Valhalla—his rank of Peer."

"I do."

A word of explanation, Mr. Chaloner, is here à propos. The Earl in this combat would lose nothing—neither title nor revenue—but so magnanimous is Satan that he has ordained that the winner in any combat in the Lists of Love, is awarded the title of nobility and revenue—but *not* the *military* rank—

of his adversary, if said adversary possesses one. The revenue is bestowed—the estates producing same—are bestowed upon the winner out of the coffers of his Satantic Majesty, which, needless to say, are fathomless. In combats in a tournament the winner receives the value of the estates—estates of equal value—from the bountiful hand of Satan—the winner receives revenues of the value of his defeated adversary's—forever. The adversary loses nothing whatever of *his* revenues. Were the title as *well as the estates* of a vanquished warrior in a tournament—a title of equal rank—conveyed upon the victor—it would tend to cheapen titles—by which I mean, create too many of them. Hence the above difference is made between deadly combats in tournaments and the Lists of Love.

Now, in order to preserve the necessary secrecy, the fact that the winner is awarded said title and revenues, is announced in the Court Circular—a periodical of the Imperial Court—and it merely states that: “For distinguished military services, * * * is hereby awarded the title of * * * with the following revenues.” *This forever hides the origin of the honor*, and the vanquished may take part in as many combats of the Lists of Love as he chooses, until he achieves his heart's desire—without his ladylove ever having an inkling of the fact that he has *ever* entered the said Lists of Love in his life! To resume.

Marmaduke continued. “Therefore, my own bride-to-be, I shall be in the proud position of—in the event of victory—making you a Peeress of Valhalla.”

Lucile blushed rosy red with pride and joy at these words. Her brilliant eyes sparkled as she turned to Marmaduke—watching as he had been her every motion—and said:

“You will win!” At the same time she raised her rosy lips and Marmaduke—like a hawk—impressed a passionate and extended kiss thereon. Lucile shuddered slightly as though the fire from Marmaduke had entered her very soul—and hastily withdrew her face. Marmaduke said hurriedly: “You know, of course, the regulations. *Whoever* wins, the combat cannot be renewed for one calendar month; during which time *only I* am allowed to pay court to you—only I—unless you signify a desire that I should discontinue my attentions and the Earl take my place.”

A hasty but positive negative in the shape of a shake of the head of Lucile.

“And I can assure you, Lucile, that nothing but your handing me my *congé* could induce me to cease combating for your hand with the Earl of Marliton for the entire duration of the thirteen months permitted by the Laws of Valhalla to such a contest—once a month for thirteen months—at the end of which time, the rejected—*not the defeated*—lover, comes into the lane which has no turning—reaches the point where he can challenge no more for the lady’s hand—provided the lady still smiles upon his rival’s suit. *I am devoutly willing to die once a month for thirteen months*, for your sweet sake, and remember”—Lucile’s face paling at these terrible words—terrible at least to anyone with sufficient imagination to grasp their significance—“remember that one victory by me forever settles the situation—with the aspirant overcome. He can never challenge again. So, my darling, let me embrace you once again before I hie me away to train for the ordeal—the time is short—one month.”

I should perhaps explain here more clearly that any number of men can pay preliminary court to a maiden of Valhalla—while she and they are making up their minds as to whether a permanent alliance is desired. But just so soon—within a week—as one of them has been accepted, it must be announced as aforesaid. If more than one suitor has proposed—or a second or third proposed during the said week—then the time is extended before she makes her decision to one week from the time the second suitor proposed, but that is the extreme limit. At the end of this time—within at most two weeks from the time the first suitor proposed—all suitors, even subsequent proposers, if any, after the second suitor, must be decided upon by the maiden, and at the end of said two weeks, the chosen suitor having been notified of his selection and the others of their rejection, the chosen suitor must announce the approaching nuptials in the Hall of the Court of Love, and await the advent of challenges. In such an event, where there is more than one proposer, combats are almost certain to ensue between the several rivals. No social intercourse whatever takes place between a maiden and the rivals of her lover. No matter whether she knew them well before they challenged, no

matter if she had tentatively considered them in the light of a possible accepted suitor. Not unless the manner of combat of her accepted suitor disenchant her—when she is bound to notify him at once that the engagement is at an end, and with it all contests—all combats with him—or for some other reason, she changes her mind—can other men call upon her.

To resume. With these words, Marmaduke gently and slowly advanced his left arm about her delicate waist and tenderly drew her towards him.

(February 18, 1918.)

Lucile sweetly seconded his action by gently relaxing her usual upright attitude—even when sitting—and leaning towards her lover, nestled her glorious face against the short purple cloak mantling his silver cuirass. Marmaduke said nothing, but softly stroked her shining golden head. For some five minutes they sat thus. Suddenly Lucile threw her arms about her lover's neck and burying her face against his corslet burst into a torrent of weeping. Marmaduke was prepared for this outburst for he had tenderly regarded her as she had leaned against him—her eyes on the floor. He had noticed her bosom rise and fall stormily several time as though she were a prey to some secret and painful emotion—there being a suggestion of convulsiveness—a suggestion of a suppressed sob—a *securely smothered* sob—behind each rise of those lovely waves. He therefore was not taken aback when the storm burst. Instead, he murmured low words—more inarticulate than the reverse—of comfort—drying her drenched eyes with his handkerchief, and tenderly kissing her forehead—now ruffled with grief. Slowly the tears ceased to fall and the sobs to rise and break. Marmaduke ceased speaking and contented himself with kissing her forehead and hair and hands. Suddenly she said, in a voice freighted with sadness, and threatening to burst once more into stormy sobs:

“Marmaduke, I think this is awful—*dreadful*—this shadow of death hanging like a cloud over innocent, pure love, in Valhalla. That is the only thing I do not admire in this marvellous place where everything is so beautiful, so true, and so pure. I am not complaining, but both you and I are newcomers in Valhalla, you know. We both graduated within

a year of each other from the University—the Palace of the Soul—although, as Fate would have it, we never met. So I am not yet used to the dreadful combats sure to be followed by bloody wounds and ultimately, almost certain to terminate in death—a death entirely different from death on earthly battlefields—where life is snuffed out at a stroke by a bullet in the heart or head—and where long-drawn death agonies are, so-to-speak—rare. For in Valhalla in *combats à l'outrance*, the wounds come only from the Roman short sword, and death only after that same sword has pierced a vital spot in a man in perfect training and of the most superb physique, therefore, to put out the life of such a champion—to check the flow of strength and vitality—of one so strong, so healthy, and so trained—necessarily produces a deadly desperate struggle, before one's very eyes, between the Forces of Life and those of its deadly rival, Death—necessarily produces a death-agony as tremendous as it is terrific. I have seen but one death since arriving in Valhalla—that was at a tournament. The Princess de la Moskowa warned me of the probable effect upon me—a tyro at such spectacles—and said that were it possible, she would spare me the spectacle, but that the Laws of Valhalla compelled all maidens to accustom themselves to the stern sight. That all the Law permitted her to do was to make the usual provision for my leaving immediately after the first death had occurred. That the merciful exception was extended to all tyros for so long a period as necessary, but not one day longer. That the Current which wafted trembling and tear-stained maidens from the uproar—the dust—blood—wounds—and death of a tournament—would refuse to work did the maiden not really and truly *need* to be carried out after the first death had occurred. This was arranged by the Emperor so that the maidens would as rapidly as possible become accustomed to the sight. I almost fainted at the first death, and was immediately wafted by the Current to my apartment in this Palace. Now, my lover, *how* can I bear to face the terrible ordeal of seeing you fighting for your life with that champion of champions—that idol of the tournaments—the Earl of Marliton.”

And once more, at the thought of the dread danger hanging over Marmaduke's head, Lucile's loving heart gave way,

and she lifted up her voice and wept. This time, probably owing to the minute and detailed description of these fierce encounters she had given to Marmaduke—owing to these details having brought vividly to her mind the last scene of blood and death she had witnessed—*capped by the climax of picturing Marmaduke in his possible death-agony*—this time, the storm of weeping was longer in duration, and harder to assuage. She buried her face—down which the tears literally rained—in his cloak, and stuffed a fold of it between her ruby lips—now twisted and distorted with grief into a shape resembling the mouth of an ancient Greek tragic mask. She stuffed a fold of his cloak into her mouth in a despairing effort to stifle her sobs and cries which—do what she could—*would* break from her tempest-tossed breast. Marmaduke suffered to the core to see such unfeigned, such sincere affliction. He essayed to wipe her eyes—to gently detach her head from his breast in order to do so, but with a stifled “No, No! Don’t look at me. Let me hide my face,” she burrowed—so-to-speak—her lovely face deeper into the purple folds which protected her delicate skin from the silver harness underneath. Marmaduke, with a heavy sigh, resumed his former action of stroking her head, and now and then, kissing tenderly her lustrous hair. After a time, nature exhausted herself, and she ceased to sob, and finally ceased to sigh. She then said, in a hushed voice: “Marmaduke, lend me your handkerchief.”

Marmaduke, after delivering his handkerchief from his sword-belt into which it was tucked, said in soothing accents:

“My sweetheart, let me say a single word in defense of the cruel sight all maidens *must*—according to the Laws of Valhalla—accustom themselves to. *Death is the greatest thing—the most momentous thing—in life on earth, to a man or woman of sense—momentous in its possibilities.* I need say no more to a maiden of Valhalla, learned and logical as they all necessarily are. Now in Valhalla, all being immortal—unless there were a modified form of death—*death in agony. unspeakable, indescribable and unbelievable by mortals—the greatest sobering—the greatest purifying force in existence—would be removed from existence.* Therefore, and for this sole and only reason—death is ever hovering over the lover of each maid or matron of Valhalla to spiritualize each maid

or matron by its ominous shadow, and the lover to his accepted Soul-Mate." Whereupon Lucile bowed her lovely head and said: "I admit, Marmaduke, the strength of your argument. You will pardon me if that is all I care to say on the utterly repellent subject." Marmaduke gravely bowed in silence.

To return. You may be surprised to hear, Mr. Chaloner, that in case of weeping in Valhalla, the usual blowing of the nose does not occur, for with the immortal frames given us—after we have worked for and won them—with those permanent abodes of the spirit those veritable palaces of the soul—so beautiful are they in man and maid—compared to the frail tabernacle of the flesh—in Valhalla no such thing as nose-blowing *ever* occurs. There are no such things as bodily functions here. There is never any waste of any kind, sort or description. What one eats nourishes one—and one may eat as heartily as on earth and as often—what one eats nourishes one, and that is all. What one drinks nourishes one, and that is all. No digestion, etc., etc. Merely complete and instantaneous assimilation. Of course, this is due to the nature of our magical bodies, and to the magical nature of the viands and wines and other beverages. No aches, no pains except from wounds—simply sempiternal health and happiness.

(Oh, Princess! How I wish I knew two things).

I very well know what one of them is, Mr. Chaloner.

(I presume you do, Princess. How I wish I knew first and foremost—you will pardon me—)

Certainly, for I know what your crime—so-to-speak—is about to be.

(A thousand thanks. How I wish I knew whether your charming words are true, and whether, when my time comes to "pay the piper" "to shuffle off this mortal coil" of the princely and marvellous, and *marvellously misunderstood* Prince of Denmark—of Hamlet—Prince of lordly philosophers and wisest and loveliest of daring and splendid souls—whether when my time comes to face that grim judge and that tell-tale moving picture of the soul—I shall pull through—shall not be knocked down, dragged out, and then drawn through a knot-hole—so-to-speak).

I shall relieve your mind before attempting to relieve your curiosity concerning my veracity. You may take my word for it—and no man as honest and truthful as my heroic Consort was known on earth to be by you, would voluntarily name as his mate a liar—

(Palpably not, Princess, palpably not.)

You may take my word for it that you will neither be knocked down, dragged out, nor drawn through a knot-hole—to employ your vigorous language—when your time to make your exit on earth and to make your bow to Hell—arrives. This is for two reasons. *First*: you are far from a bad man. Have, in fact, never injured a human being. Therefore you have no scores in the Book of Sin to wipe out. I do not mean that you will not have to “do” some “time”—as the masculine phrase in Purgatory hath it—but your name is *not*—emphatically *not*—registered in that red-backed book yclept the Book of Sin. I *know*, for I have been permitted to glance therein in your particular case. You are not in it—your name is not on the list. *Second*: you are neither going to be knocked down, dragged out, nor drawn through a knot-hole in Hell, *for the sufficient reason that that is the precise treatment you have received on earth for the past twenty years.* Turning now to your first wish. *I, being a woman, am blessed—or cursed—as you choose to look at it—with a woman’s curiosity.* I, therefore, being of a sympathetic nature, and having a regard for you—though I never, of course, met you—on account of your loving friendship for my Consort—I know how you mourned over and deplored his death—*I therefore have a fellow-feeling for your curiosity as to whether I am lying to you or telling the truth.*

(You put it terribly frankly, Princess, permit me to observe).

No more terribly frankly than you put the conundrum aforesaid, to your secret soul, my dear Mr. Chaloner.

(As we used to say at the “Manhattan Club,” I “acknowledge the corn.” Pray proceed).

Briefly. Do you suppose that I would not give you positive proof of the truth of my sayings if I were permitted to? *Of course, I would.* I am a woman, and, *therefore a foe to all suffering, mental as well as physical.* I know your record

of the last twenty years, and what you have suffered, and what you daily and even hourly—every hour of every day—every waking hour, of course—suffer. *Were I permitted to prove my words your suffering would pass as if by magic—for you are so disgusted with life—with the life circumstances for the last twenty years have forced you to live—that for years you have looked with increasing interest to the life beyond the grave.* Now, granted that that life suits your taste—and from your comments thereon to me, I opine that it does—there can be no doubt about that—

(None, Princess).

Granted that that life suits your taste, you would count the days with eagerness to see them pass, which separate you from your death. How about that, may I ask?

(That is a leading question, Princess).

Such being the fact, and you being a lawyer, you are not required to answer. So I shall pass on. At all events, your sufferings would distinctly resemble a bagatelle. How about that, may I ask?

(That is undoubtedly so).

So far, so good. Now to hasten to wind up this gross digression, and get back to my sweet Lady-in-waiting, Lucile Sternold, and her Marmaduke. *Suffering is absolutely essential for soul-growth. Not for intellectual growth, but for the growth—the development, the increase in size and strength and depth and height—of the soul.* I shall not take up time now to explain why that is. Let it suffice to say that it is so. If one does not have one's measure—one's destined, fore-ordained *measure*—of suffering when on earth, one of two things happens. *First.* The suffering must occur in Purgatory—where it is one hundred per cent.—to heavily *under-estimate* it—more terrible than it can possibly be—in the limited human, nature of things—on earth as compared with the *unlimited superhuman* nature of things under the earth—*the suffering must occur in Purgatory if it does not occur on earth, and in Purgatory the suffering is one hundred per cent. more acute than it is on earth.* *Second.* If the suffering is not incurred in Purgatory—to balance the lack of it on earth—the soul in question falls several grades in the spiritual scale—which is the only scale with which the soul has ought to

do. I shall not continue this now, for, were I to do so, it would take us too far afield for the present. So let me assure you, Mr. Chaloner, that one of these days you will agree with me that it was a blessed thing for you that you had your measure of suffering in the Vale of Tears—the place built by an All-Wise and All-Loving God, as the—so-to-speak—Laboratory, or Work-Shop of Suffering. So you see my point. You see why neither the Prince nor I, are permitted by the Laws of the Universe, to give you positive proof of the veracity of our startling—our, at times, ominous—words.

(Ye-e-s. But it is a highly unsatisfactory reason—I do not question the Logic of it, nor the Religion of it—it is highly suggestive of The Man of Sorrows and His sublime teachings—but it is, nevertheless, highly unsatisfactory—or—to speak more strictly correctly—*unsatisfying*).

That, I sadly and regretfully, my dear Mr. Chaloner, hasten to admit is undeniably so. But, my philosophic friend, is not life?

(Indubitably, Princess; indubitably).

February 19, 1918.

Now, to return to our turtle doves.

Before doing so, I should say that at the time of the—so-to-speak—Gift of Tongues—the acquiring of all knowledge by all male and female graduates from the College of the Soul—who have cast in their lot with the Prince of Darkness—who have enrolled under the standard of Valhalla—a glorious privilege accorded neither in the Kingdom of Sin—which is to say—in Philistia—nor in the Underworld nor its reflex, and deadly opponent, the Land of Cockaigne—an *actual* Gift of Tongues occurs. *First*: the language of Arms and Diplomacy—which is French—is at once acquired—but with the accent of each nationality—unless the maiden or warrior cares to take the trouble by study and care to rid himself or herself of the same, which is possible for all. *Second*: The language of Law, acquired immediately, as aforesaid, heretofore upon entry into Valhalla—which is English. *Third*: the languages of Greece and Rome, for the purpose—not of conversation—but of being able to read the wonderful literature of those countries—upon whose *idealized* civilizations, *and*

Christianity, and the *purity, individuality, self-respect, and altruism*, following that divine Religion—engrafted upon them—the civilization, manners and customs of Valhalla, are based—far more than upon those of modern times. *The civilization, arms and costumes, in a word, of the time of Christ*, are those of Valhalla—not of the twentieth century.

Upon Lucile's finishing her covert—but natural—from a tender woman's point of view—attack upon the stern and war-like law, that death and its agonies must hover ever over immortals—not only at the hands of the Hosts of Philistia—of the Hosts of Sin—but at the hands of the warrior's brothers-in-arms—under the banner of the Prince of Darkness—there was a silence between the lovers. This dread law did not hang over Philistia—in the Lists of Love and Tournaments there, death never occurred—it being only in battle with the Hosts of Valhalla that that dread penalty of defeat or a chance blow, was risked. This immunity was one of the causes for so many more warriors—physically—but not morally so—brave—throwing in their lot with the King of the Philistines, than with the Emperor of Valhalla. It was also the main cause for the superiority in *moral* courage of the forces of the Emperor over those of the King of the Philistines.

After some five minutes' silence between the lovers, Lucile—whose right hand had been silently held between Marmaduke's own—while each gazed in reverie before them—after a silence, during which Lucile's tormented spirit had found solace and comfort in the tender, tactful silence of her lover—she said slowly, in a dreamy voice, from which all traces of grief or tears had vanished: "Marmaduke, I wonder *how on earth* the Earl of Marliton ever took a fancy to me." Marmaduke smiled, not outwardly, but inwardly, and said: "Do you know that he has ever seen you—I mean so as to be able to recognize you if he saw you again? Of course, being in the *suite* of the Princess you would be seen of all men present at the tournament you witnessed—and in the tier of boxes most prominent of all, after those of the Emperor and his military suite—the Princess and Marshal Ney and their suite sitting on the right of the Emperor—the boxes on the right of the Emperor being those of the Prince of the Moskowa and his Consort, with her Ladies-in-waiting." Lucile paused a mo-

ment as though to reflect, then said: "I now recollect that I met the Earl of Marliton upon one occasion, for a brief space. It was about a month ago. I was in attendance upon the Princess for that day, and, therefore, was one of the three Ladies-in-waiting in the presence. She was in her boudoir—a room over this, and precisely the size of this. The Princess, as you probably do not know, is very fond of knitting as a means of keeping her mind off of the perils constantly hovering over the head of her Consort, on account of his position as the Emperor's right hand—not only in Valhalla but the Underworld—and the desire to challenge him to mortal combat and achieve some of his vast wealth as fruits of the spoil of the tournament, which burns secretly in the breast of many a redoubtable warrior of Valhalla. I say advisedly 'some' of the Marshal's vast wealth—for a rule prohibits any warrior, other than one of equal rank—a Marshal of the Empire—from winning in combat more than one-tenth of Marshal Ney's—or any other Marshal of the Empire's—wealth, but Marshals never fight among themselves—it is contrary to etiquette—except to avenge an insult—which has never yet occurred. Another rule prohibits any but a Marshal from challenging a Marshal until the challenger shall have vanquished in tournament all other challengers to the said dread honor. The Emperor made this rule for two reasons. The record of each Marshal of the Empire—either when on earth, or in Purgatory, or subsequently, in Valhalla, entitles him to well earned repose. Because the Emperor does not wish to have his war councils and councils of state weakened by Marshals there present being bandaged from recent wounds—for wounds remain a full month after being received—or with the care of an approaching duel-to-the-death with some ambitious aspirant to wealth and honor among the vast Host of Valhalla, on their minds. Therefore, it comes about that not more than once in five years does a Marshal of the Empire have to fight—so-to-speak—for his life. For it takes all that time for the aspirants to—so-to-speak—kill one another off, in their effort to ascertain which is the fated warrior destined to cross swords with the Bravest of the Brave—and in any event, once in five years is the limit. But in the intervening five years, the Consort of the Marshal—the Consorts

of all the Marshals—have to witness tournaments occurring daily, one month in the year, from Monday to Friday, inclusive, except in war time, when no tournaments occur—only combats in the Lists of Love—every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for four consecutive weeks—in which period each Marshal and each Consort of a Marshal of the Empire sees the possible champion who will be pitted against him, five years or less hence. Heralds announce at the openings of the lists, which Marshal each aspirant—each group of aspirants—challenges. And as Ney's prowess is proportionate to his rank and wealth—and the same is true of all Marshals—none but the most redoubted and experienced in mortal combat of Valhalla's warriors presume to challenge a member of the Emperor's suite—*all of whom are Marshals*. Thus, for one month in every year for five years, each wife of a Marshal may have her heart torn by anxiety. For one year after every period of five years no challenges of Marshals are permitted—hence once in six years the Marshals have entire rest.

To soothe and distract her mind, the Princess of the Moskowa knits almost continually, while one of us Ladies-in-waiting—we take turns—reads aloud to her. On this certain day, the Princess suddenly said to me: 'Lucile, I have just had an inspiration. Give me my writing tablets, Child.' I brought her a set of ivory and gold tablets in a gold case, of which she kept a key, attached to a bracelet, and the Marshal the other attached to a slender gold chain round his neck—concealed by his armour. The Princess hastily wrote for several minutes with a pencil upon the tablets—the size of the small paper tablets of our former world—in her firm, delicate hand. She then closed the tablets and placed them in the golden case, locked it and handing it to me, said: 'Lucile, you being in attendance today, are the one of the Ladies-in-waiting to whom the privilege belongs of entering the Imperial Council-Chamber. You may be aware that the Consorts of the Marshals of the Empire have the privilege, at any time, of interrupting the councils of State by sending in a note to their Consorts—a privilege rarely availed of—only on the most urgent occasions. You will enter, my child, at the private entrance of the Imperial Palace—the one connecting the recep-

tion hall of Marshal Ney with the Imperial Palace—the entrance always used by the Marshal when calling on the Emperor. Upon entering the Imperial Palace you will find a body of troops in the Guard Room, or antechamber—which is next to the Imperial Council-Chamber. Upon seeing you, the officer in command of the Guard, will at once be informed by a member of the Guard, and he will respectfully advance. Knowing the practice above described, he will glance at the tablets in your hand, and will know your errand. After saluting you, he will conduct you—followed by a guard of honour of four men and a non-commissioned officer—the officer will conduct you, followed by your guard of honour into the lofty Council-Chamber. Upon arriving, he will give the countersign, to the officer in command of the Guard at the entrance to the Chamber. You will then be ushered in by said officer, accompanied by the first officer and your guard of honor—into the Council-Chamber. The first officer will conduct you to the Council Table—to the seat thereat occupied by Marshal Ney. You will then deliver the tablets, and, after courtesying to the Emperor, who will salute you with his hand in return—retire.”

I should explain that the term ‘being in attendance’ is a title which is bestowed at will by the Princess upon one of the Ladies-in-waiting, which for that one day ranks her above the others Ladies-in-waiting, but gives her no authority over them. This was the first time I had ever received such an order, and, my dear, you may imagine my concern! To enter—*a lone maiden—with no other maiden with me*—the august and *terrible precincts of the Council-Chamber of His Satanic Majesty!*”

“I surely can.”

“I turned pale. The Princess noticing my alarm, said gently: ‘Remember, my darling, your halo protects you even in the Imperial presence. Its force is—by the Emperor’s special ruling—as efficient a protection against *him*, the Lord of Valhalla, as against the most humble new arrival. This is done, *not because it is necessary*, but in order that the knowledge of its divine force may assuage the maiden’s fears in *any* company. Therefore, my Child, summon your courage, and advance.’ At these words, I nerved myself and moved steadily out of the Boudoir.

Upon opening the door of communication, I found myself in a lofty and large Guard Room or ante-chamber, containing a body of at least twenty-five warriors in full armour. The guard at the door, without leaving his station, after saluting me with his drawn sword, summoned a non-commissioned officer. The latter in turn saluted me. I had not opened my mouth. The second officer rapidly crossed the room to where a commissioned officer in full armour was reclining upon an ancient Roman couch reading a book. The non-commissioned officer saluted and informed the officer that a Lady-in-waiting from the Princess de la Moskowa was at the door. The officer instantly rose, and advancing saluted me. I held the Princess's tablets in my right hand, and as all the soldiers could readily see them, they knew my mission. I bowed in acknowledgment of the salutes of all the officers, and the last officer respectfully motioned—he did not say a word—to me to advance and follow him. As I did so, I heard four men and the non-commissioned officer fall in behind me. We traversed the antechamber. Upon arriving at the door of the Imperial Council-Chamber the officer struck the door two resounding blows with the pommel of his sword. A moment after, the door was opened a foot, and the armed figure of a sentry—a commissioned officer—this time—appeared. My officer then whispered—to me inaudible—the countersign into the inclined ear of the other. This done, the door was slowly opened, and upon admitting our party, swiftly closed. The officer in command of my escort then saluted the Emperor, reclining at the head of his Council-Table upon a lounge—surrounded on three sides by Marshals and high military Chiefs in full armour—but without their helmets. The officer then said in a loud voice: 'A Lady-in-waiting from her Royal Highness, the Princesse de la Moskowa, with a message for the Prince de la Moskowa.' Thereupon the Emperor said, in pleasing, gentle tones—evidently recognizing my trepidation at finding myself alone—so far as any other woman, at least—in such a presence, surrounded by such a formidable array of warriors—the Emperor said: 'Let the Lady-in-waiting be so kind as to advance and deliver her message to the Prince de la Moskowa.' Whereupon I took fresh courage and, preceded by the officer of my body-guard, and

followed by the body-guard—advanced steadily towards the Council-Table. A word here may be in keeping regarding the Council Chamber. It was a room at least one hundred feet square with a large marble fountain in the middle, the architecture that of an ancient Roman house. There was a throne—at the upper end of the room against the wall thereof—of solid gold in the form of an antique Roman couch, resting upon a dais of black marble, reached by five steps six inches high, of the same material. Over the throne was a baldachin of purple stone—a species of porphyry exactly resembling purple in color. The baldachin was raised twenty feet above the throne upon pillars of solid gold. The ceiling of the room was thirty feet high. The throne—I learned from the Princess—is never occupied by the Emperor except upon the most ceremonious state occasions—such as a full council of all the military Chiefs entitled to be present on the eve of a declaration of war by the Emperor, or immediately after a declaration of war by the King of Sin. Otherwise, the Emperor occupies a lounge at the head of the gigantic mahogany Council Table, thirty feet long and ten wide, occupying a position immediately opposite to the steps leading up to the throne, which is in the centre of the wall of the room. I learned from the Princess that upon said occasions the vast space is filled with chairs of solid gold, in pattern resembling the curule chair of ancient Rome.

Slowly and solemnly my escort and I approached the space occupied by the Council-Table. Upon arriving there, the officer in command of my body-guard halted, and with him the body-guard, and motioned respectfully with his hand to where Marshal Ney sat—or rather stood—for he had risen upon the announcement of my entry. I then advanced slowly to where the Marshal stood. I should observe that *all* the men present—including the Emperor—rose and stood in respectful attitudes as I passed. So soon as I reached the spot occupied by the redoubtable Ney, at the right hand of the Imperial couch at the head of the Council-Table, the Marshal, bowing, said as he took the tablets: ‘Maiden, I pray you be seated upon the chair of audience’—pointing to a golden chair of the aforesaid shape, which—by magic—appeared and placed itself at his side. I afterwards learned that this chair

places itself at the side of each Marshal thus approached. At this I bowed, and sat down. Whereupon the entire assemblage seated themselves, as the Marshal, alone standing, read rapidly the tablets from his Consort. During the time required for this there was not a word spoken nor a sound heard in the vast chamber. I, therefore, had time to compose my thoughts and timidly glance about me—following a natural feminine instinct of curiosity. I saw that there were at least twenty men seated at the Council Table. I should observe that the majority of the men at once took up tablets, upon which they had evidently made notes previously, and busily turned their leaves and pored over them, as though thankful for the opportunity afforded by my unexpected entrance to catch up with what had gone on before. First, of course, I glanced in the direction of our terrible Chief—of Satan, Prince of Darkness, and Emperor of Valhalla. I found that His Satanic Majesty, to my unutterable surprise, not to say terror—was relaxing the strain of council by toying with the mane of an enormous jet black lion—utterly unchained or confined in any way—which reposed on the marble floor of the Chamber within reach of the Emperor's hand. The lion was lying at full length immediately behind the couch of the Emperor. So soon as I seated myself, the Emperor apparently leaned over the back of his lounge and thrust his right hand into the tumultuous mane of the dreadful beast. The lion evidently enjoyed the Emperor's touch, for he stretched himself, and for the first time, a sound broke the deathly stillness of the Council Chamber. The sound was an ear-splitting, soul-chilling roar from the King of Beasts! The Emperor rapidly glanced at me. My halo had apparently come into play, for immediately following the roar, the lion rolled over as though struck dead by the lightning-like bolt thrown out by my halo—without my knowledge—and merely because I was alarmed, and there was no other female present. Neither sign nor sound accompanied the discharge from my halo. The Emperor then said, with a gentle smile: 'Maiden, I honor your courage. The deadly effect of your halo shows the terror to which you have recently been a prey—and yet not a sound escaped your lips. I roused "Hannibal," the lion, who, with his mate, nightly sleeps inside my door—

for the purpose of deciding a wager between Marshal Ney and myself. The Marshal had boasted that her Royal Highness, his Consort, was the best judge of female character in all Valhalla. That he gave her credit for choosing the most dauntless of the maidens—the newly arrived maidens—of Valhalla. That he wagered that not *one* of the nine maidens forming the train of the Princess de la Moskowa, would flinch at a roar from “Hannibal”—although not one solitary one of them ever knew of his existence, or were permitted to do so until they ran across him, as you have done—it being contrary to the etiquette of the Court for the Consort of any Marshal to forewarn her messenger of what she must expect upon entering the stern Council Chamber. Maiden, Marshal Ney has won, and I shall here and now bestow upon you the fruits of your heroic courage—the fruits of the wager.’ Whereupon, Marshal Ney, arresting his reading, turned, gave a military salute, and said in a deep, powerful voice: ‘If your Majesty please, I shall now salute with my sword my Consort—she having won the wager.’ Thereupon the Marshal drew his sword, and as he did so all the men present, including the Emperor—rose, drew their swords and shouted in unison ‘Glory to the Princess de la Moskowa,’ whereupon, upon a cushion of crimson velvet, a foot square, appeared at the Emperor’s right side, by magic, the most magnificent sunburst of diamonds, rubies and sapphires, you ever imagined. The jewels were none of them less than the size of the thumbnail, and of the purest water. There were nine diamonds, nine rubies, and nine sapphires, arranged in the form of a trefoil, supported by a band of gold to encircle the head. This band was encrusted, an inch deep with small brilliants, supported by rubies and sapphires of the finest fire. The whole thing formed a crown fit to adorn the head of any maiden in Valhalla. So soon as it appeared, the Emperor said with a smile: ‘Maiden, advance and receive the reward which heroism ever—sooner or later—obtains in our dread domain.’ Whereupon I advanced slowly and courtesying stood with bent head, upon completing the courtesy. His Satanic Majesty—still standing—then placed upon my utterly unadorned head the marvellously beautiful and valuable coronet. So soon as he did so, a shout of the most appalling magnitude burst

from the assembled warriors, who, drawing their swords, exclaimed with one voice:

‘All honor to the fearless maid! All honor to the Laws of Valhalla! All honor to our Emperor!’ At the close of which a burst of unseen trumpets echoed down the vast apartment. When the sounds died away, the Emperor said smiling: ‘Maiden, your courage has won the approbation of a score of my most chosen warriors. Pardon me if, for a reward, I venture to put that courage to a farther and most supreme test.’ There was a dead silence for some moments. Whereupon the Emperor resumed in tender, sympathetic tones: ‘Maiden, provided you have the supreme courage to achieve the following test, you shall instantaneously, by magic, receive from my Treasure House, the following jewels: A cincture of diamonds, rubies, and sapphires, worthy of your diadem. A bracelet of the same jewels, and a ring—all containing the same trefoil design, in the same jewels, of the same splendour. Your task, maiden, is dread.’ A second hush fell upon the armed throng. The Emperor resumed in grave tones—tones slow, vibrant, low, and freighted with dread: *‘Your task, Maiden, is to approach and rouse “Hannibal” by a touch of your hand upon his mane, from the death-trance into which your halo has thrown him.’* An ominous, a soul-chilling pause, followed. Whereupon, that Heavenly Monitor all—male and female—have upon leaving the Vale of Tears, whispered to me—my Conscience whispered to me—‘Advance, and fear not.’ Whereupon, in spite of the dread which almost overwhelmed my soul, I advanced slowly, but with maidenly dignity, to the other side of the couch. Upon arriving there, my courage froze—the sight of that *black and monstrous beast—able to kill me with the mere stroke of his paw—lying there out-stretched—stiff in death—to be revived by my touch—and then what?* This proposition filled me with almost uncontrollable terror. However, I made a last desperate effort, and rallying all my mental, spiritual and physical forces, advanced. I approached the head of the recumbent monster. My Conscience whispered: ‘Now!’ I thereupon thrust forth my right hand and touched the bristly extremity of the monster’s fearsome mane. Instantly a tremor shook the lion’s frame. My Conscience whispered: ‘Step back—with dignity—but step back—three paces, to stand clear of the throes and convulsions now

impending. Understand the lion will *not* bite you or notice you upon regaining consciousness. He will resume his former recumbent attitude, from which he was aroused by the touch of the Emperor's hand. *Therefore, be brave, Lucile, and do as I say.* You have won the game, since you have advanced and touched his mane. All that now remains is to preserve a calm front during the struggles back to life of the monster.'

Whereupon, I did as commanded. I shall not attempt to describe the terrible contortions the animal underwent in coming back to life. I afterwards learned that he suffered nothing at the time—that the motions were all made as though under the influence of chloroform, on earth. *Let it suffice to say that I hope never to have to sustain such a shock to my heart and nerves and whole soul, again.* At the end of half a minute, the lion revived, shook himself like an immense dog, and once more, quietly, without the hint of a roar, resumed his recumbent attitude. Whereupon a shout in which even the Emperor joined, shook the very roof. '*All glory, to the dauntless Maiden! All glory to the incomparable maidens of Valhalla! All glory to Valhalla! Defeat to the Forces of Sin!*' A second fanfare of bugles followed this outburst. Whereupon the Emperor said, in tones vibrant with sympathy and pride: 'Maiden, what is thy name? I ask because I have put thee to a proof—the rousing of a dead lion—never before put to a maiden—or female, for that matter—in all Valhalla?'

'Lucile Sternold, if your Imperial Majesty please,' I replied, courtesying. Thereupon the Emperor said: 'Lucile Sternold, I name thee a Peeress—a Countess—in thine own right, with all the revenue and appurtenances therewith—a Peeress of Valhalla. I warn the warriors here present that not a word of what has just occurred must be breathed—except to a Consort—outside the four walls of this room, and said Consort must be warned that the occurrence ends with her. Advance, Lucile Sternold, and receive the reward of valour. The announcement of thy elevation to the Peerage of Valhalla will be made in due time—said time to be designated by Destiny—not by me.' Meantime, consult the Princess de la Moskowa, and choose the name of thine Earldom.'

I thereupon turned and advanced to the space between the Emperor and the Council Table. So soon as I reached

a spot three feet distant from his Majesty, a second cushion of velvet appeared by magic. It bore a girdle, enclosing a bracelet, and a ring—as promised by the Emperor—all of jewels of the first water. His Majesty smilingly advanced—the cushion remaining stationary, and as though resting upon a solid base—and respectfully encircled my waist with the most glorious cincture I ever saw—full three inches deep—a layer of diamonds, such as already described, followed by one of rubies, then one of sapphires, set in solid, jointed gold. The bracelet and ring were in keeping in splendour with the girdle. So soon as all were in place the Emperor bowed and said: ‘Maiden, retire whence you came: so soon as Marshal Ney shall have completed the perusal of his Consort’s tablets—and be good enough to say to the Princess that I compliment her; first, on her knowledge of human nature—or rather of maiden nature—second, upon the possession of as dauntless a maiden as e’er the sun shone on. Adieu.’

Whereupon I once more curtseyed, and as I started to move towards my seat to wait until the Marshal should have finished his tablets, the Marshal advanced towards me, and handing me the tablets, said in a loud, deep voice: ‘Peeress of Valhalla, be good enough to announce to my Consort, her Royal Highness the Princess de la Moskowa, that the message she was gracious enough to send me by yourself, is of the first importance, and will be at once announced to the Council here assembled.’

I thereupon extended my hand for the tablets, as the Marshal advanced towards me. As I did so, I happened by chance to glance down the long Council Table, and my gaze encountered that of the Earl of Marliton, sitting—or rather standing—for all stood when I did—immediately next to the group of the Marshals of the Empire. I had seen him at the only tournament I had ever attended—in fact *he* was the victor—was the man who had killed the only warrior I had ever seen die in Valhalla. I paid no attention to the incident—the brief meeting of our glances—until just now—and made my exit from the Council Chamber and from there returned to the boudoir of the Princess. I am, therefore, inclined to think, Marmaduke, that that is how the Earl of Marliton came to notice me.”

So soon as Lucile had finished her extended recital, Marmaduke, smiling gently, said: "Lucile, will you permit me to kiss you for the very most unanswerable reason on earth—or *under* the earth—for that matter?"

"And what is that reason, Marmaduke, may I ask?"

"That reason, Lucile, is that you are the most dauntless, the sweetest, most humble-hearted soul the sun ever shone on! Fancy your keeping the glorious fact that, under *extraordinary*—under *heroic*—circumstances, you had been made a Peeress in your own right—of Valhalla—fancy your keeping that glorious news from me. May I kiss you?"

"Yes, my champion, you may," was the utterly unexpected response of the fair Lucile. Whereupon, after this sweet ceremony, Marmaduke said: "Darling, won't you gladden the heart of your lover by summoning by magic, these imperial gifts, here—now—and adorning yourself with them?"

"Willingly, my champion."

Whereupon, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole gorgeous regalia appeared. Lucile put them on. Marmaduke exclaimed: "Magnificent! You are a blaze of glory! A Queen! Promise me to wear them at the combat between me and the Earl of Marliton in the Lists of Love."

"I do, my hero."

Whereupon, Marmaduke, his eyes aflame with pride and joy, exclaimed: "My peerless Sweetheart, you are *mine*! If I die thirteen times in succession I shall do it in a manner not unworthy of your love. Put your white arms around my neck, and hold me to you as you say—'Marmaduke, I love you'."

No sooner had Marmaduke concluded this little speech, than Lucile, lifting her rounded arms, encircled her lover's neck, murmuring as she laid her sweet lips to his: "Marmaduke, I love you."

Thereupon, Marmaduke tore himself resolutely away, and adjusting his helmet and shield, strode resolutely from the relaxed and melting form of his sweetheart.

Well, Mr. Chaloner, I think, as you mundanes say, I have "made good"—have at least *started* a romance!

(You surely have, Princess—and a thousand thanks—a

thousand thanks. I shall now summon your heroic Consort. Adieu).

Adieu, Mr. Chaloner.†

(Uncle Tom, alleged!)

What?

(Your matchless Consort can “give you cards and spades”).

For what—*in* what?

(*For* anything—*in* anything—she can “knock the spots out of you”—my venerable friend—the *spots* out of you!)

A word with you, Sir. I do not at all like your attitude towards my Consort. It is “My dear Princess, this—My dear Princess that”—*all the time!*

(Are you *jealous?* Ha, ha! *Jealous!*)

Suppose I am?

(That would be to suppose you a d——n fool—jealous of a man at *my* distance. Ha, ha!)

Nevertheless, I do not relish it, Sir.

(I don't care a d——n whether you do or not. So long as the Princess, alleged—of course, I don't employ that qualifying term to her—but I do not hesitate to do so to *you—you hoary old curmudgeon*—so long as the Princess, alleged—whom I firmly believe to be my Subconsciousness in masquerade—*don't forget that*, you old *bear*—so long as the alleged Princess de la Moskowa entertains me *you*—whether you like it or not—*may go to Hell!* Do you gather *that*, you old *villain?*)

Yes, I gather that, you impudent *rascal*—and shall not in a hurry forget it!

(Good night, my venerable Uncle, alleged).

Good night. *Understand I shall demand an apology from you, Sir, before I again communicate.*

(How about the Princess?)

She may do as she likes; her tact and discretion are exemplary.

(That being the case, I hereby apologize, my venerable Uncle, alleged).

Your apology is accepted. Good night.

† This Romance continued, page 268.

February 22, 1918.

(I should like to communicate with the alleged consort of the alleged spirit of the late Thomas Jefferson Miller—alleged to be the re-incarnation of Marshal Ney—Prince of the Moskowa—if the same is permitted).

(X-Faculty). It is. You may at once communicate with the spirit of the Princess of the Moskowa.

(Many thanks).

Well, Mr. Chaloner, I must say this is rather sudden! I understood I was not to be called upon again for some three months or so.

(I am asking a great deal, Princess, I admit.)

You surely have a high idea of my literary powers!

(I admit it could scarcely be higher.)

In consideration of your confidence in my powers, I shall, without more ado, take up the thread of the romance of Marmaduke and Lucile, where I left off—as Marmaduke was leaving Lucile's presence, in the drawing room of the Palace of the Prince and Princess of the Moskowa, in Hell—or as we more politely term it—in Valhalla.

Marmaduke was starting to train for his approaching duel—with Roman short swords—to the death, with the redoubtable Earl of Marliton, Peer of Valhalla, and Commander of a Legion of Valhalla; a duel for the hand of Lucile.

No sooner had he quitted the presence of Lucile than that charming creature burst into tears and buried her golden head in the crimson cushion adorning the couch upon which she and her lover had been so recently sitting. Her lovely form, closely clasped by its antique garb, gathered at the waist by a cincture of diamonds, rubies, and sapphires—the gift of Satan for her heroic courage in rousing the lion that ever guards the Prince of Darkness in-doors—her lovely form heaved in violent convulsions of grief—"convulsions" is not too strong for the throes which ran through her lovely frame, when the stillness of the vast room—with its tinkling marble fountain in the center—was broken by her heart-rending sobs. She clasped her graceful hands over her head as she buried the latter in the cushion in the effort to stifle the outpourings of her heart. Her tendril-like fingers writhed like minature ser-

pents in the agony of her soul. This storm lasted for some ten minutes. At the end of that time she rose, and after a futile search for her handkerchief, dried her eyes on the backs of her hands. Sighing deeply, she said aloud: "Ah me! What a fate is mine! Nothing but blood and death on all sides. On earth, blood and death were the death of me—under the earth, they are like to be—if, of course, such a thing *can* be with an immortal!"

She began to pace up and down the vast rosy rug covering the marble floor on one side of the fountain. Her hands were clasped, and hung at full length before her. She paced, slowly and meditatively up and down the vast rug, thrice, her head bent slightly forward. Then she said aloud, in a low, flute-like voice: "What on earth induced the Earl of Marliton to sue for my hand!"

The proposition seemed to utterly nonplus Lucile—her lovely face was a study in blank and utter amazement. She took another turn of the pink rug, then said: "There are other maiden Peeresses in their own right in Valhalla—as wealthy and attractive—to put it rather weakly—as I am—or am *not*—and yet Marliton goes out of his way—his woman-hating way—to choose me *and thus make my life perfectly wretched and miserable, for fear that he may kill my darling*. The combat rests upon superiority in courage and ideality—the Laws of Valhalla making both combatants equal in strength and skill. No man on earth—or *under* the earth—can surpass Marmaduke Grantham in courage—his encounter with Congressman Swannard, on Pennsylvania Avenue, at the foot of the steps leading up to the Capitol proves *that!*

"He faced almost certain death in seeking a physical encounter with a man of the Congressman's sinister record in the West. No man on earth—or *under* the earth—can surpass Marmaduke Grantham in ideality. For what greater ideality can there be than that which prompts a young man—at the *very outset* of a brilliant and assured career—to throw away his life in defense of a woman's honour—and the woman *nothing* in the world to him—simply the employee of the wife of his employer! Therefore, I *should* have no fear for Marmaduke. But my woman's heart, nevertheless, *does* fear, for this reason. Marliton is so confident of himself in mortal combat—

he is a veteran—and vanquisher of at least a score in mortal combat—in each of these combats he ‘killed his man,’ as the *ominous American phrase* in my day had it. Whereas, Marmaduke has never yet engaged in a combat of *any* sort in Valhalla. Of course, I do not know what combats he may have had during the three years he spent in Purgatory—but so far as meeting a redoubted champion of the champions—as is the Earl of Marliton—Marmaduke is as inexperienced in Valhalla as am I.”

Her lovely face was once more distorted with suppressed grief. She bit her lip in a desperate effort to keep back the tears—to suppress the rising sobs. Once more she began to slowly pace the pink rug—the intensity of her thought having arrested her in her stately and graceful progress, and chained her to one spot, as she pursued to its logical conclusion the above train of thought.

She had scarcely made one turn of the rug before the voice of her conscience was heard above the silvery tinkle of the fountain. It said: “Lucile, prepare thy soul for an alarm. Understand that I promise thee that no harm shall befall thee. I warn thee solely because I do not wish the virgin thunderbolt lurking in thy halo to be discharged upon the object of this alarm. Seat thyself upon the couch and wait.”

Lucile turned pale at the very sound of her Conscience—knowing, as she did, that it is only permitted to communicate the onrush of future events *immediately* impending, in circumstances of real danger to herself—or—as in this instance—to someone or something bound to alarm her, and therefore—unless forewarned as now—invoke the maiden thunderbolt ever ready to strike for her protection. She halted, when the voice of her Conscience broke the stillness. As soon as it had finished speaking, Lucile—like an heroic and well disciplined maiden of Valhalla—moved slowly, but with graceful dignity, to the couch, and seated herself at its head—which she had occupied when Marmaduke sat there with her. She settled herself in an easy but upright pose—her left arm upon the cushion, and her slender white hands in her lap. Her eyes were fixed on space. She did not have to wait long. Before fifteen seconds had elapsed since she was at rest—in her chosen

position to receive the enemy—to sustain the “surprise attack” impending—her very soul froze within her bosom at seeing an armed and helmetted warrior—his shield upon his left arm—and—horror of horrors!—the face beneath the helmet was that of the Earl of Marliton!

He advanced with a haughty, stately stride to the centre of the room, where rose the fountain from the marble floor. There halted, and making a military salute with his right hand, doffed both helmet and shield—leaning both against the golden base of the fountain, as had Marmaduke his. He stood in an attitude of haughty repose, when he had completed this action—having resumed an upright position immediately and easily in spite of his great size and weight of bone and sinew—totally free from the slightest suspicion of surplus flesh. He gazed inquiringly upon Lucile, awaiting some sign or word from her concerning his advance towards the couch.

To describe the tumult in Lucile’s breast, is quite beyond my powers, Mr. Chaloner. She had to master, in succession, the most passionate desire to scream out at him her surprise and disgust at his thus disturbing her most secret thoughts, followed by the most passionate desire to rise and leave the room. Being a maiden who had graduated after a three year course in Purgatory—including a course of the same length carried on, of course, at the same time, in the Academy of the Soul—College of the Soul—University of the Soul—or Palace of the Soul—as it is variously called—being so well schooled, so spiritually and *Spartanly* disciplined a flower of maidenhood, Lucile yielded to none of the above tempestuous temptations. She merely slowly, coldly inclined her beautiful head, saying in tones as icy as the winter’s blast: “The Earl of Marliton, I believe?”

The Earl slowly bent his handsome head, and said in heavy, but sonorous, rich tones: “The same, your ladyship.”

“My *ladyship*?” exclaimed Lucile, haughtily, in a surprised but chilling tone.

“The same, your ladyship. I had the honor to be present at the Imperial Council at which you were raised by his Imperial Majesty to the Peerage of Valhalla—a Peeress in your own right.”

“I had forgotten it,” somewhat hastily observed Lucile, with an angry blush at her own oversight.

“*Forgotten*” the fact that your ladyship had been raised to the Peerage of Valhalla by the Emperor!” observed the Earl, with a sneering smile which curled like a withered leaf his full, but handsome lips.

Lucile suppressed her rising anger, and contented herself by observing, in chill tones: “If my memory serves me, those are the words I used.”

Marliton gazed down upon the pale and drawn countenance of Lucile in dumb amazement. He moved his lips unconsciously as though he feared that the shock of surprise Lucile’s words had been to him had so dried them that they might perchance stick together and thus place him at a decided disadvantage in the sex-dual he saw he was in for—the trial of skill and strength—mental strength—strength of will—and thus place himself at a pronounced disadvantage—from his threatened disability *to* pronounce—in the approaching combat between the sexes he saw luring on the horizon.

Lucile, for the first time since Marliton’s entrance, breathed freely. Her woman’s penetration and swiftness of perception enabled her to note that for the first time she had placed the Earl at a disadvantage—for the first time she had scored a point in a clash of wits in which the fighting, up to that moment, had all gone Marliton’s way. She saw that she had him at a disadvantage—the great military disadvantage of surprise—that she had actually succeeded in surprising, in nonplussing, the woman-hating, man-killing Earl of Marliton in a duel of wits. Her wan face slowly took on a rosy colour as the blood surged triumphantly through her veins. With an unconscious gesture, she raised her firm but delicately modelled chin, as she asked in sarcastically chilly tones: “To what am I indebted, may I ask, for the highly *unexpected* honor of a call upon the part of the Earl of Marliton?”

There was silence for a brief space. So soon as her question had died upon the air, the Earl, starting slightly, and frowning—evidently unconsciously—said, in tones fully as cold: “If I may be permitted to be so frank with your ladyship—your ladyship appears to be—ahem!—unfamiliar—*somewhat*, at least,, unfamiliar—” with a qualifying but sarcastic short bow—a slow inclination of his well-formed head, covered with jet black hair, closely cropped—“with one of

the basic laws of the Court of Love, to-wit: that when a prospective suitor challenges an accepted suitor to mortal combat, and when said prospective suitor has never had the honour of meeting the object of his affection alone, that then the prospective suitor has a prescriptive right to present himself in the presence of the said object of his affection at the earliest possible—and opportune—moment, following his delivery of a challengee to mortal combat—the acceptance of his cartel to mortal combat. It is to that ancient law of Valhalla that your ladyship owes my presence here.”

Lucile concealed the chagrin she felt at this thrust scored by the Earl of Marliton. She rapidly rallied her mental forces, and said in cold, sneering tones: “Your lordship must pardon my newness at this—at this—what shall I say?—at this game of hide and seek.”

Marliton frowned heavily, and before he could open his mouth to retort angrily, Lucile, swift to see the advantage she had gained, was as swift to press the same, and said with a smile—the quintessence of bitterness and sneering dislike: “I lack your lordship’s experience at this—er—game of—er—hide and seek. I am a newcomer in Valhalla, whereas your lordship has been breaking hearts for thirty years here.”

It would be impossible for me, Mr. Chaloner, to convey to you the actual ferocity—that is the only word—the *ferocity* depicted upon the heavy—but handsome, intellectual, and energetic features of the redoubted Earl. The veins in his massive neck swelled. His eyes glared. His handsome lips—full and sensuous—contracted into a line so thin as to make them appear actually ascetic—the lips of an anchorite—whereas—if the truth were known—the noble Earl of Marliton was as redoubtable a trencherman as he was swordsman—as iron-headed and dangerous an adversary at a drinking-bout at one of the Imperial banquets, following upon a victory over the Hosts of Sin—and all the self-control, self-abnegation, and self-discipline a victory over those fierce and fearless hordes entailed, by way of preparation before, as well as courage and tenacity during the combat—as he was deadly as an adversary, under shield, in the field—while his broad and high forehead was darkened by a frown as deep as it was vindictive. Lucile had some difficulty in concealing her triumph over thus

landing a deadly thrust full in the face of the haughty Earl. She did so, however, and modestly regarded her shapely hands, lying—her rosy fingers intertwined—in her lap. It required fully thirty seconds for the Earl to master his emotions sufficiently to care to open his mouth, for—wily strategist as he was in love—no less than in war—*he would not allow any portion of his forces, physical or mental, to leave the fortress of his firmly closed mouth until said forces were at their utmost effectiveness as regards aggressive action.* Therefore, he swallowed several times, opened his lips once or twice, shifted his weight from the leg upon which his massive frame had been resting to his other firm limb, before essaying a counter-attack upon the bewitching but hostile parcel of femininity, so gracefully—yet so coldly—so demurely downcast before him. Then the Earl said, in a voice in which suppressed bitterness, anger, and vindictiveness were the dominant and colouring tones: “If your ladyship please, permit me to observe that my reputation in the Halls of Valhalla is neither that of a carpet-knight, nor—as we said in my day on earth—a lady’s man. No maiden in Valhalla can accuse me of obtruding myself into her affairs of the heart.”

“Except myself—my lord—except myself,” cut in Lucile with a swiftness and acid-clarity of tone.

The Earl started back as though he had received a slap in the face. The unusual occurrence of any human being’s daring to answer him back—much less flatly contradict and ridicule him—so took the doughty warrior and wary strategist by surprise that for fifteen seconds at least he was speechless—unable to utter a sound. He contented himself by first rallying his physical forces—as badly taken aback as his mental—and recovering the foot or so he had receded, he drew a long breath, and said in a voice thick with anger but not raised above the conventional pitch for a lady’s drawing-room.

“I accept the correction—if correction it should be called, rather than—ahem!—if your ladyship will pardon a soldier’s bluntness—rather than *interruption*. I was about to modestly remark that ‘No maiden in Valhalla can accuse me of obtruding myself into her affairs of the heart, *until today*’.”

The Earl paused, upon thus making shift to recover his lost ground—paused to observe the effect of his carefully

chosen words upon Lucile. An effort to pry behind the mask of the Sphinx would have been as fruitful regarding results. Lucile had lifted her magnificent eyes from her hands and was now coldly, inscrutably regarding the defiant visage of the Earl.

Impervious to his hostile and determined gaze, Lucile calmly regarded his fiery eyes with an indifference which made him as amazed as enraged. At the end of some half minute of thus watching each other, the Earl said, in a slow, deep voice: "If your ladyship, please, I have come hither to press my suit for your hand. Your ladyship is aware that Marmaduke Grantham, officer in the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla, and I, fight to the death one month from today, for the hand of your ladyship."

Marliton paused and gazed penetratingly upon Lucile's countenance to note, if possible, the effect of his awful words concerning a lover to his mistress.

Lucile's features continued Sphinxlike, but bravely as she summoned her stoicism she was utterly unable to prevent the blood from receding from her delicate cheek, or her lovely bosom from rising and falling stormily. Her voice—*she inwardly thanked God*—did not betray her—did not show the slightest sign of hoarseness or huskiness—as she said in slow, measured tones, of deadly coldness: "I am aware of the approaching combat."

The Earl—who had not failed to note the heaving of her breast—was amazed at her Spartan-like self-mastery—which could afford to despise such assaults as her bosom showed her heart had just sustained, at the Earl's brutal reference to her lover's approaching peril—and reply as evenly and coldly as had Lucile.

For the first time in the entire conversation, a feeling neither hostile, vindictive, or sneering crept into his haughty heart, as he felt something akin to tenderness for the lovely creature suffering silently under the knife he had just thrust into—and then turned in—her heart. Something of the admiration for her heroic stoicism crept into his face and voice. Lucile noticed it, and attributed it to admiration for her physical attractions merely, and hated the Earl—if possible—with a more deadly intensity than before. The passionate

desire to destroy this one obstacle which threatened her happiness in threatening her lover's very life, burned in her dark grey eyes like a sombre flame. She looked at the Earl, then down at her hands. Pausing a few seconds, she once more raised her gaze until it met the Earl's, full and level in the eye. She allowed her lovely lips to twist—ever so slightly—into as blighting a sneer as ever rejected lover gazed hopelessly upon. Marliton was amazed at such an exhibition of murderous—but thoroughly controlled—hatred. He saw at a glance that it was hatred—as deadly as undying—and his face hardened and took on a deadly severity, as he said, after drawing himself up to his full majestic height: “If your ladyship please. I shall once more beg indulgence for my soldier's bluntness. I am a man unaccustomed to sue in vain. This is my first experience at that bitter game, and I trust it will be my last. It certainly will be, with your ladyship—for I see beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Earl of Marliton, Peer of Valhalla, and Commander of the Tenth Legion of Valhalla—is *persona non grata* here.”

As he said these last words, he bowed sarcastically, showing—at the same time—his even white teeth in a bitter sneer. Lucile did not flinch at sight of this unfathomable hatred of Marmaduke these words thinly concealed. Her heart contracted with fear for her lover as the sudden vision of the last victim of Marliton's fearless prowess with the Roman short sword and shield—the warrior Lucile had seen die in agony from a thrust through the neck by the dreaded Earl, at her first tournament—rose before her. But though her loving heart contracted, her heroic face was as frank and open as the day, as she regarded the Earl with a calm, concentrated hatred not even his war-like and battle-trying spirit could surpass.

Silence reigned supreme for a full minute. Lucile, after looking the Earl full in the face, lowered her gaze from motives of maidenly modesty. As soon as she did so, Marliton said in insolently self-satisfied tones—cool, easy and confident as those of a master speaking to a newly arrived pupil: “I look forward with greater pleasure to my approaching combat with Marmaduke Grantham—and shall train for the same with greater care—than any of the score or more of duels I

have had the honor to participate in—and—if I may be permitted to say so—win.”

Lucile raised her eyes once more to his face as he concluded his vindictive and hateful speech, and not even Marliton could crowd more confidence into a few words—not even *he* could freight more heavily his argosy of words with hatred and contempt—than did Lucile, as she said with the most insulting slowness of utterance: “‘Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off’—my lord.”

Marliton stepped back a full pace in the overwhelming flood of surprise and affronted military pride which surged through his sorely tried soul like a lava torrent. He stepped back with an agility—a briskness no human being would have supposed possible in a man of his size and strength. Lucile’s storm-tossed heart once more contracted as she noted this—to her—unexpected danger to her lover this utterly unlooked for, unexpected agility. No sooner had she suffered the knife-thrust which this thought brought to her heart than a sigh of joy escaped her, as, suddenly, the words of Marmaduke recurred to her mind: “I am *more active* than Marliton.”

If anything on earth was calculated to swell to overflowing the already crowded cup of bitterness and disappointment of the Earl of Marliton, it was this utterly unexpected sigh of joy, at his—Marliton’s discomfiture. Lucile was actually amazed at the rage rolling up into his face from his heart. He murmured inarticulately once or twice—as the first waves of the bitter flood overwhelmed his soul. Almost choking with suppressed passion—as though escaping from an actual wave which had first suffocated, then buffeted him—the Earl said, in tones as ominous and death-laden as the low bellowing of a man-killing bull before he charges upon his quarry:

“If your ladyship please, if any one thing on earth *could* increase the force of my sword-thrust—*could* speed the thrust of my sword in the coming combat to the death with Marmaduke Grantham, it would be the recollection of this my first and last interview with your ladyship. For know—Peeress of Valhalla—that the Earl of Marliton no longer fights for thy white hand—no longer sues for thy hand—but fights for the pleasure of slaying the only man who has ever stood between him and the woman he desired to espouse. Farewell.”

Lucile slowly rose. As she did so, a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind was heard, and before either Lucile or the Earl had time to comprehend or even guess at the cause, Marmaduke Grantham appeared. I say "appeared" advisedly—there was absolutely no motion connected with his entry upon the scene. He—one moment—was not in the room—whereas the next moment he was. *He simply appeared.* He suddenly stood between Lucile and the enraged and towering figure of the Earl of Marliton. Nothing, Mr. Chalonier, which I can command in the way of language can ever *begin* to depict the amazement of these two. Lucile—with her woman's spontaneity and suppleness of spirit—was the first to recover from the overwhelming shock of surprise, sufficiently at least, to know what she *wanted* to do. No sooner had this wish formulated itself in her racked heart than—with a slow step and an air and mien in which dignity, pride, maidenly modesty and love mingled—she moved towards Marmaduke Grantham, and did not stop until she stood by his side. The sight of this conjunction—so-to-speak—of the planets of Venus and Mars—for Marmaduke's face was as terrible of aspect—to borrow an astrological term—as the conjunction of the two aforesaid planets—as that of the God of War himself. This aspect roused all the latent combativeness in the far from evangelical temperament of the Earl of Marliton—already strained to the point of bursting and exhaustion. His brawny breast heaved under his corselet from the tumultuous emotions of surprise, amazement, distrust, hatred, and revenge, surging through his powerful heart. His brawny breast heaved so that—to save her life—terrible as the moment was to Lucile—whose sense of humour was as prominent as her reading of the poets—especially Shakspeare—on earth, had been wide—Lucile, to save her life, could scarcely refrain from smiling—was forced to bite her cherry lip more than once to pinch back the insistent desire to smile, for the scene brought to her mind so vividly these lines from "Antony and Cleopatra"—the opening scene—where two of Antony's soldiers are bewailing his fall from grace. One of them crowns his bitter complaint as follows: "His captain's heart which in the scuffles of great fights had burst the buckles on his breast, reneges all temper and is become the bellows and the fan to

cool a gipsy's lust! Look where they come!" (Pointing to the amorous couple who now appear on the stage).

It was the heaving of the redoubtable Earl's "Captain's heart" which almost upset Lucile's splendidly calm countenance—in which, however, a line of pearly teeth was seen pressing swiftly and severely upon a pink lower lip.

Marliton burst out with a roar like that of a wild beast when he recovered his breath and the use of his lungs and lips:

"*You*. Sir! What make you here, intruding upon my prescriptive right to state my case to this lady?"

Marmaduke, glaring as fiercely back at the Earl, replied—in tones fully as truculent, fully as ferocious, but nothing like so low-pitched, nor so heavy: "I follow my destiny, and in doing so, follow the Laws of Valhalla—for it was the Magical Current which brought me here, and, as you should know, Earl of Marliton, the Magical Force never operates in favor of the party wishing to employ same without the consent of Destiny. I had no intention, Sir, of intruding upon your indubitable prescriptive right in the premises. But suddenly—without the slightest volition upon my part—I found myself where you now see me. I know nothing of what has passed between you and this lady—this Peeress"—

"The Countess of Grantham, Marmaduke, if you please"—broke in Lucile, with a smile in which love and pride and a hint of sweetly roguish humour were mingled.

Grantham simply could not believe his ears, and stepped back a full yard in amazement. Marliton simply *would* not believe his, and stepped back the same distance. Each, simultaneously burst out, in a tone whose dominant note was incredulity: "The Countess of *Grantham!*"

Lucile, smiling even more sweetly roguishly, said: "The same—gentlemen, both."

"But how can that be?" reiterated in amazed tones, the Earl of Marliton.

"Thus, my lord. His Imperial Majesty told me to consult the Princess de la Moskowa and select a name for my Peerage—which he would bestow, with the revenues and appurtenances appertaining to the same—at the proper time. Thereafter, I *did* consult the Maréchale Ney, and her Royal Highness was gracious enough to approve my suggestion to

choose the name of my suitor. She said there was no precedent for it, but that she would ask the Marshal to obtain his Imperial Majesty's permission. The Prince de la Moskowa was gracious enough to interest himself on my behalf with the Emperor—with the result that his Imperial Majesty was good enough to say that the request establishing—if granted—a perpetual precedent in Valhalla—it was necessary to go searchingly into Marmaduke Grantham's record while on earth; and provided some act of his, while on earth, was sufficiently chivalrous—sufficiently unselfish—and sufficiently heroic to merit the extraordinary honor of creating—he being merely an untitled officer of a Legion of Valhalla—a precedent for all eternity for the Peerage of Valhalla—provided the condition precedent—the aforesaid act of heroism of the first magnitude was discovered in Marmaduke Grantham's earthly career—then I could assume his name as my choice for the title, the name of my Peerage. That until such time as his Imperial Majesty should designate, I was only to be addressed as the Countess of Grantham by those in the secret—those aware of the great honor so recently conferred upon me by his Imperial Majesty. That in public, I am to be addressed merely as Lucile Sternold, of the suite of the Princess of the Moskowa. So now, my lord, and you, Marmaduke Grantham, Officer in the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla—so now you two gentlemen are in a position to judge as to whether the Countess of Grantham is within her rights—or the reverse—in calling herself by said title. I might add”—with a smile at Marmaduke Grantham “that a searching inquiry into the record on earth of Marmaduke Grantham, disclosed the following salient facts: First, that he had injured neither man nor woman. Second, that he had devoted himself with complete singleness of purpose to the prosecution of his career as a journalist. Third, that at the request—the mere *request*—of the wife of his employer he—to redress an insult to a defenseless young girl, of gentle birth, but without either means or friends—received from a rich and politically powerful roué of sinister record, as a brawler in the West—that in granting said request Grantham had as good as signed his own death-warrant—taking care, however, as a self-respecting man should—to see to it that the party bringing Grantham's death to pass should and *must* ‘pass in his checks’—to use an

old-fashioned, Bret Harte phrase for crossing the Styx—at the same time with Grantham. His Imperial Majesty said, that since Grantham was scarcely even acquainted—except in a professional manner with the young girl—both being secretaries in the same private family—Grantham, in acting as he did, merely to please the wife of his employer, with whom he was on terms of the most distant formality, had come within measurable distance, at least, of that noble mark which I shall dismiss under the caption: ‘Greater love hath no man.’ That therefore, Grantham was worthy of the extraordinary honour above indicated, in token of which his Imperial Majesty willingly permitted me to assume his name for the name or title of my approaching Peerage.”

The faces of the two men were a study during Lucile’s rehearsal. That of the Earl of Marliton was—so-to-speak—a race track for a contest in speed and endurance between the following emotions: jealousy, hatred, rage, distrust, revenge, vindictiveness. His lordship breathed heavily, and for a moment cast his eyes to the floor, as though hoping to find, in his despair of finding it anywhere else—some swift and dire avenue to revenge there—on the floor. He then raised his eyes and glanced fiercely and furtively at Grantham, in order to satisfy his natural interest as to just how his deadly enemy was standing the marvellous good fortune Fate had thrown at his feet—a fortune which would make his name a household word throughout all the vast and warlike domain of Valhalla, the moment—or the day after, at latest—the Emperor publicly raised the Countess of Grantham to the Peerage. Marliton saw, to his chagrin, that Grantham was standing his windfall from the hand of Destiny with extraordinary equanimity. That the expression on his face, most prominent, was that of surprise. That the next most prominent expression, was love. That the last was stern determination. Having noted and scheduled the said emotions, Marliton said, in the haughty, stern, military tones, peculiar to him: “Marmaduke Grantham, I await with *joy* the hour of our meeting. I shall not obtrude my presence longer between two persons evidently so congenial. *Au revoir*, Marmaduke Grantham, *au revoir*.”

Then with a slight, cold bow to Lucile, the Earl of Marliton turned to take up his helmet and shield. Marmaduke

wore both helmet and shield. As soon as the Earl had donned his harness, Marmaduke said, in tones as cold as ice, and as slow as the current in a canal: "Earl of Marliton, your joy at our approaching meeting cannot possibly surpass my own. *Au revoir*, Earl of Marliton. *Au revoir*."

The Earl inclined his head slightly to Grantham, turned abruptly and haughtily upon his heel and stalked, in long, stately strides, out of the apartment. Marmaduke returned his bow with a motion of the head fully as slight—fully as perfunctory.

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No sooner had the stalwart armoured back and shoulders of the redoubted Earl passed through the doorway, than Lucile threw her arms around her lover's neck in a gesture of convulsive *abandon*, joy and relief, impossible to put into words. For some moments, these two stood locked in an embrace as tender as it was deep and heart-felt. Lucile's head nestled in the folds of the short, purple cloak shrouding the silver cuirass of Marmaduke—rested over the spot at which beat the stout heart of Marmaduke. Lucile—as befitted her sex—Mr. Chaloner—pray pardon my somewhat personal remark—but I note that you are smiling.

(Admitted, Princess. I see what's coming—"Lucile was the first to withdraw"—or words to that effect, I opine).

You are correct, Sir. Lucile—as befitted her sex—was the first to release herself from the embrace. She did so with a charming blush and a sigh of unfathomable relief and comfort. Her glorious eyes were on the floor. Marmaduke regarded her with a rapturous look in which respect, admiration, and passionate feeling were equally blended. Slowly Lucile raised her eyes, and with a smile as sweet as it was bewitching, said in soft tones: "Marmaduke, *nothing* in all my life—my life on earth as well as my life in Purgatory and Valhalla—can equal the joy and triumph and relief I felt at seeing your form stand between me and the detested Earl of Marliton. It even makes me bow my head in willing submission to the terrible Laws of Valhalla—even that clause I criticized so lately to you—for any combination of circumstances or concatenation of events—*no matter how severe, no matter how drastic, no matter, even how terrible—so long as they are*

just and right—are far more than vindicated by such an unutterable—*Heavenly* solution of a desperate—a hopelessly *lost* situation—as your miraculous appearance here at the exact moment when the terrible Earl had gathered his forces to rend my heart. I therefore apologize to his Satanic Majesty, through you, for having criticized the bloody gauntlet each female heart must run before she is at peace in the undisputed possession of her choice.”

Marmaduke bowed his head upon the conclusion of Lucile’s brief speech, and said in grave tones: “My darling, you cannot picture the joy your words bring to my heart. I sympathize fully with your woman’s aversion to the blood and wounds and death surrounding the course of true love in Valhalla. But, my angel, you know that even on earth, it was an accepted fact that ‘the course of true love never *did* run smooth.’ Now, if such is the experience of humanity or sinful, wretched, purblind earth, is it logical to assume that true love is to run without a ripple in Valhalla? *It being remembered that Valhalla is Valhalla, and not one of even the most distant and outlying Zones of Paradise—or Heaven?*”

Lucile gravely bowed her head in acquiescence. Marmaduke went on: “I must be going, my darling—the time for preparation—for training—is short—and the deadly hatred of my adversary is a warning to me that I must omit no portion of the searching training needed for such a battle to the death as ours will be. So farewell, my Star—farewell my Goddess.”

With these words, Marmaduke respectfully took Lucile’s right hand, hanging at her side, and raised it to his lips. Lucile started as though an electric current had entered her—upon the touch of Marmaduke’s lips. “My *darling!*” she ejaculated, “My *darling!* Do you suppose I am going to allow you to leave me for a whole week—at the end of which time you see me but thrice before the combat—with a mere formal leave-taking such as you have just bestowed upon me? *Kiss me, Marmaduke! Kiss me, and put your strong arms around me, and hold me to your faithful, loving heart that I may imbibe courage therefrom to support the anguish—the dread—which will assail my heart until you have emerged victor from the fight.*”

As she said these words, she extended her arms and encircled the neck of her lover. Marmaduke put his arms around her slender waist, and slowly, tenderly placed his lips upon hers. No sooner had he done so than the lovely and loving Lucile—distracted by the experiences of the past few hours—convulsively pressed her lovely lips upon her lover's, and burst into tears.

Marmaduke's mind was occupied by the following propositions successively: "This darling creature jeopardizes our mutual hopes by her tenderness. I have only so many days—so many hours—so many minutes—in which to go through certain exercises essential to success in the coming combat. Each exercise takes so many hours, or so many minutes. *So many exercises, so many hours—so many minutes.* That is the logical Law of Valhalla. Now God alone knows how long it will take me to soothe this precious child's very natural—and highly complimentary concern about my welfare in the coming fight. Therefore, she—utterly unwittingly—jeopardizes my chances of success therein, and her hopes therein—to say nothing of mine—by this very natural and feminine demonstration of abiding affection. For this, I am devoutly thankful—of this, I am unutterably proud. But *where* does this delay make me stand *precisely*? That is what interests me most at this psychological moment. I love a woman to *be* a woman, and—when *her conscience is at peace*—act utterly regardless of consequences; but what is that going to cost me? Will it cost me—from lack of time for training—the first combat with Marliton? Must I go down to Death—to the Valley of the Shadow—in consequence, and be slain before Lucile's eyes?" Marmaduke paused when he reached this crucial moment in his cogitations. After a pause, he mentally resumed: "*I shall, if necessary.* I—who am willing to die thirteen deaths in succession for Lucile's sake—cannot very logically shrink from dying *one*—I would not otherwise have to die—owing to her feminine necessity of expressing to me the full effulgence of her glorious love. I rush to meet death with joy in my heart. I shall, of course, at the proper time—but not before—explain to Lucile that her affection was the direct and sole cause of this extra death. That said death was due *not* to my lack of

prowess or courage, but to her over-and-above feminine affection."

By the time Marmaduke had completed the above rummaging of his sorely tried mind and heart, Lucile raised her charming head from his breast—with tears no longer staining her velvet cheeks—and said in a perfectly clear, low tone: "Marmaduke you are strangely silent."

Marmaduke instantly and triumphantly suppressed a desire to smile—smile tenderly, lovingly and sympathetically, at this charmingly apt and feminine observation; he instantly dismissed all thought from his mind, and began stroking sympathetically that lovely entity, known as Lucile's back, with his powerful palm. His left palm was securely anchored—it was only his right palm that was at liberty. Thereupon Lucile said in flute-like tones: "Marmaduke, I sometimes think that I am too spontaneous—too frank—in the expression of my feelings to you, and that you—more or less—disapprove of my spontaneity."

Hardly had these words issued from Lucile's lovely lips, than Marmaduke—throwing all thought of the severity of the training necessary for the approaching combat to the winds—burst forth:

"My Queen! Forgive my lapse. My mind was temporarily preoccupied with the cares of combat—*specifically*, with the *time* needed therefor. I am concerned not to lose a single point in the game with Marliton. I was studying out whether my stay with your bewitching self here would cloud our hopes. That is all. But I am utterly willing to die an extra death for the pleasure, ecstasy and utter satisfaction of being in your presence."

No sooner had Marmaduke concluded than Lucile burst forth, her lovely face the picture of terror and despair: "*Marmaduke!* I am endangering your *very life* by this womanish and futile affection—am conspiring with Marliton for your destruction."

As soon as these self-accusing words left her lips, a voice, soul-chilling in its sombre solemnity, broke the stillness:

"Countess of Grantham, I am the Voice of Destiny. I am heard only at crises in the lives of upright souls—at their wits' end. In consideration of the indubitable sincerity of the

words of Marmaduke Grantham and yourself, Destiny deigns to extend the time of preparation—of training—for combat of Marmaduke Grantham, by just so many minutes consumed by you and him in achieving the farewells appropriate to the sinister situation now confronting you both. Adieu.”

The death-like silence following these sinister words was almost a silence that could be felt. Marmaduke was the first to recover the use of his senses. He said in low, grave tones:

“Lucile, you see the magical world we live in—what it is!” Lucile silently, solemnly, bowed her head.

Marmaduke resumed: “You also see, my darling, the considerate—the *ideal*—the Celestial consideration bestowed upon our case.”

Once more, Lucile bowed her lovely head in silence.

“Therefore, my darling, let us take the gifts the Gods provide, and seat ourselves upon yonder couch, and pour into each other’s hearts the love and devotion thus marvellously smiled upon by Destiny.”

Lucile silently inclined her head, and allowed Marmaduke to gently guide her to the couch. Once there, Lucile appeared *distracte*. She imperceptibly withdrew herself from Marmaduke, and stealthily edged towards her end—the head of the couch, upon which the cushion rested. Marmaduke, with the tact and sympathy characteristic of him, suited her mood by keeping his hands to himself—allowing them to rest upon his knees as he gazed before him. There was no hint of sullenness or injured feeling in his gaze—it was purely meditative. Lucile, noticing that he did not—so-to-speak—come after her—did not make the slightest effort to possess himself of her hand—to say nothing of attempting so dangerous a thing—under the circumstances—as a caress, shot a swift glance at him to ascertain the cause of this phenomenon. She encountered the meditative gaze of Marmaduke—or *nearly*—encountered it—since she saw that it was directed upon the evolutions, as they slowly swam about, of the gold-fish in the little pond at the base of the marble fountain. Her woman’s nature was somewhat affronted at this apparent indifference to his surroundings upon the part of Marmaduke. She, therefore, thrust her delicate chin into the air and gazed ahead of her. The watchful Marmaduke—regarding her least movement from the tail of his eye—said, without moving his head—

as soon as she had raised hers: "My darling, can anything be lovelier than the colour and evolutions of those charming little fish—shining like plaques of gold, as they happily swim about in their lovely element?"

Lucile mentally admitted the accuracy of Marmaduke's observation, but could not suppress a feeling of irritation at his ability to meditate upon Natural History in the very jaws of death—under the shadow of an impending deadly combat, and—above all—with her at his side, and apparently—for the nonce at least—forgotten. She said in rather chilly tones, without turning her head: "I never imagined that you were so interested in Natural History, Marmaduke."

"I am not, as a rule—it is not exactly in my line—but when my eye encounters something so charmingly lovely as the picture I have just attempted to describe, I feel inclined to enjoy it."

Lucile said nothing. Presently her shapely little foot began to tap the rug at her feet. The sound was soft, muffled, and attractive to Marmaduke—but he knew that it boded him no good. The taps were slow, deliberate, measured. Marmaduke deliberately began to count them. He counted up to ten, then turned his head toward Lucile with a smile of frank amusement, as he said:

"Without wishing to appear inquisitive, I cannot help wishing that I could have overheard Marliton's addresses to you."

Lucile started violently. The words of Marmaduke conjured up a vision so detested in her memory that all charming, feminine—more or less tigerish—little teasing tendencies were swept away thereby. She turned her beautiful face to Marmaduke, her features aflame with hatred. "Never speak that man's name again in my presence, Marmaduke! I hate the very *sound* of it!"

Marmaduke extended his left hand until it rested upon Lucile's right hand, clinched vigorously at her side, as the vision of the doughty Earl of Marliton, conjured up by Marmaduke's words, stalked before her affronted mental gaze. Lucile permitted Marmaduke's hand to slowly, gently, soothingly, stroke and caress her own embattled one, in silence. After a pause, Marmaduke observed:

"The reason, my darling, I made the observation—concerning the Nameless One—was that my sense of humour is pronounced. Such being the fact, nothing could attract it more than a vision of the Nameless One and your adorable self engaged in the hearing of his suit. I hasten to say that the reason the above is so attractive to my sense of humour is that the Nameless One is notoriously proud, haughty, arrogant, and impatient of the slightest resistance to his least wish. His position as Commander of the Tenth Legion—one of the most formidable of all the Legions of Valhalla—on account of the severity of the training undergone by all its members—which includes not only soldiers but non-commissioned and commissioned officers, including the redoubtable Commander thereof himself—his position aforesaid, which places him at the table next below that of the Marshals at all Imperial war-councils—is calculated to make him somewhat exacting—somewhat imperious—as a suitor—I should respectfully submit."

The fair Lucile shot a glance of somewhat sarcastic surprise at Marmaduke, as she withdrew her hand from his caress. She then said, in icy tones: "The subject is so entirely distasteful to me, Marmaduke, that I must insist that you refrain—in spite of your sense of humour—from every broaching it again—even in the most indirect way. It is simply *abhorrent!*"

With these words, Lucile once more fixed her flashing eyes on space—and at a somewhat elevated angle. Marmaduke slowly bent his head in acquiescence, as he said: "As you will, my darling."

Whereupon, silence fell once more between them. This continued for some five minutes, when Lucile started and said, turning her face to Marmaduke: "I feel a deadly fear creeping into my heart, Marmaduke. You know, from your training in Purgatory that that means that disaster impends unless vigorous action is immediately taken. I, therefore, suggest that you leave me and train."

Marmaduke said slowly, in icy tones: "Pardon me, Lucile, but permit me to be the judge of that. I am the one who has the most to lose in the approaching contest. You have practically *nothing* to lose."

Lucile started violently at the conclusion of Marmaduke's

brief speech, and her face turned pale. Suddenly she extended her hand until it encountered those of Marmaduke. She allowed her little palm to find a nest—a resting place—between the powerful hands of her lover. Marmaduke raised her hand to his lips, and continuing the petting, caressing process, so abruptly interrupted by Lucile, said: “My soul’s darling! Do you suppose I would curtail this Heavenly period with you by so much as one solitary moment? I’d rather risk death. Remember, this is the last time I see you for one calendar week—the last time but three—once each week—before the combat.”

Lucile unconsciously drew near her lover at these words, and murmured as she rested her head against his shoulder: “Marmaduke, forgive me. I am self-willed, imperious, impatient—in spite of all the pains and pangs of Purgatory. I am—thanks to *them*—able to recognize the presence of these faults, and strive to conquer them—and *will* conquer them in time—but meantime, I am most unfortunate, stormy, sweet-heart, my darling, a most uncertain and tempestuous one. Uncertain, however, only in her moods, and *not* in her love for, and pride in, her champion.”

With these words, Lucile hung her head, resting it as before, upon Marmaduke’s stalwart shoulder. Marmaduke said nothing for a brief space. He passed his left arm around Lucile’s waist and stroked gently and lovingly her shining head with his right hand. He then said, in low, impassioned tones: “My soul’s darling, *nothing* could equal my happiness—no happiness I could conceive of—could equal my joy at your sweet words. I love and adore your changeful moods. I love and adore your high spirit. Therefore, never again reproach yourself with being possessed of the attributes, which, above all others in the galaxy of woman’s mental charms, appeal to me—fascinate me most.”

With these words, he raised Lucile’s hand to his lips. No sooner had he done so than the Voice of Destiny said, in the same soul-chilling, sombre tones:

“Marmaduke Grantham, the time has come to bring this interview to a close.”

So soon as this solemn tone soared through the air, Lucile and Marmaduke started apart—at the very inception thereof. Marmaduke, recovering his faculties first, said, as he rose and

regarded Lucile: "Darling, I must go. My summons has come."

Lucile's fair cheek had instantly blanched at the first sound of the voice. She too, rose quickly and advancing a step towards Marmaduke, said in awed tones: "*Marmaduke, I feel as though we were being watched.*"

"We *are* watched, my sweetheart, but no more than ever before—*no more than on earth.* It seems so—naturally—from the irruption of the mystic Voice—but that is the only difference. So put that very natural feeling out of your sweet mind, and put your white arms around my neck, and tell me you will think of me—and pray for my success—until we meet again.

Lucile needed no further encouragement—no further urging. The spectre of the combat and all that it entailed in wounds, blood, and possible death, for Marmaduke, froze, at their inception, any and all impulses opposed to a full, perfect, and soul-satisfying embrace, before the parting. She, therefore, impulsively threw her arms around her lover's neck, and passionately pressed her sweet lips to his. Neither spoke for some moments—for some moments neither of them *could* have spoken—their lips were otherwise engaged.

After some moments of this blissful blending of spontaneous affection, Lucile slowly disengaged herself, and said in low tones:

"Marmaduke, speed to the arena to train, and may God strengthen your arm, and guide your hand in the day of battle."

Marmaduke, raising her right hand to his lips, said, upon releasing it: "Darling, I go."

With these words, he resolutely turned from Lucile and stalked towards the door—after assuming his helmet and shield, which he had leaned against the gold rim of the fountain upon the exit of the Earl of Marliton. Upon reaching the marble and gold portal of the vast apartment, Marmaduke turned on his heel, drew his sword, and bringing it to the salute, said: "Countess of Grantham, I salute you. May your prayers for my success in the coming combat bring strength, support, and solace to your lovely soul. As for me, so confident am I in the justice of my cause—and so confident am I

in the justice of the marvellous Laws of Valhalla—that—being about to train—with all the energy, self-abnegation, and severity that that dread word implies—I have not the slightest shadow of a doubt as to the outcome of the combat. But, should my confidence prove to be misplaced, rest assured, Countess of Grantham, that my end will be worthy of the matchless mistress of my soul, whom I now salute.”

With these words, Marmaduke completed the salute, sheathed his sword, turned abruptly on his heel and disappeared.

Lucile, whose lovely face had reflected each emotion invoked by the stern words of her lover, the moment Marmaduke’s stalwart form no longer darkened the door, turned abruptly, and throwing herself on her knees at the edge of the couch, rested her head on her joined hands—her elbows buried in the soft depths of the couch—and addressed her soul to prayer. She mentally prayed as follows:

“Almighty God. Thy child addresses Thee in agony of spirit. Strengthen the arm of Marmaduke Grantham—instruct his hand—so that, in the impending conflict, victory shall be his.”

So soon as Lucile had completed her brief address to Omnipotence the Voice of Destiny once more broke the stillness:

“Daughter, thy prayer is heard. Jehovah deigns to lend His ear to thy distress. Know that victory shall rest upon the crest of thy lover. Adieu.”

When the Voice had ceased Lucile once more dropped upon her knees, and assuming her former attitude, said mentally—as before:

“Jehovah, Thine handmaid blesses Thy glorious name in overflowing gratitude of spirit. May her prayers from now until the completion of the combat reach Thine Omnipotent ear.”

She thereupon rose to her feet, and passing her hands swiftly and lightly over her hair, to ascertain if it was in order, slowly moved towards a side door, and disappeared.

THE ARENA.

The moment Marmaduke disappeared through the gold and marble portal of the audience room of the Palace of the

Prince of the Moskowa, he felt himself seized by a Current which transported him instantly—and invisibly—he becoming by Magic, invisible—during the transit—to the Camp of the Thirteenth Legion. The feeling of the Current was precisely like that of an overmastering *undertow*—an undertow, however, which, *while it drew* one with irresistible force in a certain direction, *also supported* one with the same strength—enveloping the entire frame with its mighty force. In the twinkling of an eye, Marmaduke was there. During his passage from the Palace thither—a distance of fifty miles or so—Marmaduke experienced absolutely nothing in the way of motion, of being carried through the air. He experienced only the enveloping motion and the starting motion of the Current. The next instant, he had arrived. He found himself standing restfully upon his feet in the centre of the Arena of the Thirteenth Legion. He looked about him. He saw, to his utter amazement that Lucile was seated on the throne of the Praetor—Commander of the Legion.

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The throne was of solid gold, in the form of an ancient Roman chair. It rose from a base of marble which substance constituted the material forming the entire vast arena—an exact replica of the amphitheatre of the Emperor Vespasian, at Rome—usually known as the Colosseum, from the accident that the Colossus, or gigantic statue of Nero, stood adjacent thereto. I say “exact replica” advisedly. It *was* so in shape—but not in size. For whereas, the amphitheatre of Vespasian is an elliptical structure, measuring about six hundred and fifteen feet, by five hundred and ten feet, the amphitheatre of the Thirteenth Legion of Valhalla, measured half a mile by one-third of a mile. The Arena—by which is meant the sanded space forming the surface of the open space of the amphitheatre, at the base of the marble structure, upon which surface the combats took place—which term will be employed from now on to describe the amphitheatre—the arena faced north and south. The Praetor’s throne was in the exact centre of the northern side.

So soon as Marmaduke had recovered from the amazement resulting from the aforesaid discovery, he rapidly

glanced about him. He was standing immediately in front of the throne—some fifty feet from it. He wished to ascertain if he and Lucile were alone. He found, to his unspeakable joy, that they were. He thereupon drew his sword and saluted her with military formality. Lucile bowed with the air of an Empress. Marmaduke then instantly turned and looked down the arena. No sooner had he done so than he saw approaching him—the object when seen was not more than five hundred yards off—at a charge—a rhinoceros, with horn lowered, and sweeping the ground. The terrible monster came on at a pace far more rapid than a charging rhinoceros can compass on earth. Marmaduke lowered his shield and awaited the advent of the beast. Lucile brought both hands to her bosom in an anguish of dread for her lover, and mentally offered an inarticulate prayer for his safety. In almost less time than it takes to tell it, the beast was upon him. As soon as the rhinoceros was within three feet of him—its terrible horn lowered—its little red eyes blazing like coals of fire—Marmaduke, with the rapidity of lightning, leaped to one side, and with a movement as swift as had been his leap—plunged his sword up to the hilt into the monster's carcass, immediately behind its left shoulder. As he did so, he released the sword, and drawing a dagger, whose bright blade was eight inches long—which hung at his sword belt—stood on the defensive in case his thrust had not been fatal. Lucile uttered a heart-felt "Thank God" upon seeing the monster pitch forward, and roll over dead. The dead rhinoceros instantly disappeared, leaving Marmaduke's sword sticking up to the hilt in sand. Thereupon, Lucile said: "Marmaduke, I congratulate you upon your prowess. My heart was in my mouth when I saw that creature charging at you. You are a warrior of the first water. I salute you."

With these words, she blew him a kiss. Marmaduke, without paying the least attention to Lucile's charming compliment, had—upon the disappearance of the rhinoceros—sprung with lightning-like swiftness towards the spot from which his sword-hilt protruded from the blood-stained sand. Possessing himself of that, he instantly turned about and cast a scrutinizing glance down the entire arena. It was only upon seeing that the coast was clear that Marmaduke gave himself the pleasure of noticing Lucile. He thereupon saluted

her, with his still unsheathed and bloodstained sword, for, though the sand into which it had been plunged had soaked up the blood-drip, yet the crimson stain still adhered to the blade down its entire length. Upon completing the salute Marmaduke said:

“Pardon my apparent indifference, my darling, but I now stand in an exceedingly dangerous spot.”

Lucile turned pale, and leaned forward to catch each word from her lover.

“You must know—what I had aimed at sparing you—that in training for a duel *each warrior is liable to die as often as he misses his swordstroke.*”

Lucile burst in with “*What!*” * * * To which Marmaduke replied instantly: “Precisely so. *In training for war as in training for personal combat, each warrior is as much exposed to death in agony as though in war, or in actual mortal combat.*”

Lucile shrank back at these terrible words. Marmaduke—noting their effect upon her—went on: “This, my darling, is what makes life in Valhalla so interesting—so accentuated. In Philistia no such thing takes place. In Philistia, a man dies *but once* in any given combat—either a duel, or a battle with Valhalla. That is one of the various reasons why Philistia is so much more populated—is so much more popular than Valhalla. But the warriors of Valhalla are men who would rather die—and die several times over—than have to put up with the drudgery the warriors in Philistia have to submit to. For instance. A warrior in Philistia—no matter what his rank—from the King of the Philistines, down—has got to go through the drudgery of dressing and undressing daily—of washing daily—of bathing daily. Whereas we of Valhalla have none of this commonplace, degrading, dull, menial service to pay to the Goddess of Cleanliness—to Hebe, the Goddess of Health—in the old Greek religion. Upon opening our eyes every morning, we, of Valhalla—male and female—mind you—find ourselves by the mere expression—*mental*, not voiced—not uttered—*expression of the wish* to be bathed, washed and dressed—*we, of Valhalla, find ourselves bathed, washed and dressed.*”

Lucile smiled and said: “Marmaduke, you have hit upon

the very thing of all things—short, of course, of spiritual or mental things—which has appealed to me more than anything else since my arrival in Valhalla. The hideous bore of dressing and undressing weighed upon my soul—particularly the brushing of my hair—the undoing of it at night, and the doing of it next morning—this hideous bore weighed upon my soul on earth like a nightmare. Now, thanks to the Divine regulations of Valhalla, that cloud has been lifted: and I am no more a serf—no more a helot—to my own body!”

Marmaduke bowed, and went on: “That is the reason, because—most particularly—no warrior of Philistia is ever killed in a duel, or killed in training—that is the reason why Philistia is so popular. That also is the main reason why one warrior in Valhalla is a match for so many warriors in Philistia. Therefore, my darling, you must steel your soul to see your lover perish in agony before your very eyes at any moment, should he not be able to plant his thrust in a fatal spot at the psychological moment.”

Lucile shuddered, and said breathlessly: “Marmaduke, my *darling*, tell me how many combats you must engage in in training on any one given day—and for how many days does the training continue?”

“That, my soul’s darling, is something I can only answer approximately. A warrior of Valhalla never knows, after accepting a challenge, or after being informed that a combat—a campaign—with Philistia impends, how many times he must face death in training. Training is thus made as uncertain in its chances of death as battle itself—and therefore training is honoured by the vast Host of Valhalla as much as is battle—as much as is mortal combat—combat *à l’outrance*.”

Lucile sighed heavily upon hearing these ominous words from her lover.

“Have you no idea as to what or who your adversary will be in training—as to whether a monster like that fearful creature you have just slain, or a man?”

“None. Not the least in the world.”

Lucile sighed even more heavily. “What an awful life is yours—you warriors of Valhalla!”

“My sweetheart, this sort of thing does not go on all the time—far, far from it. In the first place, a man is mated

only *once* in all eternity, in Valhalla. Therefore, the deadly risks consequent upon suing for the hand of a maiden as sought after as your matchless self, are only encountered once in all eternity. In the second place, wars between Valhalla and Philistia are not waged continually. There are truces and armistices which last for months—sometimes even years, between the two kingdoms—or speaking more by the card, Empire and Kingdom. Furthermore, upon the resumption of hostilities, at the expiration of the armistice, the entire war-force of the two warring nations is *never* employed. It is merely an affair of outposts, a series of skirmishes, for months or even years even after war has been resumed; for, seeing that we are in Eternity and no longer in Time, it would be highly inartistic—to say the least—for the full and terrible military forces of Valhalla and Philistia to be engaged in an internecine struggle through all eternity.”

Lucile bowed her head in acquiescence.

“Therefore such a state of war, as now impends between the two nations, is a rare occurrence. With the above reservation—the only possible danger to life in training in Valhalla is in preparation for private duels—irrespective of affairs of the heart for slights—or imagined slights—between warriors. Now, before a duel is permitted to occur in Valhalla—outside the realm of Love—outside the realm in which I fight Marliton for your hand—each of the two parties must go before what is known as the Court of Honour. This Court consists of three warriors—all of the rank of Generals—Commanders of a Legion—and the President of the Court must be a Marshal of Valhalla. The question is then gone into with the greatest nicety, and unless a real cause for combat exists, the combat is there and then forbidden, under pain of loss of rank, and heavy fines. Therefore, the aforesaid danger to life is strictly safeguarded by the *unchangeable* Laws of Valhalla. So you see, my darling, that the pains and perils, changes and chances, to which I am now subjected, are transitory, and—after we are one—will only be of rare occurrence.”

Lucile smiled and blushed at the prospect thus hinted at, then said: “Marmaduke, am I detaining you by conversing with you in the arena—for, if so, I shall instantly cease speaking.”

“Not in the slightest degree, my darling. It is a Law of Valhalla that when ladies are present they may speak freely to their champions from the seats, during lulls in the combat. I had no idea you were going to grace my training with your lovely presence. Never having trained for a duel for love before, I was in total ignorance as to what it entailed. I only knew that in tournaments—which, by the way, I omitted naming in the possible causes of death—but since all tournaments are entirely voluntary—no warrior need engage unless he chooses to—I was not far off my orbit—so-to-speak. I only warn you now to prepare for the most terrible—even the most grotesque sights—for God alone knows what a warrior is going to find himself opposed to in training, in Valhalla. I only say, in closing—for it is time for another adversary to appear—that you need have no fear that any act of yours—any inadvertent act, that is to say—any ejaculation—any cry or scream—can animadvert against my chances of success. Anything you say or do is totally distinct and separate from my score in the combat. Adieu.”

With these words, Marmaduke, once more turned his face away from Lucile, and prepared for combat. He did not have long to wait. At the same spot at which the horned rhinoceros had appeared, now appeared a gorilla of immense size and strength, ferocious as those man-eating† beasts always are. The creature advanced slowly on its hind legs. When it was within six feet of Marmaduke, it sprang upon him with an unearthly roar. Knowing that the beast was looking at him, unlike the rhinoceros which merely regarded the ground before it—as it swept along—Marmaduke made no attempt to spring to one side, but instead, braced himself to receive the violent shock of the monster’s spring. He advanced his shield, and the moment the beast reached him, thrust his sword into its heart—being careful to thrust upward and *under* the branching and outstretched arms of the monster, which otherwise would either have succeeded in warding off—or at least, turning or deflecting—the thrust. His wishes were fulfilled. His sword buried itself to the hilt in the monster’s heart and the beast sank upon the blood-stained sand of the arena with a last and mortal groan—almost human in its sound. No

† In the sense of deadly—only—of course.

sooner had its carcass touched the sand than it disappeared, as had the rhinoceros, and left the sword of Marmaduke lying—this time—instead of buried in the sand—on its side in the sand. Marmaduke heaved a sigh of relief, and leaning forward, drew the sword along the sand, first on one side of the blade, then the other, thus stopping the blood-drip, which he felt would be abhorrent to the eyes of Lucile. He then turned, and once more saluted his sweetheart. Lucile, radiant with joy at the outcome—her ashy cheeks suffused in a moment with the rosy tide of joy—said breathlessly: “Marmaduke, you did *nobly*. I was more afraid of the gorilla than of the rhinoceros—the former was so much less clumsy and awkward than the latter. He kept his hideous eyes on you all the time—whereas the rhinoceros never once took its eyes off the ground.”

Marmaduke smiled, bowed, and said: “I shall now turn to receive the next adversary.”

As he did so, an African buffalo—the most inveterate enemy of man in the animal kingdom—even more so than a man-eating Bengal tiger—since the tiger hunts man for the satisfaction of its hunger—whereas the African buffalo hunts man for the sole and only purpose of killing him—thrusting its horns through him out of revenge—or—to speak more correctly—out of motives of pure hatred and antipathy—an African buffalo appeared. The animal stood still, on the usual spot, and as it pawed the arena, bellowed, in low blood-curdling tones. Lucile turned pale. Marmaduke stepped lightly from side to side to flex his leg muscles for this—the most deadly of all his recent encounters. The buffalo slowly approached, bellowing, and, from time to time, stopping to paw the ground. Lucile found the approach of this formidable animal more difficult to sustain than that of any of the others. Marmaduke, now and then, stepped lightly from side to side, holding his shield low, and prepared to sustain the upward toss of the buffalo’s horns; while his sword was—to Lucile’s utter amazement—held high—its point downwards, the hilt over his head! When within ten feet of him, the buffalo, with a blood-curdling bellow, lowered its formidable horns, and charged at a gallop, full at Marmaduke. Lucile sent up a prayer for succor as she brought her clasped

hands convulsively to her heart. Marmaduke, with his shield inclined forward—so that the beast could not get its horns under it—with the rapidity of lightning and the accuracy of a toreador in a Spanish Bull-Ring, thrust the point of his sword between the buffalo's horns and pierced its spine precisely between its shoulders. Marmaduke had given such impetus to the sword that it buried itself in the animal's back to within six inches of the hilt. Then, with supreme agility, he leaped to one side avoiding the impact of the force of the charge. For the head of the animal had scarcely touched his shield before the thrust had been given, and the animal stopped short in its onward rush—the first impetus of which had reached its climax upon contact with Marmaduke's shield. It thereupon slowly bent its head, and after swaying slightly from side to side once or twice, sank upon its knees and expired, rolling over upon its dusky side. It, also, disappeared instantaneously, leaving the sword lying on the sand. Marmaduke partially dried his trusty blade, as formerly, and once more saluted Lucile, who bowed in awed silence at the horror of each succeeding combat. Swiftly then, Marmaduke turned and prepared for war. He had scarcely done so, before the reddish and ominous form of a crouching Bengal tiger was seen creeping towards him, lashing its sides with its tail as it advanced. Marmaduke this time crouched low. Lucile was amazed to see how low he *did* crouch. When the tiger was within fifty feet of him, Marmaduke was so close to the ground as to be hardly further from it than the upper edge of his shield. The tiger then uttered its first roar, and charged. When within six feet it sprang upon Marmaduke. Just as its forepaws reached the edge of his shield Marmaduke, with the swiftness and accuracy which had characterized all his former thrusts—pierced the extended and flying carcass of the tiger from beneath, as it was flying upon him—so that his sword—piercing its heart from below—thrust upward through the beast's stomach—the point protruding above its back. The rush of the animal and its weight were so formidable, that Marmaduke sank to the ground, but as he did so, he rolled to the right, thus entirely clearing the body of the tiger. Immediately regaining his feet, he drew his dagger, and prepared for another thrust—this time at

even closer quarters. But the tiger had made its last spring in Valhalla. It lay dead. The same ceremony of recovering his sword and saluting Lucile, in silence, took place. He then turned to face the next foe. Before any foe presented itself, the same Voice which had been heard in the Salon of the Palace of the Prince of the Moskowa, was heard. It said: "Countess of Grantham, your lover has conducted himself fearlessly and well. Prepare your soul for the last—but most terrible—of the combats called for by the Decrees of Destiny in training for the combat for your hand."

At that moment, Lucile saw appear before her—on the usual spot—a object which—in spite of her heroic self-command—forced a *piercing scream from her*. It was nothing less than a *boa-constrictor, at least thirty feet long*, which crawled determinedly—and slowly—towards her lover. Marmaduke this time began—when the snake was within ten feet—leaping—six or more feet at a bound—from side to side—crouching low, shield held low, and sword raised as though to deliver—for the first time—instead of a thrust—a blow. The snake slowly approached. When within three feet, it opened its cavernous jaws, emitting at the same time, a hiss like a steam whistle—or rather like the escape of steam from the sides of a locomotive, just getting into motion. At the same time, it raised its head and the first yard or so of its length. Marmaduke at once delivered a swingeing blow which—to Lucile's unspeakable relief—completely severed the reptile's head from its body. Marmaduke, his sword still in his hand, dashed down the line of the snake, cutting it into sections, six feet long—each blow severing portions of the serpent asunder. When he had cut the snake up, it disappeared—writhing hideously before it did so—as had all his former adversaries. Once more he dried his trusty sword on the sand. Once more he turned to salute his lady-love. As he did so, a hidden chorus of female voices sang as follows:

"Hero! Now thy foes are gone.

Bravely hast thou fought the fight.

Gaze upon the prize thou'st won.

Rest thy soul in her delight."

The lovely sounds ceased, and, to his utter amazement, Marmaduke found himself instantly, upon the conclusion of the aforesaid couplet, transported above the sheer fifty-foot wall, forming the lower edge of the lowest tier of seats in the arena, and occupying a share of the crimson velvet cushion at the base of the throne upon which Lucile's rosy sandalled feet rested. Lucile, no whit less amazed than he, blushed as she smiled down upon him. She absently played with his closely cropped curls, escaping from the rear of his helmet, as she gazed on vacancy. After a while, she murmured absently:

"Marmaduke, did you ever conceive of anything to compare with the 'Arabian Night's' magic of Valhalla?"

"Never, my darling," replied Marmaduke.

END

OF

"SECOND SPIRIT MESSAGE (Alleged) FROM HELL."

BRITISH REVIEWS

ABERDEEN FREE PRESS, 30 Union St., Aberdeen, Scotland, March 12, 1916.

"Pieces of Eight," by J. A. Chaloner. (North Carolina; Palmetto Press. 25 cents.)

Mr. Chaloner who is an American and strongly pro-Ally, denounces the Germans in a series of sonnets, entitled "The Swine of the Gadarenes." Aiming deliberately at the fierceness of Swift, he does not mince his words in so good a cause. Here are the opening lines of his first sonnet:

The swine o' th' Gadarenes are here once more,
That demon-haunted herd now scours the earth,
Led by Bill William Two, their great wild boar;
Their antics, 'pon my soul, give cause for mirth!
In massed formation do they charge pell-mell,
Showing less judgment than a herd of swine;
In massed formation are they sent to Hell—
That's where dead Germans go I dare opine.

Mr. Chaloner tells us that the first eight sonnets were offered free to several American newspapers but were refused. This could not, he thinks, have been owing to their lack of quality, for "anyone can see that they are correct iambic pentameters." We wonder what more those American editors could want than correct iambic pentameters!

OUTLOOK, 167 Strand, W. S., London, February 19, 1916.

"Pieces of Eight," by J. A. Chaloner. (North Carolina: Palmetto Press. 25 cents.)

A sequence of twenty-four war sonnets, the first eight of which were offered to various American newspapers and re-

fused. The sonnets are all condemnatory of Germany, and the author suggests that he "aimed at the fierceness of Swift" in his denunciation.

HUDDERSFIELD WEEKLY EXAMINER, England,
February 19, 1916.

ON THE BAT'S BACK.

"Where the bee sucks, there lurk I;
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry,
On the bat's back do I fly
After summer merrily."

The Tempest.

"PIECES OF EIGHT."

The Americans are a wonderful people. They have given to the world the Declaration of Independence, cocktails, and the poems of Ella Wheeler Willcox. They have also produced Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, of "The Merry Mills," Cobham, Albemarle county, Virginia. Lest, in your benighted ignorance, you should be unaware of the antecedents and achievements of that gentleman, let me inform you in his own words, that he is "an Anglo-Saxon who has also the following strains in his veins—namely, Welsh, Scotch Scotch-Irish, French, Dutch, and German, and whose progenitors sailed from Tenby, Wales, in 1710, and landed at Charleston, South Carolina"—a veritable olla podrida of ancestors, as you will observe. Mr. Chaloner has already made the world of letters richer by a treatise on "The Lunacy Laws of the World" and a metrical nosegay under the title of "Scorpio." He now seeks, under the further influence of the divine afflatus, to "unbosom himself upon the European situation," and does so in a slim volume of twenty-nine sonnets, entitled "Pieces of Eight." The dominating strain in our sonneteer is evidently British—

Proud am I that my veins do course thy blood,
Proud am I that my home's beyond the sea—
Home o' my fathers—be it understood—
For Columbia's the home that shelters me—

and he is vehemently—indeed almost diabolically—pro-Ally. His sonnets are grouped together under the engaging title, “Swine of the Gaderenes,” and he is out (in vulgar parlance) to let our enemies “have it in the neck.”

POEMS OF PUGNACITY.

When “Scorpio” claimed the attention of the Press in 1908, Lord Alfred Douglas hailed its author, in the columns of the *Academy* as a “metrical bruiser.” The appellation is apt. Mr. Chaloner goes for his spiritual foes bald-headed, and neither gives nor asks for quarter. “How far” he writes, “we fall below the standard of fierceness set forever and in all tongues—bar, possibly, only Juvenal, Voltaire and Lord Byron—by the mighty Dean of St. Patrick’s—is for others to judge.” As a humble member of these others *I confess that for frankness of expression our poet appears to me to out-Swift Swift*. He writes beneath the American flag, but his enthusiasm could not be bettered in London, Paris or Petrograd. If he lays on the stripes, he makes his opponents see stars. Had Mrs. Willcox mothered these sonnets, I doubt not that she would have labelled them “poems of Pugnacity.” They certainly deserve the title. Our metrical prize-fighter commences his series with an engaging little trifle entitled “Pig-Sticking,” the introductory lines of which run as follows:

The swine o’th’ Gadarenes are here once more,
That demon-haunted herd now scours the earth,
Led by Bill William Two, their great wild boar;
Their antics, ’pon my soul, give cause for mirth!

“Bill William Two” is left under no possible misapprehension as to the opinion which our author holds of him. Elsewhere he is hailed as

Thou treaty-breaking, perjured potentate,
and

Scrofulous leper, with a wither’d arm.

While Mr. Chaloner puts into the innocent mouth of Mr. St. Loe Strachey, the delicate warning:—

Watch out for that bloody Dutchman, Windy Bill,
That smug, moustacho'd lanz-knecht, William Two.

Shades of "my Grandmother"! What would the regular readers of *The Spectator* say, were their editor, indeed to address them in this fashion? As for the "psychology" of Professor Hugo Munsterberg, of Harvard, *Our Modern Swift* describes it thus:

Back number'd dry-as-dust rot-gut it be
Enough to make Emanuel Kant blank stare.

And as for the enemy, in gross, Mr. Chaloner encouragingly assures us that

These gross Sausage-eaters surely have no show—
Less chance than snowball in fell hottest hell.

A forceful, though not original simile, which I should never have thought of myself.

METRICAL BRUISING.

Our sonneteer has nothing but contempt for "Jews and Gentiles, Bond and Free, and All other members and Supporters of Premature-Peace Societies." His feelings, I dare say, are shared by most of us, but we would hardly have the temerity to express them as he does. As thus:—

Ye piffling little squirts that drape the earth,

or

Lying fakers who the tin horn toot.

Mr. W. R. Hearst, the American press magnate who "for palpably selfish ends yells for premature-peace in Europe," comes in for a similar lash of the whip—"and *id hoc genus omne*," as our poet puts it.

Ye pimps and panders of the daily press
 Pimping your vicious wares e'en day by day,
 Ye make me smile—e'en laugh—I must confess,
 The way ye do your blooming public "play."
 Flim-flam and buncombe are your stock-in-trade
 "Hot-air" hypocrisy your longest suit.

To this friendly greeting is appended a foot-note, which concludes: "Mr. W. R. Hearse (we spell it this way intentionally, since his character acts as funeral casket for his vaulting political hopes) we are informed, owns rather a large tract of land in Mexico. Eh! What! And also prints a German edition of the *Evening Journal*. Eh! What!" I myself feel pretty strongly about some of our British newspaper magnates, but I should not venture to castigate them with quite such vehemence as that. But Mr. Chaloner has no such qualms. *He sees what he calls elsewhere "the cold, hard, undodgeable, non-lie-outable fact" that Premature-Peace people whether here, or in the United States, are playing Germany's game, and, having seen it, he has no hesitation in expressing his opinion in fitting language. Nor has he any doubts as to the issue of the war.* He speaks confidently of a time "when Germany shall have been crushed between the upper and nether millstone—between the Colossus of the North and France—and her undaunted but tottering ally, Austria—a house divided into three warring sections against itself—Teuton—Magyar—and Slav—shall have been actually dismembered" — — — — —! I wonder how the printer keeps up with the demand for dashes!

AMERICA AND THE ALLIES.

I hope that in the improbable event these lines reach Mr. Chaloner's eye, he will forgive me for chaffing him so freely. For I appreciate, as any Englishman must, the deep and sincere sympathy for the Allied cause which has dictated these sonnets, and the passionate hatred of the Prussian military machine which breathes through every line of them. And I believe that, for all President Wilson's silence, our sonneteer expresses the feelings of the majority of his fellow-countrymen. America is with us in this struggle. Whether she as-

sure us of her sympathy in the *shattering denunciations* of Mr. Chaloner, or in the gentler cadences of less strenuous voices, we accept and value all that is involved in her support. We understand her problems no better than she understands ours, and perhaps if we were in the place of Mr. Wilson, we should have played no more dramatic part. But it is an immense asset to the cause of the Allies—not only now, but for the future—that the citizens of the United States should have passed judgment upon our enemies as unmistakably as they have done, and that after full discussion and consideration. America has her quarrel with us over the blockade—a quarrel which foolish folk would have us exacerbate—but it is a quarrel of legal nicety rather than of moral responsibility. With Germany her quarrel—as is abundantly evident in these sonnets—is that of civilization, outraged and ravished by Prussian “necessity.” Many Americans, as we know, are fretted by their President’s impassivity. Mr. Chaloner is one of them. He strains at the leash and fumes to be off on the trail. But I think we are justified in assuring him and all who think with him, that we in this country appreciate the sympathy which we know to be ours, and realize the great services which American men and women have already rendered to the cause of humanity in the war. If we wish for something more, that is only natural. But for what we have already received, we are grateful. ARIEL.

HAMPSHIRE INDEPENDENT, England, February 10, 1916.

“Pieces of Eight” is a long pamphlet, by Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, the author of “Scorpio”, a copy of which is sent us by the publishers, the Palmetto Press, of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, U. S. A. It embodies a sequence of twenty-four war sonnets by Mr. Chaloner, who is “an Anglo-Saxon, who has also the following strains in his veins, namely, Welsh, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, French, Dutch, and German, and whose progenitors sailed from Tenby, in Wales, in 1710, and landed at Charleston, South Carolina,” and the writer desires through its pages to unbosom himself upon the

present European situation. He is no pro-German. Listen to what he writes about "The Kaiser":—

"Thou treaty-breaking, perjured potentate!
 Blaspheming with thy lips the God of Truth
 Each time that thou dost dare asseverate
 That 'God is on thy side'—thou great uncouth!
 The fate of Ananias hangs o'er thee
 That sword of Damocles o'er thee suspends
 And in the end thou shalt flat ruined be
 When in the '*rechnung*' thou dost pay amends.
 Thy mighty ancestor Frederick the Great
 Turns in his grave at sight of thy foul deed
 Which makes all true men the name German hate
 As synonym for bloodshed and for greed.
 My German blood doth curse thee to deep Hell
 A curse as black as rhyme and reason spell."

This is dated September First, 1914, so that Mr. Chaloner soon formed his opinion of the Master Hun. His other sonnets—several are in French—are in much the same view, all in denunciation of German treachery and murderous intent, and of praise of the bravery of the heroes of Belgium and of the Allies generally.

THE ENFIELD OBSERVER, England, February 19, 1916.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

An American Champions The *Entente*.

There is no beating about the bush in the war sonnets by an American, John Armstrong Chaloner, and published under the singular title "Pieces of Eight." Cosmopolitan in blood, he has brought together, within the compass of some fifty pages, scathing condemnation of German war methods, addressing the Kaiser as "Thou treaty-breaking perjured potentate"; tells supporters of Premature-Peace Societies that "your antics shew what cowards can be found in big Amer-

ica"; and, singing of the British Empire, declares that "The English-speaking race for aye is one, And all who brave it to defeat go down." Appendix notes which elaborate the themes of the sonnets should leave the reader in no doubt as to which side the writer's sympathies incline, *and amongst various reprints contributed to American journals is a forecast, written August, 1914, that the war will last more like three years than three months; that France will reverse 1870 . . . and that France, Russia and Great Britian will become the police force of Europe.* This interesting little publication comes from the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, and is priced at 25 cents.

DORSET COUNTY CHRONICLE, England, February 17, 1916.

"Pieces of Eight" is the title of a sequence of twenty-four war sonnets by John Armstrong Chaloner (author of "Scorpio"), in which an "Anglo-Saxon with Welsh, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, French, Dutch, and German blood, and whose progenitors sailed from Tenby, in 1710," unbosoms himself upon the European situation. Mr. Chaloner is a well-known American, and in these full-blooded verses he utters scathing contempt for the Hun and all his works. The "pieces" were apparently too much for the New York papers, for they refused publication, and so Mr. Chaloner sends them over here in this form (price 25 cents). It is a fierce judgment which he passes on the Kaiser: "Scrofulous leper with a withered arm," "crippled German clown," are phrases in one of the sonnets, though the poet is careful to say that he means moral and not Asiatic leprosy. Mr. Chaloner evidently hates the German thoroughly, and he fairly lets himself go. *They are clever sonnets, too, and because they are so highly finished they are the more deadly.* The book issues from the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

MONMOUTHSHIRE EVENING POST, England, Wednesday, March 1, 1916.

“PIECES OF EIGHT.”

“Pieces of Eight” is a sequence of twenty-four war songs, by John Armstrong Chaloner, author of “Scorpio,” published at 25 cents, by the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. The author, who describes himself as “an Anglo-Saxon who has also the following strains in his veins, namely, Welsh, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, French, Dutch, and German, and whose progenitors sailed from Tenby, Wales, in 1710, and landed at Charleston, South Carolina,” is a very emphatic sympathiser with the Allies, and in these sonnets he does not mince his words. He apostrophises the Germans in the very strongest terms, and there is an inclination at times to sacrifice poetry for denunciation. *There can be no mistaking the virility of these sonnets, however.*

THE BRIDPORT NEWS, and DORSET, DEVON AND SOMERSET ADVERTISER.

Bridport, England, February 18, 1916.

REVIEWS.

“Pieces of Eight.”—One would naturally conclude that a book bearing this title had something to tell us of the Spanish Main and the prizes of the cruel and haughty buccaneers of the 16th and 17th centuries, but it has a far different purpose. As a matter of fact, it is a small volume of twenty-four war sonnets, entitled “The Swine of the Gadarenes,” by Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, and published by the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. The title “Pieces of Eight” refers to the first eight sonnets in this sequence, which were refused publication, although offered free, by the New York *Herald*, the New York *American*, and the Boston *Advertiser*. *They are cleverly written sonnets* in praise of the Allies and in condemnation of the murdering Huns. Sonnet Five, which we reproduce, will give an idea of *the intensity of feeling against the German outrages on the part of the author*, who in this respect, represents the feeling of the civilized world. It is addressed:

TO THE GERMAN ARMY OFFICERS:

Who were your Mothers? The foul hags of Hell?
 And who your Fathers? Who? Fiends incarnate?
 And do your sisters, prithee, harlot spell?
 The premise to this sonnet thus I state.
 How otherwise could ye foul do a thing
 That's left to negroes wild, and savages?
 Outrage so ghastly that the world doth ring
 With your most Hellish Belgian ravages!
 Were justice to be done your Kaiser'd fall
 He and his Hellish brood would be cut off
 And your flayed hides would form their funeral pall
 In coldest frame I write—not lightsome scoff.
 Ye act like a band of drunken Malays
 Who as acts of God rape and arson appraise.

THE DEVON AND EXETER GAZETTE, Exeter, England, February 22, 1916.

"Pieces of Eight" is a somewhat strange title to a book of verse, published by the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. It is a sequence of twenty-four War Sonnets by John Armstrong Chaloner. Originally the sequence consisted of eight—hence the title. But others were added without the name being changed. *We only can say the poetry is of a strong order*—in fact, the author says "nothing but the dire—the awful cataclysm—now unfolding itself on the field of Europe, and our desire to stand by civilization, truth, and honour—as shown by regard for a nation's pledged word in a treaty—could have induced us to brave the possible storm of protest at the strength of our denunciation in 'Pieces of Eight' and accompanying sonnets—or sullen silence of cold disapproval. . . . We aim at the fierceness of Swift when we denounce. How far we fall below the standard of fierceness set forever and in all tongues—bar, possibly, only Juvenal, Voltaire, and Lord Byron—by the mighty Dean of St. Patrick's—is for others to judge." Here is a sample of the poet's aroused feelings. Addressing the Kaiser, he says:—

“Thou treaty-breaking, perjured potentate!
 Blaspheming with thy lips the God of Truth
 Each time that thou dost dare asseverate
 That ‘God is on thy side’—thou great uncouth!
 The fate of Ananias hangs o’er thee.”

But while the pen is dipped in gall to word-paint our enemies, Mr. Chaloner is full of eulogies for the brave Belgians—

“Nation of heroes! men proud, superb, and strong—
 Who for Liberty like water pour your blood!
 ‘Strong as Death for Liberty’ is your war song.
 ‘Strong as our faith in Jesus Christ His rood’”.

He has some sarcastic lines for England in his sonnet on Lord Roberts—the “stark old warrior and soldier fine,” who “foretold Britian’s peril line by line.” *Mr. Chaloner is right—the voice of “Bobs” did cry in the wilderness alone, the people slept the sleep of Laish the lost.*

“Now for their folly do they dear atone
 Now do they train armed millions—ah! the cost.
 Old hero! Thy wise words are writ in blood!
Hereafter armed will be British manhood.”

We wish we could subscribe to the latter sentiment. To-day there is still too much of the policy of “Wait and See” to be at all certain that Britain will ever be armed as she should be. The book is one which will arouse one’s feelings to, at least, a vigorous denunciation of our enemies and a kindly appreciation of the great acts of heroism on the part of our Allies. *One feels decidedly better after reading the sonnets.*

JOHN O’GROAT’S JOURNAL, Friday, March 10, 1916.
 and WEEKLY ADVERTISER for the counties of
 Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Cromarty, Orkney, and Zet-
 land, Scotland.

LITERATURE.

SMASHING SONNETS.

“Pieces of Eight” is the somewhat striking title of a large pamphlet by John Armstrong Chaloner, author of “Scorpio,”

and issued by the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, price 25 cents, or 1s. The "Pieces of Eight" are war sonnets, and there are many others, *all characterized by extremely vigorous expression*, the emphasis of independent thought being more evident even than the poetical quality of the lines. We like Mr. Chaloner's straight hitting, and should like to meet him and say "shake!" In what he calls his prologue he gives the Breakers of Treaties a bit of his mind, and it's to be hoped they'll profit by it. *The sonnets and prose letters are even more direct in their sledge-hammer style than the prologue, and if the author aims at the fierceness of Swift when he denounces, he certainly does not fall far below the standard set by the mighty Dean of St. Patrick's.* The general heading of the sonnets is "The Swine of the Gadarenes," and thus he opens:—

The swine o' th' Gaderenes are here once more,
That demon-haunted herd now scours the earth,
Led by Bill William Two, their great wild boar"—

Enough said.

ATHENAEUM, London, March, 1916.

Chaloner (John Armstrong). *Pieces Of Eight: a sequence of 24 war-sonnets.* Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, Palmetto Press, 1914. 9 in. 65 pp. pamphlet, 25 cents.

A collection of thirty-two violent journalistic sonnets, twenty-nine of which are grouped under the title "The Swine of the Gaderenes." In this invective against the Germans *the author takes Swift as his model, and the sledge-hammer as his weapon*, but is likely to confuse the reader by filling up so much space (32 pp.) with notes, comments, extracts from newspaper reports, and reviews of his previous work.

PULLENS KENT ARGUS, September 30, 1916, Ramsgate.

LITERATURE.

“Jupiter Tonans.”—We have once more been favored with a series of sonnets by Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, the author of “Scorpio,” “Pieces of Eight,” &c., *and once more the author puts his pro-British thoughts into powerful words, as evidenced by the epilogue:—*

And now farewell forever and a day!
 No more advice to Britain do we give.
 We did mean well in all that we did say
 If we have chafed thy feelings—pray forgive.
 We now retire forever from the world
 And all our time devote unto the Muse
 In Whose sweet service is our incense curled
 Who aids us when our rights our foes abuse.
 These sweet Virginia Woodlands are our home
 We love the people and we love the clime
 No more through the broad world shall we bold roam
 But worshipping the Muses pass our time.
 Farewell bold Britons! We be of one blood.
 So help me G—d, I’ve writ but for thy good!

KENT MESSENGER, October 1, 1916. Maidstone.

REVIEWS.

“Jupiter Tonans” (Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina), is a sequence of seven sonnets by Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, who continues the scathing contempt which he has previously shown for the Hun and all his works, while he tenders advice to “Albion.”

THE ATHENAEUM, London, England, January, 1917.

Chaloner (John Armstrong). *Jupiter Tonans*: a sequence of seven sonnets. Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, Palmetto Press, 1916. 9½ inches, 27 pp., paper.

This collection of verse shows us something of what Mr. Chesterton called "rich badness"; it is the effusion, in several cascades, so to speak, of all-round invective. The author is quite right in saying at the end of his Prologue:—

Prepare bold Britons, for a dreadful time
When ye do turn the page and read our rhyme.

The HARROGATE HERALD. England, Sept. 2, 1916.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

"Jupiter Tonans" by John Armstrong Chaloner, the author of "Scorpio," "Pieces of Eight," is a sequence of seven sonnets arising out of the war. There is a gentle irony and a perverse humour running through the verses that mark them out from the usual war sonnets. Truth is quaintly expressed, whilst there is a piquancy about the criticism which gives it a flavour. It is published by the Palmetto Press.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES EXPRESS, December 22, 1918.

THE INFERNAL COMEDY.

The United States possesses in John Armstrong Chaloner a modern Dante. Having dabbled in Spiritualism without being able to assimilate the tenets of the cult, Chaloner details in prose, as well as verse, his adventures in graphic automatism. His works, issued by the Palmetto Press, North Carolina, constitute strong meat for strong minds. In his preface, the author declines even hypothetically to lift the remotest fringe of the veil specifically set in place by the Saviour of mankind. But, since the alleged tortures and delights of

the place of departed spirits rouse interest in the hearts of individuals who understand love and war, the reader is invited "to accept the Infernal Comedy for what it is worth."

GLASGOW HERALD, Glasgow, December 27, 1917.

"Hell and the Infernal Comedy." By John Armstrong Chaloner. North Carolina: Palmetto Press.

It is unfortunate that the bulk of this book is taken up with extracts from the American press, largely cribbed from preceding notices, for we are bored by these before we get to "The Infernal Comedy." Our first impression from the whole book was that Mr. Chaloner must be half mad, and his highly-charged sonnets did nothing to remove this idea. *But his comedy has points, and the blank verse of the various plays, given here in part, has vigour and passion.* "The Serpent of Old Nile," Act I, is a really powerful study. As for "The Infernal Comedy," its main importance being in the picture of Hell presented as true, the question of poetry or non-poetry scarcely arises. But one point—invented or communicated—for the whole professes to be a spiritualistic revelation versified—is impressive.

The sinner's first punishment is the presentation "on a screen" of all his sins, and the effect of this in one instance is vividly and impressively portrayed. Many things, too, are well said.

"You men despise the name of thought—you'd rather walk a mile than think a minute." Hell is set forth in a mixture of poetry and American slang, tragedy, and farce, but it has so much that is suggestive that we regret that it is not published by itself, or with the "communication" only. At present the whole is a queer mixture.

SHEFFIELD INDEPENDENT, Sheffield, December 28, 1917.

HELL NOT A BAD SORT OF PLACE.

We are not greatly interested in what modern writers may have to tell us about the old-fashioned hell, of which our forefathers knew so much. "Hell and the Infernal Comedy" consists of two works in one book, by an American, one John Armstrong Chaloner, member of the Bar and a medium, who tells us that hell is "not a bad sort of place at all." Inasmuch as Mr. Chaloner, with the help of his powers as a medium, does not claim to have seen further than the audience chamber, with Satan presiding, he clearly has much to learn. "The Infernal Comedy" would appear to show that at a later stage the author travelled beyond the audience chamber. He treads in some of the tracks of Milton, of Bunyan, and of Dante, and, although he is many literary leagues behind the least inspired of this trio, he gives us a few weird half-hours.

ABERDEEN JOURNAL, Aberdeen, December 29, 1917.

Hell—"Hell and the Infernal Comedy." By John Armstrong Chaloner. North Carolina, Roanoke Rapids: Palmetto Press.

According to John Armstrong Chaloner, millionaire master of "The Merry Mills," Cobham, Albemarle County, Virginia, Hell is not such a bad place after all. This view of the nether regions he first launched into the world of literature in August, 1912, when he published "Hell," a book purporting to be a message he received from a former club friend, then a resident of the region which Dante has graphically described. No less an authority than the late Professor James had testified that Mr. Chaloner was a medium—although the latter declares his total disbelief in spiritualism—and consequently, by virtue of this gift of subconsciousness, his "X-Faculty," as he terms it, he has been able to communicate by "graphic automatism" with the spirit of his friend in the shades.

According to the message received, the Infernal Regions would seem to be a tolerable place to live in. The Prince of Darkness is described as of medium height, with the face of Napoleon at the apex of his power, and garbed in habiliments like those of Michael Angelo's statue, "The Thinker." The throne room of the chief of the fallen angels is a wonderful place, constructed of marble, rubies, and diamonds. Having thus, by a process of spiritualistic transmission, brought Hell data down to date, Mr. Chaloner has now converted the communication of his departed friend into "rhyme," and published it first for the edification of British readers—a "back-hand" blow to American reviewers eagerly awaiting the opportunity to shower a renewed quota of criticism on his devoted head.

In Canto One of "The Infernal Comedy," a sequence of 100 sonnets, Mr. Chaloner supplements the previous description of his Satanic Majesty by—relinquishing the idea of his Napoleonic deification—describing him as a sort of grim judge, who sees that the sinner in Hell shall "pay the piper" for his sins on earth, while providing for the penitent one a sumptuous banquet every Saturday night as a foretaste of the joys in store for him when he shall have expiated the crimes of the flesh.* *Oh! shades of Mahomet! Still another convert to thy sense-satisfying theory of the Elysian Fields! Love and war, the delights and the soul-chilling tortures of the "Place of Departed Souls"—these are the themes both of the Koran and "The Infernal Comedy."* No wonder Hell appeared to be not such a bad place after all, especially to one who had already in his estimation had his share of Hell on earth, being a "New Yorker" of social standing and no money! Piquantly interesting and imaginative as are the spiritualistic communications of "Hell" and their free interpretation in metre in "The Infernal Comedy," Mr. Chaloner rather tends to confuse the reader by devoting so much space in his book to notes, comments, excerpts from newspaper reports, and reviews of his previous work.

*A misapprehension. The Judge is one of Satan's Hierarchs—not Satan.

KENT MESSENGER, Maidstone, January 5, 1918.

REVIEWS.

"Hell and the Infernal Comedy." Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

The author of this remarkable book is Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, described as the millionaire master of "Merry Mills," Virginia, who, as a devout member, claims to believe all the tenets of the Church of England. *His numerous works are invariably sensational and arresting, and this is probably the most extraordinary of them all.* Mr. Chaloner declares that while he was in a state of sub-consciousness, his hand, guided by unknown and unseen forces without his conscious direction, wrote a communication, extending over 54 pages, from the spirit of a friend named Miller in Hell. A description of His Santanic Majesty and his audience chamber, with walls of rubies, diamonds and sapphires, and other details, constitutes the part of the volume entitled "Hell." A reviewer suggested it was disappointing not to be told more about this interesting place, and this induced Mr. Chaloner to embark on "The Infernal Comedy," a poetic effusion of a hundred 14-line verses. The composer's vivid imagination is allowed full play in depicting the ludicrous and the tragic, and in revealing the delights as well as the terrific and soul-chilling tortures of the Place of Departed Spirits. By the way, Mr. Chaloner predicts that the war will not conclude before 1919.

OXFORD TIMES, Oxford, January 5, 1918.

Hell and the Infernal Comedy. By John Armstrong Chaloner, A. B., A. M. Member of the Bar. Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Mr. Chaloner, though a disbeliever in hell* or in commu-

*On the contrary, I am an exceedingly firm believer in Hell. All orthodox Christians must be, or be false to Christ.—J. A. C.

nication with the dead, purports in this book to have received in automatic writing a message from a friend, Thomas Jefferson Miller, who is familiarly addressed as "Uncle Tom," who is supposed to be in hell and describes the place as a kind of purgatory in which Satan, seated upon a fiery throne, had features precisely the same as Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power, and was dressed in the costume of Michael Angelo's statue, "The Thinker." The Hall of Audience was miles long, miles wide, and miles high, with walls of rubies the size of building bricks and the rest of the apartment correspondingly gorgeous with diamonds and crystals. Hell, through which, according to the message, every one has to pass, was not at all a bad sort of place, and Satan, a much-maligned person, is described as Jehovah's right-hand minister and a sort of public prosecutor. Before a person can have a good time in Hell, or in either of the other three worlds—the "Underworld," the "Kingdom of Sin," or "Heaven"—to which he may eventually be transferred, he must "pay the piper" for his misdeeds on earth. Horrors which an earthly mind cannot dream of are smoothed over by the author in "The Infernal Comedy," a poem of 100 sonnets, in which we are told that thoughts which occupy the mind of a person in Hell, more than any deed, expose him to or shield him from the attacks of demons and dangers which abound. *The poem is Dantesque in its depiction of life in the infernal regions, in its combination of fiendish horrors and punishments, and a Turkish paradise where properly-behaved probationers, who take their gruel in the right spirit, meet once a week at a banquet at which there is no rationing, and are entertained with song and dance by fairylike houris. It is altogether quaint and unconvincing, but Mr. Chaloner's lines have strength and dignity and never sink to the level of mere prettiness.*

NOTTINGHAM EXPRESS, Nottingham, January 11, 1918.

Hell and the Infernal Comedy. By John Armstrong Chaloner, A. B., A. M., member of the Bar, medium, author

of "Scorpio," etc. Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Having hereby "dipt into the future," Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, an American, playing Dante with a former acquaintance in New York as his Virgil, one is sorely tempted to observe that its title could not possibly have been more aptly chosen; but the reflection that the author, long before his compatriots had made up their minds on the European conflict, used his vitriolic pen as a weapon for the castigation of Germany in general and the Kaiser and his officers in particular, entitles him to a certain amount of respect as a seer and a prophet. Thus he denounces:

The swine o' th' gadarenes are here once more,
That demon-haunted herd now scours the earth,
Led by Bill William Two, that great wild boar.

* * * * *

These gross sausage-eaters surely have no show,
Less chance than snowball in fell hottest hell.

Whatever other credentials Mr. Chaloner may possess for his adventure into the dream domains, we are interested to learn from an American critic that he first came into public notice by marrying that sizzling vessel of molten lava, Amelie Rives, shortly after she had perpetrated on the world "The Quick or the Dead." *The chief interest in the publication to readers on this side of the Atlantic, is the introduction it accords to a striking personality in the States, who has set aside a large part of his patrimony (one million dollars) for educational purposes, and is credited with "the sonneteering style of Shakespeare, methods of expression as individualistic as Walt Whitman's, and a capacity for metrical bruising which puts Swift in the shade."* Hell, according to Mr. Chaloner, is not a bad sort of a place after all, and is infinitely preferable to the position of a New Yorker of social standing, but no money.

ABERDEEN JOURNAL, Aberdeen, December 31, 1917.

"THE DEVIL"

If Dante, Milton, or Bunyan were to revisit the glimpses of the moon, they would certainly be surprised by the new attitude assumed by the Prince of Devils in the creative hands of contemporary novelists. It were, indeed, difficult to identify the ancient self of his Satanic Majesty in the new role in which he has been cast by recent literature. Mr. Bernard Shaw transfers the devil into an affable if slightly cynical gentleman—a role imitated by lesser writers as in the American novel, "The Devil," and in the melodrama of "My Lady Frayle." Miss Corelli in "The Sorrows of Satan" waxes anxiously sympathetic over the fiend; Mr. Blackwood takes him seriously in some of his stories; Mark Twain finds scope for some pooh-poohing of accepted theological creeds and some oblique humour in his treatment of "The Mysterious Stranger;" while a still more corrosive satire and just as engaging a devil is provided in Anatole France's "The Revolt of the Angels."

* * * * *

Curiously enough, the recurring theme with novelists is a compact with Satan, in the development of which subject "Wandering Willie's Tale" in "Redgauntlet" remains unsurpassed. But what of the appearance of Satan when "at home" in the nether regions? *To John Armstrong Chaloner, author of "Hell" and "The Infernal Comedy," reviewed in our columns last week, Satan is a Prince, and "The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman."* He is described as of medium height, with a face like that of Napoleon Bonaparte at the apex of his power and garbed in habiliments like those of Michael Angelo's statue, "The Thinker." A description precise enough certainly, and rendered doubly so when we consider that the details came pat from a resident in Hell in spiritualistic communication with a scoffing young friend on earth.

* * * * *

This declared scoffer of spiritualism, while yet a very successful "medium," is John Armstrong Chaloner, an American writer, the millionaire master of "The Merry Mills,"

Cobham, Albemarle County, Virginia. Of distinguished ancestry, and a scion of the Astor family—and accordingly wealthy—Mr. Chaloner is a graduate of Columbia University and a member of the bar. *In addition to his imaginative if lurid description of "Hell" and its interpretation in metre in "The Infernal Comedy,"* he is likewise the author of "Scorpio," "Pieces of Eight"—a sequence of war sonnets—and "The Serpent of Old Nile," dealing with two different phases in the life of Julius Caesar.

* * * * *

There seems, indeed, to be no end of literature in the study of "comparative diabolics," if one may term it so, or in spritualistic effusions. The latest addition to the latter is Mr. J. S. M. Ward's "Gone West," the curtailed chapters of which—a war exigency—give geographical and otherwise descriptive accounts of life on the Astral Plane, Hell, and the Realm of Half Belief. The descriptions were "received" by the author when in a trance, and they are given by "three men who have gone west."

BELFAST NEWS LETTER, Belfast, February 2, 1918.

HELL AND THE INFERNAL COMEDY.

This is a new work by John Armstrong Chaloner, M. A., author of "Scorpio" and "Pieces of Eight." He believes that the interest in the other world has been greatly increased by the war. Perhaps it is owing to some of the statements in the book that he has thought it desirable to explain that he is a member of the Church of England and a devout believer in all that Church's teaching. The volume professes to give an account of hell received from a deceased friend. According to the message, we read, "Hell was a very bearable place, and one which every one must pass through. Miller (the deceased) admitted to his former friend that he had been bad enough on earth to merit more punishment than he received, but considered that his relief was probably due to the fact that he had had his share of hell upon earth, being a New Yorker in the social standing and no money." The first part of the

book contains this alleged message, and in the second is Canto One of "The Infernal Comedy." Many readers will find the latter the more readable.

GLASGOW TIMES, Glasgow, February 14, 1918.

THE NETHER WORLD.

"Hell, Per a Spirit Message Therefrom (Alleged)," is the title of a remarkable book, written by a remarkable man. Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner is a member of the American Bar and a millionaire. He is also a Spiritualist, and yet not a Spiritualist, for, though he was assured by the late Professor William James, of Harvard, that he is a "medium," he has no belief in Spiritualism, and has expressed his scepticism in somewhat lurid language. All the same, however, Mr. Chaloner has devoted his life and his fortune to the exploration of spiritualistic phenomena with a view to "determining their significance for himself." Fortunately he has a friend who, though long dead, has proved willing to co-operate with him in his quest. This friend is Thomas Jefferson Miller, who had been a non-commissioned officer in the Confederate Navy during the Civil War, and died at the age of 80. According to Mr. Chaloner's account, he had a visit from the spirit of his old friend in July, 1912, having, while in a sub-conscious state, summoned him by means of his art of "graphic automatism." The spirit was most obliging. "Miller," says Mr. Chaloner, "or whatever force it was, immediately replied through my hand, and wrote a lengthy statement, answering my queries and giving much information in regard to his present abode, which he said was Hell, temporarily." It took the medium eight hours to transcribe the communication, and when completed it occupied sixteen pages of type-writing.

Having acquired this unique message from Hades, Mr. Chaloner followed a course which, without offence, may be described as thoroughly American. He summoned "a score or so of the members of the press of Washington" to assem-

ble and hear his marvellous tale. They answered the call gladly, for they doubtless foresaw what is known in modern journalese as a "stunt" of no ordinary kind. To these gentlemen he read the whole of Mr. Miller's communication, and it must be admitted that the newspaper comments, much of which the author has reprinted, form not the least amusing part of the book. We have no intention of entering into any detailed account of Miller's experiences in the "nether world." One quotation may be enough as a taste of its quality. Miller speaks (or rather writes) through the hand of Chaloner:

"You must know that I am now in the Hall of Audience of Hell. I am standing against the wall on the right side of the hall, looking towards the fiery throne. Upon said throne sits Satan. * * * His features are precisely those of Napoleon Bonaparte, at the apex of his power. In height he is considerably taller, but yet under six feet, and regarding weight, there is no surplussage of flesh. He is dressed precisely in the costume of Michael Angelo's statue entitled "The Thinker," placed over the tomb of one of the Medici in Florence. The Hall of Audience is an immense apartment. So huge as to be practically incomprehensible to mortal ideas of architecture. Let it suffice to say it is miles long, miles wide, and miles high.

* * * You must not think from this that the proportions are lost in distance, for you must know that when we shed the frail shell of the flesh, and put on the filaments of immortality the senses become as much more powerful, as much more penetrating, and as much more delicate and sensitive as the incorruptible body is superior to the corruptible. Therefore, it is as easy for the eye of an immortal to see fifty miles as it is for you—far from near-sighted as you are—to see five hundred yards."

We leave our Spiritualist readers to judge whether this extraordinary narrative is all "Miller" or all "Chaloner," or a blend of both. We have the word of Professor James that Mr. Chaloner is a "medium;" we have his own word that he has the gift of "graphic-automatism." Are we to believe that we owe to the possession of these qualities the reception of the "spirit-message;" or are we simply to conclude that Mr. Chaloner has been endowed with a diabolical sense of humour, and is hocussing his friends and the reporters? The

medium's own explanation to his newspaper audience seems to leave us midway between these two conjectures:†

“I want you to understand—and my veracity has never been called into question—that I did not invent this yarn consciously, nor do I believe a — word of it. I do believe that my sub-conscious self, my X-Faculty, did invent it in the guise of the spirit of Miller.”

It is probably this conviction that has induced the author to dedicate his book to the shades of Dante, John Milton, and John Bunyan! The volume contains also, it should be mentioned, the first canto of a long poem, “The Infernal Comedy,” and a drama in three acts, “The Hazard of the Die.” The author mentions in his preface that the book has been brought out first in Great Britain, but the imprint contains only the name of the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

† A little good old Scottish mist drifted into the Editorial sanctum at about this time obscuring the otherwise clear mind of the Reviewer. For how otherwise could such an absurd doubt arise in his mind, as that there was an attempt at “hocussing” anybody, upon the part of the author? What could be clearer or more complete than: “I did not invent this yarn consciously nor do I believe a — word of it. I do believe that my Sub-Conscious self, my X-Faculty, did invent it in the guise of the spirit of Miller.”

J. A. C.

A SEQUENCE OF FIVE SONNETS

ENTITLED

EL SOLDADO AMERICANO

(The Soldier of Uncle Sam)

"The cannonneers of song and thought
 The great artillerists—the foremost leaders
 Captains of the soul. - - - - -
 Comrade Americanos!"

"Leaves of Grass"
 Walt Whitman.

EL SOLDADO AMERICANO

There's but one people on this teeming earth
 That loves to fight, and fighting loves to kill.
 The people of the land that gave me birth—
 The land of Mockingbird and Whippoorwill.
 The heirs are they of great Napoleon's men—
 Of his Old Guard and of his "*Grande Armée*"—
Whose equals in this world have never been
For joy of combat and dare-devilry!
 The world holds other Nations brave as ours
 But none who do so love to see blood flow—
 O'er other Nations our ambition towers
 To glut ambition none will so far go.
 They love to fight, for fighting meaneth fame
 And life they'll daily risk to win a name.

II.

They fight for fame as gladiators fought—
 As Rome's Patricians in th' arena dire—
 Willing that fame should by their lives be bought
 Willing that Death should be paid for its hire.
 E'en football to a shambles do they turn—
 A surreptitious fight of tooth and claw†
 So fiercely doth blood-lust within them burn.
 The fiercest Nation that the World e'er saw!
 Good natured Briton, and the blasé Gaul
 Stout Belgian and bold sons of Italy
 Fight with grim vim that nothing doth appal
 But not from choice but stern necessity.
 To th' Yankee sole is battle a great game
Of Poker sublimé—whose "Jack Pot's" fame.

III.

And I do glory in my warlike race
 And sing their praise thro' worlds without end.
 Who sans all avarice do th' dollar chase
 And what they fiercely gain do freely spend.
 The dollar's a mere marker unto them
 That lets them in Life's Poker Game "sit in"—
 Marks their financial power amongst men
 And how they fare in Business' battle's din.
 Money is power in this Land of Work—
 Where every man or works or is despised—
 And prizes shine for those who pierce the mirk
 And in their ventures have been well advised.
 Of ancient Rome the counterpart are we
 Whose mind on war and gold bent equally.

† Stricter umpiring has practically wiped this out.

IV.

And of all Nations the most chivalrous
 Is my own Nation, I do proudly say.
 Others there be who are most courteous
 But when it comes to chivalry turn away.
 Woman is shrined like to a Goddess here—
 Worshipped and served like Pallas the Athene—
 To strike a woman here *all* men do fear
 They know it would their manhood *e'er* demean.
 To strike a woman here would bring short shift—
The neighbours their own business it would make—
 T' impress the brute with their opinions' drift
Till he in fear of life and limb did quake.
 We ne'er forget Judge Lynch—his dark address—
 Who the slow Wheels of Justice doth redress.

December 1, 1918.

V.

"God's Country".

A dithyrambic paean of deep joy!
Such is my pride in fair Columbia.
 A joy that is as free from all alloy
 As is of stint the cornucopia.
 Beauty, and climate and fertility
 Do all conspire to dress and drape our soil
 Whilst rivers *vast* lend their utility
 To grace and transport the fruits of our toil.
The Garden of the World God here did plant!
 And deck it with world-wide variety
 Of climate as of flower, fruit and plant
 And coal and ores—t'invite satiety.
 And in Niagara and the Grand Cañón
 He did bestow mysterious benison.

January 17, 1919.

J. A. C.,
 "The Merry Mills,"
 Cobham, Virginia.

A SEQUENCE OF THREE SONNETS

ENTITLED

"OPPORTUNITY."

"There's a Divinity which shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will.

* * * * *

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune
Omitted—all the voyage of their lives
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

—Shakspear.

OPPORTUNITY.†

Opportunity, thou Mother of events!
Who bides his time eventual wins his game,
Sternly refraining from sundry—all attempts,
Till Opportunity doth back the same.
Opportunity's the beck'ning on: of Fate,
The mystic harbinger of sure success,
When that clock strikes let no one dare be late,
Or this world's chances risk beyond redress.
Opportunity's the Hand of the Unseen,
Of Nature working with the world of men,
Her fair Excalibur of metal keen
Presented once at least to each one's ken.
Observe the times with patience back'd by nerve,
When the time's ripe—dart forward!—sans a swerve.

II.††

'Twas opportunity gave Cromwell play
 Opportunity made Napoleon
 Gave each field of battle on which to display
 The gifts Fate's hand had each rich showered on.
 'Tis opportunity that makes the man
Never can man make opportunity
 From the knees of the Gods descends the plan
 In accord with which whirls the world—pardie!
 To think otherwise is to think like fool
 And lie in one's heart like a damned knave†††
 History proves what we say is the rule
 And the converse, a drunken doggel stave.
 Fate in her womb forms the times and the man
 And when time is full ripe, hands him Her plan.

III.††

An opportunist is a gambler fell
 A lousy rascal that lacks principle
 A dirty dog whose soul is food for H—l
 Who'll piper *pay—interest and principal!*
 A rev'rent waiter-upon-Destiny
 Until the dread hour on Fate's clock is struck
 Is one the Gods regard with sympathy
 Graciously smile upon, and wish him luck.
 'Tis such an one who keeps his weapons bright—
 Sword, shield and armour burnished for the fray—
 Whose mind is firm made up—and made up right—
 To dash at once where Conscience points the way.
 Who holds in leash his passions—*dogs of War—*
 Till Fate cries: "Havoc! And let slip! *Go far!*"

August 22, 1918.

† This sonnet appeared in "Scorpio" published in 1907.

†† Was written August 22, 1918.

††† Like Ludendorff—for example—who stated that every man made his own destiny—that fate was merely a question of will-power. And where is Ludendorff now? *In hiding*—hiding his head inside a Dutch cheese—if he can find one large enough to contain it.

**What the Law Reviews Have to Say About
"The Lunacy Law of The World"
by J. A. Chaloner.**

NORTHEASTERN REPORTER.

St. Paul, Minn., July, 1907.

"The Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C., has printed a book on "The Lunacy Law of the World," by J. A. Chaloner, of the same place. It is an examination of the laws of each of the States and Territories, and of the Six Great Powers of Europe, on this subject, and is in terms a very severe arraignment of most of them. It would appear that the iniquitous system against which Charles Reade waged war has by no means disappeared. People may still be incarcerated in insane asylums without notice, and without an opportunity to be heard, either in person or by attorney; and once in an asylum, a patient has little protection against the keepers. They may be wise, and kind, but the instances of cruelty which occasionally reach the public indicate that this is not a safe assumption. *Mr. Chaloner holds a brief for the accused, and puts his case very strongly, but, in view of the cases he cites, it would be impossible to state the matter too strongly.* He says:

"A survey of the field of Lunacy Legislation the world over presents to-day an appalling spectacle. It affords, to put it mildly, the strongest card in favor of anarchy—of no law—ever laid upon the table of world-politics; and throws into lamentable relief the fact that in about forty per cent. of the States and Territories of the United States neither the Bench—with many honorable exceptions—the Bar nor the Legislature, can be entrusted with safeguarding that fundamental principle of liberty, the absolute rights of the individual."

"The book should awaken public interest in an important matter."

THE OHIO LAW BULLETIN.

Norwalk, Ohio, July 29, 1907.

"Chaloner, Lunacy Law of the World.

A criticism of the practice of adjudging persons incompetent and depriving them of their liberties without due process of law, fortified by decisions of the courts, is the theme upon which the author has developed this interesting and instructive work. The lunacy law of all the States of the Union and six of the Great Powers of Europe are reviewed, and surprising as it may seem, nearly half of the States and Great Britain fail to require notice of the inquisition to be given the alleged lunatic or incompetent; twenty-four of the States and Germany and Great Britain fail to afford him opportunity to appear and be heard. *The author makes it conclusively appear that there is needed revision of these laws.* Edited by J. A. Chaloner, counsellor at law. Published by the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C.

THE OKLAHOMA LAW JOURNAL.

Guthrie, Oklahoma, September, 1907.

"The Lunacy Law of the World.

By J. A. Chaloner.

Published by the Palmetto Press,
Roanoke Rapids, N. C.

This is a volume of nearly four hundred pages, well printed, but bound in paper covers—a point always detrimental to the sale as well as the dignity of a law book. However, *when the contents are carefully read and reflected upon, it is found one of the best and most needed books that has appeared for many years.*

The subject of Lunacy Law in spite of all the legislation we have had in other departments, has received little attention. In fact, it is little better than when Charles Reade wrote his book entitled "Hard Cash." The fact that many mentally deranged persons are incapable of comprehending the nature of the steps taken to place them in custody, the custom has become prevalent that no process is needed to place them on trial as to their sanity. It is to be remembered that in every State of the Union, and in fact, in every country

of the world, fraud has been perpetrated on men and women of means by greedy relatives and the unfortunate ones placed in asylums for no other purpose than to secure control of their property. And further it should be remembered that one once adjudged insane if he cannot secure a hearing of his right to restoration through the influence of true friends he is forever barred of the right to be heard. He has lost the standing of a citizen. *There is much in Mr. Chaloner's book that should be well studied by every lawyer and legislator as to what should be done to secure the constitutional rights of every one alleged to be of unsound mind.* The book carefully goes over the law of lunacy in the forty-five States and territories as well as that of the leading nations of Europe."

LANCASTER LAW REVIEW.

Lancaster, Pa., September 30, 1907.

"The Lunacy Law of the World."

By J. A. Chaloner, Counsellor at law

Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C.

The work is a review of the lunacy laws of the States and Territories of this country together with those of Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Austria and Russia, with a view of showing their defects mainly in regard to affording proper protection to the alleged lunatic.

To those of us who have been accustomed to look with complacency on our lunacy laws, remembering how lunatics were thrown into dungeons and chained and tortured but a short time ago, this book brings home some startling truths. It shows clearly the dangers of that class of legislation in force in England and many of our States (as our own Act of April 20, 1869 P. L., 78) which permits an alleged lunatic to be incarcerated upon the certificate of 'two or more reputable physicians.'

The author contends that in lunacy proceedings notice to the alleged lunatic ought to be absolutely essential and that the trial should be by jury in the presence of the alleged lunatic; that any other practice is a violation of his constitutional rights and dangerous, in that it might be used by designing relatives for fraudulent purposes.

The importance of a jury trial in such cases has been recognized by Judge Brewster in Com. ex rel vs. Kirkbride, 2 Brewster, 402. The writ of habeas corpus is not a sufficient safeguard.

In setting forth the importance of allowing the alleged lunatic an opportunity to appear, the author says:

"The test of sanity is a mental test wholly within the power of the accused to accomplish and without any witnesses, professional or lay, to back him up. Suppose two paid experts in insanity, in the pay of the other side, swear defendant's mind cannot tell what his past history has been—that said defendant's mind is a total blank upon the subject. Would that professional and paid and interested oath stand against the defendant's refutation thereof by taking the stand and promptly and lucidly giving his past history, provided he were afforded his legal privilege of taking the stand in place of being kept away from court and having to allow his liberty and property to be perjured away from him in his enforced absence?" (Page 217).

Collusion would be very difficult to prove. It has been held that no presumption arises from the fact that the parties certifying to the alleged lunacy were in fact mistaken. *Williams vs. Le Bar*, 141 Pa., 149.

The subject is an important and interesting one, and the book shows extensive and careful research. It is forcefully written and carries conviction."

LAW NOTES.

Northport, New York, September, 1907.

"The Lunacy Law of the World.

By J. A. Chaloner, Palmetto Press,

Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. 1906. Pages 348.

The writer is assuredly earnest,.....setting forth the unquestionable abuses to which the state of the lunacy laws has given rise.

The exhaustiveness of his research into the question compels admiration, an author who can work through lunacy law from the time of the Emperor Conrad down to the present."

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