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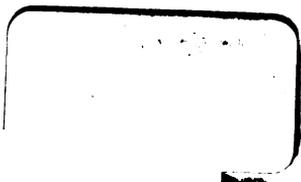
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Sequel to "Hafed Prince of Persia."

HERMES, A DISCIPLE OF JESUS:

His Life and Missionary Work;

ALSO, THE EVANGELISTIC TRAVELS OF

ANAH AND ZITHA,

Two Persian Evangelists, sent out by Hafed;

TOGETHER WITH

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

Given by a Disciple through Hafed.

Spirit Communications received through the Glasgow Trance-Painting
Medium, Mr. David Fuguid.

GLASGOW: HAY NISBET & CO., 25 JAMAICA STREET.
LONDON: E. W. ALLEN, 4 AVE MARIA LANE.

1888.

265. l. 362⁴

GLASGOW :
HAY NISBET & Co., PRINTERS,
25 JAMAICA STREET.



PREFATORY NOTE.

TO those who are in possession of, or who have read, the book, entitled, "*Hafed Prince of Persia*," it is hardly necessary, I think, that I should give another Preface and Introduction to the present volume, which forms a *Sequel* to "*Hafed*." Since the publication of that volume, about twelve years ago, the members of the circle have continued to sit with the Medium, MR. DAVID DUGUID, generally from week to week, and by untiring assiduity on the part of Mr. Thomas Garrioch, a member of the circle, records of these Sittings have been kept, and from these I have compiled the present volume.

The Recorder's Notes of the Sittings, as extended, accumulating for twelve years, formed a very large bundle, one-third of which has been used for the production of the present volume,—the remainder—composed of the Life and Mission Work of the Brahmin Priest, who was raised from the dead by Jesus; the Autobiographies of an ancient Mexican Priest and a Red Indian Chief; various Spirit Autobiographies, Tales, Addresses, Answers to Questions, etc.—will, I trust, be issued in due time.

HAY NISBET.

Glasgow, December 10, 1887.

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HERMES:
LIFE AND MISSIONARY LABOURS.

HERMES:

LIFE AND MISSIONARY LABOURS.

First Sitting.

March 12th, 1878.

Continuation of Life and Missionary Work of Hermes—Mission to Ethiopia—
Ion the Negro Merchant—Religion and Business—Casting Lots—Prayer
Meeting of the Church—A Vision—Ion's Faith—Departure of Caravan—
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Controlled by HERMES.

I PROMISED, on a previous occasion, to give you something additional in connection with my life in the body. I have not told you of my visit to Ethiopia, one of my missionary excursions.

At one of our meetings, towards the latter end of my sojourn in Egypt, it was thought advisable, by the assembled brethren of the church, that a mission into the country to the south should be undertaken. At that time there were in Egypt a great many negroes and half-castes, both slaves and freemen, some of whom were connected with the church. One of these, a freeman, named ION, stood pretty high in rank as a citizen. He was well educated, a clever man, had a good household, and likewise many servants. It was this person who suggested that we should do something for his countrymen. He was a merchant, doing a good trade with Ethiopia, bringing therefrom spices, gold, precious stones, etc., into Egypt, whence they were scattered over the world. He was about to take a caravan to Ethiopia, and he said, if I would go with him, he would contrive to make it both a business and a preaching journey.

Some might think that we, the early followers of Jesus, would not unite the business of life with the teaching of his religion; but whatever might be thought as to this, our friend Ion had

what he considered a good way of reaching the people's hearts—he was an honest, upright man, and his word could be relied on by all with whom he dealt.

In our church matters, we did nothing to give cause for saying that we favoured one over another ; and in such cases as the one I am speaking of, we cast lots to ascertain the brother who should undertake the mission, and it was accounted an honour to be sent out by the assembled church. The lot on this occasion fell on me to do the church's work ; but I would rather the lot had fallen on some one else, for I then thought I could do more in the way of keeping the congregation together than any other man. Being the principal instrument in founding the church, I looked on myself as their father, and thought it my place to remain with them. But as there were several brethren who were quite able to take my place, I agreed to go.

In our early churches, it was customary for merchants and others connected with the business of the world, who were members of the church, before engaging in any great enterprise, to have the brethren called together for prayer ; and after laying the matter before the assembly, to ask the blessing of Heaven on the undertaking. It was always understood that any thing we undertook was to be of an honourable kind. We were not to enter into any transaction that would tend to bring dishonour or discredit on the great cause with which we were connected. We generally found that we did not ask Heaven's blessing in vain ; for I think our friends of the Spirit-world saw when we needed their help, both in temporal and spiritual affairs. I have known of many cases where aid was granted in answer to special prayer since I entered the Spirit-world.

Well, on this occasion we held one of those meetings to ask that a blessing might descend on us, and on our journey and mission. We assembled at night, for a number of our members were slaves, and were not free to come till the day's labour was over. One and all, as the Spirit moved them, raised their voices to the Great Spirit for help and blessing, through the Spirits that do His will, on the work about to be undertaken. These meetings were more like an assembly in Spirit-life than like one on earth, the place was so spiritually illumined—so dazzling to the eyes. They (the Spirits) often, on these occasions, appeared and

spoke to us—telling us of dangers, and how to protect ourselves—how to relieve the sick and infirm—the strong to protect the weak, etc.

The whole of our proposed journey on this occasion was opened up to our eyes. We did not go blindfold. We saw in vision the caravan, with all those camels, laden with the fruits of Egypt, grain, fine wools, and many other articles of value; we saw ourselves sitting on these animals, and going forth, leaving the Pyramids in the distance; we saw the caravan attacked by robbers of the desert; we saw the camel-drivers slain, the goods taken from the backs of the camels, and ourselves made prisoners! All this was opened up to our eyes at our prayer-meeting. We had our choice—to go or stay.

I turned to my friend Ion, the merchant, and said—“What of our journey now? The heavenly host hath shown us what shall befall us: the wealth of the caravan taken away by robbers and we ourselves made captives.”

Ion answered—“They may rob me of those earthly riches, I care not; but I carry a treasure here worth all the gold of Ethiopia and Egypt, which they cannot take from me. If they take my life, they but liberate me from the body, and then I shall be like the bright ones above. Some time or other, this, our grand end, will be attained. Why trouble ourselves now? Thou hast seen the Master [referring to one of my visions, in which Jesus appeared]. I have here one beside me, who tells me we shall return from this journey a hundredfold richer than when we left. Be not afraid, brother—let us go.”

He had more faith than I had. He had all his worldly wealth to lose—I had nothing of that.

We went away amid the prayers and tears of the little church we were leaving behind; although some said we were foolhardy after having such a vision presented to us.

We had journeyed on for some days, and were in the desert; the sun was sinking in the horizon, when we saw in the distance a great cloud of dust.

My friend, Ion, said to me—“There it comes!” and turning to his followers, he said—“Lift no weapon in defence of the goods; let as few lives be lost as possible.”

Some of his servants belonged to the church, and others did

not. When the dust had cleared away, some 50 of the wild Arabs of the desert appeared at a short distance in front of us, and immediately drew their bows ; a few of our men were struck down by their arrows. My friend and I were untouched, for we rode somewhat in advance of the rest. He was richly dressed—always keeping up the appearance of a wealthy merchant—but I was but poorly clad.

As we continued advancing, Ion held up his hand to the Arabs in token of submission, and pointed to the goods. The chief of the band seemingly thought that, as he had made an easy capture, he could afford to be kind to his prisoners. Accordingly, we were led over to their encampment, and ordered to dismount, when our men were bound and my friend and I were left free. They evidently looked on me as some kind of priest, and rather honoured me, though not then so very old and venerable-like. They were not long in cutting up the various packages of goods with which the camels had been laden, and in doing so they wasted much more than they took. They appeared to value the grain more than any other article.

My friend, Ion, begged hard for camels and a small stock of provisions, with liberty to pursue our journey, but they refused. They thought that, being a rich merchant, they would get a heavy ransom for him ; and having the idea that I was a priest connected with some of the temples of Egypt, they thought to get a ransom for me also. Ion told them that they had already taken everything he possessed, and there was no use expecting a ransom for him ; and I said that if they would send to the highest temple of Egypt for my ransom, they would be told they were welcome to take the head off my body.

We had been some time with them, and were well treated, when one day I began to speak or preach to them. I spoke in a language I did not understand myself ; but my friend told me in the evening that I had been addressing them in their own language with great power. This occurred at a religious service we had held with our fellow-captives ; for by this time we had got the Arab chief to free the captive servants from their bonds. We usually met in a circle for morning devotion, beside a few date trees in the neighbourhood of the encampment. The hour of that service in the desert was, to some of us, as happy as if we

had spent it within a fine hall. We knew that we were surrounded by heavenly beings; we were not unprotected, and we felt assured our guardians would not leave us. The Arabs used to look on, and wondered what we were about. At one of those meetings our own men began to lose the meaning of what I said in my address, while the Arabs around seemed evidently to understand me.

These meetings, at which I had thus opened up the truth to the Arabs in their own language, had lasted but a week, when the chief came to our tent one night, and spoke earnestly concerning what I had been preaching. At first I did not understand him; and he got wroth, thinking I was making a fool of him. My friend Ion tried to explain, but the chief could not see it in that light. Ion then acted as my interpreter, while I spoke, and showed the chief that it was by the power of the Spirit-world I was enabled to speak in their own language to his tribe, and that perhaps some of his own departed people were helping me to do so. His eyes began to open, and he asked me to preach again that night to him and the assembled tribe. I did so, and my friend told me that it was the most powerful address I had ever uttered. He said I had held the whole wild audience as if they had been spell-bound. They could not stir; and while I was speaking, they said they had seen a number of white forms around the tree before which I stood. They thought that I was more than man.

I met with the chief again the same night, when I tried to show him how those who had left the earth could come back again. "That accounts," he said, "for my seeing sometimes some of my friends, who have gone before, sitting on the banks of a river. I thought I had slept and dreamt, while on the back of my camel, but now I see it must have been a vision." So deeply interested was he that he expressed the wish that I would stay with him altogether, offering me his daughter to wife. I told him I had passed all these years without knowing woman; that I had wedded myself to this work; "for this work (said I) will I live, and for this work will I die." Indeed, it would have been but a small world for me to labour in—only a small tribe of 50 men, and might not see another tribe for months.

We remained with them for about two months, preaching to

them and instructing them in a knowledge of the truth. By that time the whole of the tribe were converted. The chief and his followers escorted us for some distance southwards, and gave up to us all the goods and camels they had taken. They told us that they would meet us again on our return journey, and escort us through the desert. They would not, they said, give up their wild life and dwell in cities, for they felt that such a life would not suit them. The chief could now preach to his followers. He told us that henceforth he would rob no more travellers, but would endeavour to deal honestly with his fellow-men.

There were, as I have said, 50 men of the tribe, besides women and children. (It was customary to count only the males or men of a tribe.) So that taking them altogether there would be about 200 souls belonging to this tribe. Formerly robbing and murdering all they came across, they were now changed, and made better men for the time they would be on the earth.

I will break off at this point the narrative of my mission to Ethiopia, and resume it at our next meeting.

Mr. N. made a remark on the fraternal spirit exhibited by the early Christians in bringing their business affairs before the church. In reply, Hermes said :—

I always laid any transaction of my own before my brethren, so that I might get their advice. And this practice was followed by all. If an undertaking was deemed right, the blessing of Heaven was asked. If it proved a failure in the hands of a brother, then the brethren came forward and helped him ; but it was seldom that a failure occurred. There were a good many well-to-do people connected with that church, and none of them what you would call poor. I was one of the poorest belonging to it—and yet I was rich ; for I had always what I required to sustain my body—having a clear conscience and an honest heart, ready when I had it, to give to others ; though frequently in want myself, and glad to receive assistance when I stood in need of it.

Second Sitting.

March 19th, 1878.

Balancing Accounts—Trade in Salt—The Lion Tamed—Great Things from Little—Out of the Desert—Tabu, the Ethiopian Country—Mode of Traffic—Guests at a Royal Feast—Female Slaves for Sale—Hermes Denounces Slavery—Ion's Appeal—The Slave-Dealer Converted—His Slaves Set Free—Their Marriage Portions—The New Religion—Old Priest's Opposition—Hermes Meets with the Old Priest—Secret Sign Acknowledged—A Discussion—Issha appears in Materialised Form—He speaks to the Priest—Hermes Denounces Idolatry and Priestcraft.

(HERMES *controlled*)—My merchant friend was richer when he parted with the Arabs than when he met with them: not, perhaps, in the wealth of the world; yet even in this he was rich, for what was wasted or destroyed by them when they attacked the caravan, was returned by them in the shape of feathers, of great value to Ion, for he sold them for a very large sum. But we had become rich spiritually by the conversion of 200 souls; a greater amount of wealth was thus heaped on us—greater by far than any amount of shekels of gold and silver.

The Arabs accompanied us to the Salt Lakes, where we exchanged the greater part of the merchandise for salt, a commodity more prized than gold by the inhabitants of the interior, to whom it was sold by our merchant friend in exchange for gold dust.

After this we bade our Arab brethren farewell. These men, who had so shortly before been our enemies, had become dear to us as our nearest brothers. The wild lion had been tamed. He who plundered caravans and was the terror of the desert, became as meek as a little child. I only saw him once afterwards, and he told me that he was then truly a happy man. His company had grown to three times its former number; and he had many camels and a great many cattle. These, he said, he was in the habit of leaving under the care of one-third of the tribe, beside one of the green oases of the desert. On every journey he made it a point to ask the protection and guidance of the Great Spirit; and he did not ask in vain, for in the seasons of the greatest drought, he had always found water; the springs they came to were always bubbling up cold, pure water for their refreshment after the weary march.

I learned afterwards that this Chief and his tribe became, in

these desert regions, the protectors of the merchants they had formerly robbed; and that he received more from them in return for his protection than he had ever acquired by plunder. This Arab Chief, once a robber of the desert, now a follower of the Nazarene, was the founder of a movement that in aftertimes became a great and mighty empire, which spread over the eastern and western world.

We had by this time reached in our journey the region of pure, luxuriant vegetation. We had but a few furlongs more to travel. (It had taken us already about five months' weary travelling to reach this place; but we were much quicker in going back.) It was somewhat dreary this woodland country, as the roads were rough and open, and we were in constant dread of wild animals.

At last we came to Tabu, the chief district of the negro country. They were not exactly negroes; but a mixture of the Arab and negro. They had not such thick lips as the pure negro, and were fine, athletic men, with long hair—though not exactly straight; they generally wore more clothing than the negroes. They were what you might term a wealthy people—trading in silks, fine linen, and gold and silver ornaments. We arrived at the place I have named after a very perilous journey, during which we had experienced a good many hardships.

We went into one of their walled cities, where my friend Ion was well known. He had long been known as an honest, upright man—always paying the price sought for by those who dealt with him, and when he stated his price of any article he offered for sale, they knew he was not cheating. "That is what I ask," he would say on such occasions, and that was enough.

We were introduced to the chief, or king—one of the princes who acted as chief or king, under another king—and invited to dine with him. They were fond of showing off their female slaves, especially the fair ones, for they dealt in slaves. My merchant friend, in his younger days, had also trafficked in slaves, carrying them to Egypt, and selling them there. So, while we feasted, these females were brought before us and made to dance, that, by showing off their beautiful forms, their owners might get a higher price for them. But on this occasion no offer was made for them.

At length we were asked what we thought of the display. I got up and said—"I have visited many cities, and seen many strange sights; I have seen beautiful women—have seen them dance and heard them sing with voices that sweetly charmed the listeners—but I have never till now seen them exhibited for sale. You are wrong in so doing, for are they not the noblest works of the Creator? Woman was not created to be the slave of any man—to dance for his amusement, while he feasts and drinks of the wine-cup. She was given as an helpmate to man. Why should young females be rudely torn from their parents and homes, taken to a distant country, and there sold as slaves to the highest bidder, so that he may do what he pleases with them? Why should they be denied the freedom which we possess, to act as they please? I claim them as my sisters!"

On saying this, the owner of the slaves and the prince both looked inquiringly at me. "Your sisters! how can that be?" asked the former. "They are my slaves—mine, for I have paid for them; and so are the children which they bear. Surely I may do with my property as I choose!"

I replied—"Who made these females your goods? Did not God create them free—equal with yourself? Why call them slaves? What have they done that they should be kept in bondage? If their parents were indebted to you, and unable to pay, you might keep the parents in bondage, but not their children,"—and thus I continued reasoning with him and appealing to his sense of justice, getting rather warm in the course of my address—but I felt I could not help denouncing the iniquity of the system

My friend Ion followed me. He said—"I once carried on the same trade; but seeing that it was not right, I gave it up. I buy slaves no more. Take them home. Think well over this matter, my friend; and you will perhaps find that you yourself are the greatest slave in your household. You have made it the great object of your life to procure the most beautiful women, and through them to beget the most beautiful children—the same as you would rear animals—and for what? That you might amass gold. And what can gold do for you when you come to part with life? It will be of no use to you then. Set your slaves at liberty. It will ease your mind. You are now harassed. You

are waiting patiently for the arrival of certain caravans, which may never come ;” and he then told him of the Arabian chief who had embraced the new faith, and who had vowed that henceforth he would set every slave free he came across—that merchants he met with in the desert carrying on such a trade would lose by it.

This statement made by my friend, Ion, appeared to interest the slave-merchant, and he began to make inquiry about the new faith. My friend, knowing the language better than I did, opened up the truth to him, to which he attentively listened ; after which he invited us to his house. We washed our feet and we supped under his roof that night. (It was the custom when guests were invited to set water before them, wherewith their hands and feet were washed.)

This was the beginning of a work that ended in the conversion of this man and his household to the faith of Jesus, my Master and Prince. He was the greatest slave-dealer in all that region. And now, what was he to do with all those he held in bondage? A suggestion was made that he should buy as many men as he had female slaves, and let them all go free. “No,” said he, “I will not buy men ; but to-morrow morning, when the sun is above yonder hill, meet me in my great square.” Merchants’ houses were built in the form of a square.

Accordingly, next morning I was up before the sun, and on going into the square I was astonished to see a great company of females, all standing in ranks two deep, from ages a little above a child to the maiden of 18 summers—the most saleable age being from 13 to 15.

As the sun rose, the merchant himself came forth. I think I never listened to a more powerful address than that which I heard that morning from the lips of one who till the night before had been an entire stranger to the truths he then so fervently advocated. Towards the conclusion, he proclaimed liberty to all his slaves, telling them that he would provide for them as he would provide for his own children. The young men of the city would take them as wives, and none of them would go portionless.

I could not understand all this, but Ion took me aside and told me all. After I had retired to sleep the previous night, up

to the time when he came to waken me up, he said that he had been engaged talking with the slave-dealer, proclaiming the new faith to him, and relating some of his experiences. They had had a vision also. He (the slave-dealer) had only heard faint rumours of the Great Nazarene of Palestine, and when he began to learn what Jesus claimed to be, and to understand what his mission was, he was filled with admiration. He said that henceforth he would preach to his own nation, and look on them all as his brethren.

The intention of the slave-merchant as to the disposal of his female slaves was soon noised abroad over all the city, and before we left he found he would soon have none of his young females to give away. Numbers of young men flocked to his house, all anxious to get a wife, and along with her the portion that fell to her lot; but they found that conditions were strictly laid down by the merchant, that every marriage was to be from true love—that they were to be known to each other for a good long time, and that the young man would not get the young woman in marriage without her consent. This, in some measure, laid barriers in the way of those who were actuated by the desire to get gold rather than a wife.

The news soon spread that the great slave merchant had embraced a new religion, which had led him to abandon his old occupation of a trafficker in human beings; so that wherever he went, he always found many to listen to him while he proclaimed Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth as the true way—the messenger sent from God to man. He was bold, too, for he did not hesitate to hold forth the truths of his new faith before the entrance to the temple. You have no idea how little opposition was shown to us by the people in our attempts to bring the light to bear on them. All seemed anxious to know something about the new religion.

But opposition we did experience, though not from the people. An old priest, who was the chief of the temple, on seeing the result of our efforts on the minds of the people, strove hard to stir up strife. He saw clearly that if the people of the city were turned to this new way, he would lose by it. No more lies to uphold his idolatrous system would be listened to. Such and such a god had spoken—therefore bring so and so to the treasury. It would not do. There would henceforth not be sufficient to

support existence. He laboured anxiously to turn the people from the consideration of our doctrines ; but they would not be turned. The once slave-master stood up and denounced him and his gods. The whole system was corrupt, and could only be kept up by falsehood. It was the same in every place where priest-craft prevailed—when cash ran short, the priests laid their heads together and hatched a new oracle, whose utterances soon produced an inpouring of gold from the deluded people.

O, if priests who have been dedicated to the service of God for the good of men would but stand true to their first impressions, how much better would it be for poor humanity ! How much less of misery, and how much more of happiness and peace ! I blame the professed leaders of the people as perverters of the ways in which the Great Spirit seeks to guide the wavering steps of man. Instead of guarding the people as watchful sentinels, they have all along dealt treacherously by opening the gates to every evil influence. There have been many exceptions to the rule ; but generally they have looked more to their selfish ends than to the good of the people over whom they have been set as shepherds.

One day, while walking in the neighbourhood of the temple, felt some one pulling me by the back of my girdle. On turning round, I saw one dressed in pure white robes, with a golden band round his head. This was the old priest who had been stirring up the people against us. He said, in reply to my inquiring glance, " Friend, wouldst thou speak with me ? "

" Yes," I said, " I am free to speak with any man. "

" Wouldst thou, then, come this way ? "

" Yes, I will ; " and in turning to go with him, a young man whispered to me—" Do not go in there ! the very stones are too sacred for thy feet to tread on. "

" My friend, I have trodden on stones as sacred as these ; and I am even now walking upon the floor of the Great Temple of the Great Spirit, in whose presence I and thou art always. "

The youth seemed anxious to prevent me going into the temple with the old priest, and said the priest and his assistants would perhaps lay hands on me, coming as I did from a distant country, and disseminating strange doctrines.

I said—" I have been in Palestine, and heard Him whose

doctrines I preach. Why should I be afraid to speak the truths I have learned of my Master?"

"You do not know the difficulties," said he, "I have to encounter. I have stood and listened to you while you preached these new doctrines, and I want earnestly to embrace them, but were I to do so, my father would cast me off."

"And what of that? Have not I been cast off by my brethren of the sacred temple?"

"I want you," he said, "to beware of these priests."

"I am not afraid," I said; "my life is in the hands of One greater than myself. I wish to see you again, young man, that I may talk with you about these things."

On saying this, I went up to the old priest, and accompanied him into the temple. He led me directly to the altar, where sacrifices were offered up, and turning to me, he said—"Are you not afraid to approach this altar?"

"No, I am not afraid," I replied; "nor am I afraid to lay my hands on it." Saying so, I laid my hand on a certain stone.

On seeing what I did, he came rushing to me and clasped me in his arms. I had never seen him before, nor had he seen me; and to account for this display on his part, I must explain that, throughout all the Eastern and Western world, what I had done could only be done by one who was a true priest—a sign known only amongst priests. My making the sign without hesitation was certain proof to him that I belonged to the priesthood. A stranger might lay his hand accidentally on the spot; but the way I did it convinced him that I was brought up in the mystery of the symbol.

He said,—“I thought that, though you wore the garb, you might not be a true priest; and notwithstanding your mighty utterances, I was determined to test you. Now I know you are one of us, and (judging from your garb, and the cloak you wear,) that you come from Egypt.”

I said,—“I wear the dress of the humble but true priest of the Prince of Life and Death.”

He seemed stupified as I uttered these words; and staring wonderingly at me, he asked what I meant by that. “Is not this,” he said, pointing to an image, “a symbol of the God?”

I replied,—“It is no symbol to me; it is only an uncouth

stone figure, having no resemblance to the Great God. Had you pointed to that ray of light which now pierces the gloom of your temple, I would say *that* is a symbol of God, and there is no higher on earth. Nothing gives a clearer idea of the Mighty Spirit than the great luminary of day, a bright ray from which now plays upon these walls."

"You come from Persia, do you?"

"No," I answered,—“I am now from Egypt, but I have been in Persia.”

When in course of my reply I mentioned the name of my father ISSHA, he trembled, and looked anxiously at me. “Why are you afraid?” I asked.

“When I was young,” he replied, “I knew Issha well. I travelled into Egypt, and there I met with him, and I spent some happy weeks under his teachings. But he did not speak in the way you now speak to me.”

“No, for then he had no knowledge of these truths. I called him father, and he called me his son,—and he still looks on me as his son.”

At this he seemed amazed, and said,—“Does he still live, then?”

“There! he stands before me now. Do you see him?”

“No; I do not,” he tremblingly said.

The vision became so clear to me, I thought any one might have seen him. The Spirit-form beckoned to me to lay my hand on the shoulder of the old priest. The moment I did so he perceived the form, and fell down on his knees, beseeching Heaven to protect him, for he had seen a god. His priestly ritualism had no such manifestations.

“This is he,” I said, “and you will now perceive that he is not a god, but your old friend, as well as mine.”

He at once rose from his knees and looked, and beheld Issha take upon himself his earth-form. At first appearance the form was brighter—more spiritual—not having become materialised.

On seeing him, the priest wished to grasp his hand. This I would not allow, saying, at the same time,—“No, that must not be done, for what you see is a spirit. If Issha, however, should stretch his hand towards you, you can then take it.” Shortly thereafter a hand was put forth. The priest, trembling from head

to foot, put out his hand, but did not grasp the outstretched hand of the spirit, but my old father at once seized his firmly.

“He is about to speak (I said). Listen!”

The Spirit then spoke to the trembling, awe-struck priest. He referred to the time when he sojourned in Egypt, and of the counsels then given to him, and asked him if these counsels had been followed. He confessed that they had not, but that he had acted unjustly; he had resisted the voice of conscience when it urged him to do that which was true and honest, so that it had become seared. Issha then said—“I have come myself to remind you of your promise to me.”

In a moment, the Spirit-form vanished, and we were left alone. “What use,” I said, “is there for those fires burning?—they are of no avail.” I then told him of the coming of the Prince, and of the sacrifices that he proclaimed—that we were to do that which was right—to love one another—to love all, rich and poor, friend and enemy. “But what,” I asked, “have you been doing? You have made it your business to serve neither God nor man, but yourself alone, and have threatened the people with the vengeance of the gods if they refused to give you gold and silver. Instead of a servant of God you have been a robber—worse than the robbers of the desert. Break these images of stone to pieces; put out these altar fires; gather the people around you, and speak to them of truth, righteousness, and love to each other, and soon you will have more pleasure than ever you have enjoyed before.”

He came forth. The young priests gathered round, with countenances betokening fear. They had not seen the vision, but they had heard what had been said. They appeared to be afraid of the old priest, for they knew that many who had entered that temple never were seen to leave it. It was given out in such cases that they had been carried away by the vengeance of the gods, and that, by the command of the gods, their goods, also, had been confiscated. Thus the house erected for the service of God became a den of robbers and murderers. That old priest went forth with the determination to follow the path pointed out to him, and, to some extent, he carried out his intention, but he had so long accustomed himself to his iniquitous deeds, that I did not expect much of him. The idol worship was given up,

and he adopted a system of symbolical service in its stead. But there was no real conversion to the truths laid down to him. He was too old to readily take up the new faith.

Third Sitting.

March 26th, 1878.

Results of the Slave-Dealer's Conversion—A Love Feast—Vision of the Angel Host—Spirit Music—The Company Entranced—Farewell—Arrival at the Coast—Arabs of the Red Sea—The Negro Giant—Nefarious Practice of the Arabs—The Negro Giant's Lesson—Ion's Faith—Sea-Robbers' Village—Hermes speaks all night in an Unknown Tongue—Ion's Interpretation.

(*Controlled by HERMES*)—Good evening, by dear friends. You do not seem to consider, while sitting talking in this room, what a long stretch of road I have yet to travel over before I get to the end of my story.

In answer to questions, he said it was the Mahometan empire he alluded to when speaking of the Arab chief. The name of the city was *Bodoo* (so pronounced).

Well, as I have already told you, the old slave-dealer gave his female slaves their freedom, and dowries also, by which they might get the highest men in the land as husbands. In so doing, he was honestly trying to make some amends for the iniquity of which he had been guilty. He tried also to get the other merchants to look at the matter in the same way, but they said that they did not see the necessity of going that length. He saw the evil of the traffic—the others pretended they saw it not. Nevertheless, the subject was much talked of amongst the people; for here, as was said, was a man noted for his selfish and sinful ways, now striving to help others—the owner of many valuable slaves, yet setting them free; he who had once put heavy burdens upon the shoulders of his labourers, now sharing his lands, his silver, and his gold with the meanest of them! The thing was so strange that all the people wondered, and had their minds turned to inquire as to how it had been brought about. The king, or ruler, also, with whom this merchant had been intimate, could not help being deeply interested, and, in course of a short time, the simple truths preached by us were cordially accepted by him and his people.

Two days after the scene in the temple with the old priest, we had completed all our business affairs, and made preparation to return home by way of the Red Sea. My friend Ion had many articles of value to take with him ; and I may say here that I myself had also a good deal in charge, gifts from merchants and others to our little church in Egypt.

Before starting on our journey we assembled at night in the house of the merchant who had freed his slaves. It was a "Feast of Love," the first of the kind I had taken part in ; and I tried to conduct it in the same way as I had seen it done when with the Master. In the Great Square, at the back of the house, there were long tables erected, on which were placed all kinds of fruit. Servants went about carrying water in silver basins, so that the guests might wash their hands before sitting down to eat. When all were seated, I took a bunch of grapes from the table, and breaking off a few, I thanked Him from whom we had received the gifts, asked His fatherly blessing on the partakers, after which the company ate of that which was set before them.

After partaking of the good things, I engaged in prayer. Then my friend Ion rose and addressed the assembly. That address I will not easily forget. I had listened to the solemn eloquence of the Spirit Issha, and even to Hafed, but I never heard words equal to those which fell that night from the lips of this man of a despised race. He spoke with such power that the company were melted to tears, and anon, so excited that they clapt their hands with joy and delight. I myself broke down, and cried like a child, as he depicted the miseries of mankind—how the people in various places he had visited were tortured and treated as if they were devils, and not human beings. His address lasted till midnight. Then I rose and we sang a hymn, after which I engaged in prayer. When I was done praying the whole company, with one accord, rose to their feet, and some cried—"Oh this is surely heaven!" whilst every eye was directed to the centre of the square, in which there appeared a mass of light so glorious that it seemed as if the starry firmament had come down to earth, and been condensed as it were into one great glory—so bright, so dazzling, that we dared not at first keep our eyes on it. Gradually as our vision got accustomed to the great light, we began to distinguish forms flitting about : and then, our sight be-

coming stronger, we saw a glorious company of Spirit-forms : and amongst the angelic band I saw Issha and others whom I had known when they were on the earth. Strains of heavenly music fell on our ears, and we saw that while some of the glorious ones played on instruments, others raised their voices in the spirit-hymn. The mortal listeners stood entranced by the glorious vision and the heavenly sounds. At length Issha spoke to us in cheering terms as to the stand we had made in boldly proclaiming the truth. He said it was registered to our account. The wealth of Ion, he said, would not be taken away, for he had shown faith in God and the Spirit-world. He told the assembled people that those they now looked upon were at one time but men like themselves. Here I cried out—"Yes! my father: well do I know thee, and before these witnesses acknowledge thy care over me and thy goodness to me when thou wast with me in the mortal body, and who in spirit sent me out on this mission. Next to him who is my Lord and Master, I love and honour thee, my sainted father!" The Spirit-form of Issha with uplifted hands then blessed us. He then turned to our host, the late slave-dealer, and alluding to his noble acts of self-sacrifice, spoke of him as a faithful minister and priest of the Most High God. At this point the whole assembly fell into a deep trance, in which we found ourselves in a beautiful sunny plain, and in the distance a mountain on which stood a great and glorious temple. We were as it were spirits while in this trance, for each of us saw one another like spirits. How long the trance continued we knew not, but on waking up all testified to having witnessed the same scene.

My friend, Ion, then said that we must depart, and we bade farewell to the merchant, and those who believed with him, earnestly hoping that they would continue faithful to the cause of truth they had embraced so fervently. The young man of whom I have spoken, when describing the interview with the old priest at the temple, promised that he for one would declare the truths he had received with all boldness. (I have something more to tell you about this young man at another time. He became the founder of several churches in the East).

Next morning we started on our journey to the shores of the Red Sea, where we might get an opportunity of conveyance by

water to Suez. We left with the blessings of the people, who affectionately bade us farewell. We knew we had a perilous journey before us—a great part of it being through a mountainous region infested not only by wild beasts, but by robbers—though other parts were occupied as pastoral districts. But we remembered how one daring robber had been conquered, and had become the fast friend of all honest merchants—but woe to him who crossed his path if found to be a trafficker in human beings.

We reached the coast after a journey of six days, without anything occurring worth mentioning. On arrival we found we could not get a vessel big enough to convey the whole caravan, and we did not care to divide it. We were a large company, and able to protect ourselves in such a place; so we pitched our tents on the shore, to wait patiently for a vessel, or, if need be, to make arrangements with some Arab traders that might come in sight—though, really, we cared not to have anything to do with these men, for it was well known they depended more on plunder than on honest trade for a livelihood.

We had just settled down in our tents when a vessel hove in sight, with about from 20 to 30 oars on each side. Seeing our camp, they pulled towards the shore, and landed at a short distance from us. A company of them came up, desiring to trade with us. My friend Ion was, however, not disposed to have dealings with them; but, carrying, as he often did, medicines as part of his stock, he told them that he would exchange these for dyes. They were hard bargain-makers—inclined to take, but not to give. But a bargain was at length made, by which it was stipulated that the medicines were to be sent down to the vessel, and there to be paid for in dyes. The man selected by Ion to go in charge of the goods to the beach, and receive the dyes, was a gigantic and powerful negro, savage-like in outward form, but in disposition a very child: when roused, however, no ordinary man was able to quell him. He was a good and trustworthy man, and acted as the steward of the caravan, for which he was well qualified by education. He was also a member of our church, and greatly respected by the brethren. On reaching the vessel at the water's edge he delivered the goods into the hands of the Arabs; but no sooner was this done than they shoved off without giving

the dyes in exchange, and in doing so began to show fight. He told them that he thought he had got honest men to deal with, otherwise he would not have allowed their boat to leave the shore. We in the camp saw what was going on at the beach between the Arabs and the men sent with the goods. The steward tried various ways with them, evidently without effect, and at last the miscreants sent a shower of arrows on shore, by which a poor fellow, one of the men sent with the goods, was killed. On seeing this the giant ran into the water, and putting forth his strength, which, when excited, was enormous, he seized hold of the vessel, and drew it right up on the beach. The act being so sudden and unexpected, the Arabs were panic-stricken and amazed, and finding themselves in the presence of greater numbers, and with no means of escape, they submitted.

The giant steward then calmly addressed them. "Now," said he, "though you have wickedly, and without cause, slain one of our men, I will not return evil for evil; but, at the same time, I will deal justly with you. You are now at our mercy. You thought that, having a boat, you might do as you liked. I will show you what I like, and what I want you to do. The man whom you have slain has a wife and child at home waiting his return. By your cruel deed you have made her a widow, and her child fatherless. Who is to provide for them? All that your vessel contains must be given up."

The goods were taken out and laid on the beach. Putting aside those which had been bargained for by his master, he took possession of what remained in behalf of the widow and orphan of the murdered man. "There, go!" he said to the Arabs, "and if you dare come near I will sink your boat." But they seemed glad to get off with their lives, and at once got their vessel into the water, and pulled off, howling with rage at those on shore. The giant, however, heeded not their howling, but quietly got his men to work, so as to secure the goods. I could not help admiring the bravery he displayed. We buried the body of the poor fellow, who had been killed, under the green sod, and marked the spot by the erection of a rude cross. The amount of rich dyes made the widow a wealthy woman.

We considered it would be prudent, after what had happened, to shift our camp to some other quarter, as it was likely a whole

fleet of Arab vessels might come down on us. Accordingly we went off, but not too soon, for shortly thereafter a fleet of boats was seen nearing the camping ground we had left. We had no desire to fight; and in resolving never to use arms, we were but following out our Lord and Master's rule. My friend Ion was one with me on this point. "I have," he said, "faith in that which was told me by my Spirit friends, that I will not return to Egypt in poverty. Though I may be robbed to-day, yet will I have more on the morrow." Ion, I found, had more faith than I had. His faith was stronger and greater—better than wealth.

We travelled along the margin of the Red Sea till we came to a small fishing village, inhabited by a wild-looking set of men—a sort of sea-robbers—living by fishing when they could get nothing to steal. Our friend Ion knew them well, having been there before; and he at once went to the chief and claimed his protection. This was at once granted, by his being called into the house of the chief to "eat salt" with him. This was a bond of friendship that would not be broken, and the people of the place being aware of it, we knew we were safe. The people were very rude, and had no form of religion. They believed, it is true, in a Great and Good Spirit, but they also believed in a Great Evil Spirit, and seemed more concerned about how to appease the anger of the latter, than to adore the goodness of the former.

As I walked out among the inhabitants, I felt as if compelled to speak to them concerning those spiritual things of which they were evidently ignorant. I knew very little of their language, but I thought I would speak to them in a simple way, so as to be understood. I began, but soon discovered that I was, as on other occasions, uttering sounds unintelligible to myself. At such times I felt as if I were a mere machine for the production of sounds, the purport of which I knew nothing. But the people who had gathered about me evidently understood what I was saying, for they stood fixed like statues, looking anxiously at me while I addressed them. Ion, who understood the language of the people, stood near me, and when I had been thus speaking for some time, I cast my eyes on him, and he seemed by his look to say—"Go on—go on!" and I did go on, for I stood from the setting of the sun till he rose again, when the anxious listeners, apparently tired and weary, went off to their homes. My friend

Ion said that I must have exhausted myself by such a night of speaking ; but no, I felt as if I had been resting for a week.

We sat down and ate and conversed together. He told me the nature of my address—that I had spoken in the language of the villagers, and had set clearly before them the way of truth and life. Their hearts, he said, appeared as if drawn towards me as I discoursed on the simple truths which I had learned of my Master, Jesus. “Well, my friend Ion, I will see you and talk further on these things in the morning”—forgetting that it was then morning, and that I had been talking all night. We slept not, but continued our conversation ; and afterwards went forth into the village square to speak again. I was unable to resist speaking. But this time I found that gradually the knowledge of what I was saying dawned in upon me—to come as it were bit by bit, till I thought I was really speaking my own language. At first, it seems like speaking in a kind of trance, and gradually light begins to break upon the speaker, and then it flashes forth in all its power and clearness.

After being there for a week, the chief proposed to get a vessel capable of holding our goods and people. But I must stop here for this night. [Benediction.]

Fourth Sitting.

April 2nd, 1878.

A Church Formed—Camels unpleasant Companions—Reflections at Night on the Red Sea—Dangers of the Voyage—Study of the Stars—An Alarm Spirit-tap—Spirits Communicating—Attack of the Sea-Robbers—The Negro Giant's Exploit—The Captured Robbers—Hidden Things Disclosed—Ion's Conditions—Ion Controlled by Spirits—The Robbers Confess—A Night to be Remembered—Arrival at Alexandria—Advice of the Church.

(*Controlled by HERMES*)—We were on the shores of the Red Sea at a little village, when I left off last night we met. Short time as we sojourned in the place, we had formed a small church, having got a few of them to become adherents to the faith. They had also found vessels capable of carrying our whole caravan to the northern point of the Red Sea.

In the course of my wanderings in my younger days, I had been on this sea, though never with such a large company. In one of

the vessels there were camels, and men of different nations with their servants, while another was devoted to the conveyance of cattle, carriages, etc. Camels are very unpleasant companions on board ship, for although I had been accustomed to them for a good many months on land, when I came to be pent up in a ship with them I found that I could hardly endure their presence. For you must remember, that to those who are not used to such company, the presence of camels is very disagreeable—the stench which proceeds from them being almost unbearable. At first when we set out on our voyage, I felt so disgusted that I would have given anything to get travelling on foot all the way to Egypt.

The Red Sea, especially in good weather, is one of those places where one has no need to seek for shelter; for he may lie down without fear on the deck of the ship at night, with nothing above him but the blue canopy of heaven, and the deep, clear water of the sea beneath, and sleep soundly, without suffering in any way from exposure to the atmosphere. I have sailed on the Great Sea, or Mediterranean, but the Red Sea far outstrips it for the depth and beauty of the water. When you come to deep water, so clear is it that you can see the fishes sporting about. In the evening, you may gaze upward to the deep blue sky, and see the bright stars shining out in their thousands like clusters of diamonds; and then, withdrawing your eyes from the sky above to the sea below, you perceive the starry firmament reflected on it as if on a mighty mirror. In such hallowed surroundings, the soul is led to meditate on Him who made these waters, and who planted those glorious worlds which shine so beautifully in the heavens above.

I must confess, indeed, that during this short voyage I made on the Red Sea, I was drawn to reflect on the goodness and greatness of the Creator in a way I had never before experienced. By day and by night, I was always discovering something new and wonderful. At times we would come across some of the coral-shaped trees which rise from the bed of the sea; and when the bright stars were reflected on the waters that covered the white and crimson coral, the effect, as viewed from the deck of our vessel, was beautiful indeed. And when we looked towards the shore, we saw the distant African

mountains towering one above another in solemn grandeur, while nearer, our eyes rested on the sloping hills covered with trees and verdure. At times, also, the stillness of night was broken with the roaring of wild animals in quest of food.

But those nights on the sea, the beauty and grandeur of which I have tried to describe, had also in them something to be dreaded by us ; for it was just in such calm, fine nights that the wild sea-robbers put off from their secret caves to attack the merchant traveller as he quietly sailed over the placid waters : and this system of robbery and murder had prevailed for some time ; so that many who had undertaken the voyage were never more seen alive—not that they were lost in the angry storm of wind which, rising amid the mountains, swept furiously down upon the face of the waters, but destroyed by their fellowmen, who were more to be dreaded than the wildest storms. The weary mariner sleeps and thinks not that danger is nigh, but the enemy—these robbers—come forth from their lair ; they spring on the deck of the luckless ship, and all on board are hurled into the deep, blue, peaceful waters—they find their resting-place amid the coral groves in the depths of the sea. That is where the body goes, but the Spirit goes upwards. Here is a merchant who has, perhaps, travelled from the very centre of Africa : he reaches the coast after a weary over-land journey, and anxious to reach his home by way of the sea. He has much wealth to take home. His family wait for him ; for he has been long away, and they long for the day when they shall welcome him home. But, alas ! poor fellow, he never returns to them. Better he had taken thought, and travelled along the banks of the Nile, the waters of which flow through his native country—better had he toiled over the high and rocky mountains than taken his path by the sea !

Well, it was upon one of those lovely nights that I lay stretched on deck, my eyes looking up to the starry heavens, and trying, as it were, to measure in my own mind the distances between the shining orbs. I had read a good deal in the course of my studies about the planetary system in the Babylonian writings which my father, Issha, had by him, and also in those which I had fallen in with myself—for I was one of those who liked to sift everything, knowing that while I was on the earth such knowledge would be of use to me. I would like everyone to do the same—to try, if

possible, to find out the truth of things for himself. That is the course I followed. I placed everything at the bar of my own judgment. I sat as judge. If I found it light in the balance, it was put aside; if in accordance with truth—with reason, it was accepted: if I erred in my judgment, and that which I judged to be good turned out to be evil, I could not be blamed—I did my duty. But, as I have said, I lay on deck gazing at the stars, while my friend, the Ethiopian merchant, sat by my side, and as we talked one to the other, and spoke of the worlds above, he said that he had often tried to bring his mind to grasp the subject, but he failed. On hearing this I began there and then to open up the subject to his mind. I showed him that the planet, or world, we moved on was a mere speck when compared with the vastness of some of those on which we then looked. I spoke of the immense distances between them and our own world, and how each one of them was peopled by beings like us in shape and faculty, but that they were not like us in character—for they were not engrossed with the dark things that occupied the minds of men, having nothing of that earthly matter which weighed mankind down to the earth.

I was thus talking to my friend, when I heard a slight tap, as it were, upon the deck—nothing to disturb one—nothing to attract the attention, especially if the attention was engrossed with such topics as we were conversing about. Still, it did attract attention—not mine, but my friend's. He was a man who had travelled often over the wildest countries, amid scenes of danger; and his ear was quick, both from experience and naturally; the slightest crackling of a rotten reed would make him start. His ears were up at once. Ion said, "Did you hear that?"

"Yes," I said, "I heard something as if a small pebble had fallen on the deck."

"No," he said, "it could not be *that* which struck the deck."

"Well," I answered, "I cannot tell how the sound was made, but I can point out the very spot where the sound came from. There is the place—look!" and when we looked down upon the deck, we observed a small stone lying just about the spot indicated. That stone began to move, and, as it moved, it formed letters upon the deck, and these letters were of a fiery hue. We

watched it with great interest, as you may imagine, wondering at the same time what it meant. We knew that it was a warning to us of some kind ; and as we gazed on it, following it with our astonished eyes, we saw that the writing was in the Coptic characters. The message was this :—“ *Sleep not to-night. The enemy lurks in the way. The days you have been sailing, you have been watched and followed by those who think you have injured them. But we are your friends, and we watch over you.*”

My friend at once rose up and said to the unseen writer,—“ I know not who you are, but would you answer me this question ?” Before he had time to put his question, the reply was made in writing,—“ Yes ; and your question is this,—you want to know if your servant did right when he took the goods from the Arabs, to give them to my wife and child ? Well, they have taken my bodily life, and their goods have been taken in behalf of my family. I think it is right.” Then my friend, Ion, said,—“ Perhaps it is right. Is there no one else here who can say as you say ? I want to deal honestly in this matter.” In another style of hand was written,—“ It is honest dealing. These men took this poor man’s earthly life away, depriving his wife and child of their supporter. Why should not those who wronged this family be made to maintain them, and bring them up ? These robbers would, if they had been permitted, have taken away your goods and lives also.” The Spirit giving this writing put his name to it. It was the name of Ion’s father. My friend then said,—“ I can believe you, father, that what you have now said is right : for you have, ever since you entered the Spirit-world, guarded me and guided me by your counsels to act honestly in all my dealings. I trace all my success in business to you ; but you know that I have not set my heart upon the riches of this world, knowing that there is something greater and more enduring in the better world. Even although those men were to rob me of all I have, I would not repine, if they but spared my life ; for I have no desire to leave the earth while there is plenty of good work for me to do. But, I thank you, dear father, for the warning, and we shall be on our guard, and see that they touch nothing.”

Well, I was very much pleased with all this. Here was one, who had been but a short time in Spirit life, coming back,

anxiously caring for the welfare of those loved ones he had left behind. He had been a man of an honest and trustworthy character ; and his reply to my friend's question had therefore some power in helping him to decide as to the right disposal of the goods ; but when he had the additional counsel of his own father, he resolved at once that the widow and her child should get the goods taken from the murderers of their earthly supporter.

That night, about the middle watch, we approached the shore, intending to land at a certain watering-place on the route for a fresh supply of water ; and just as we came under the shadow of a high precipice, near the shore, suddenly there shot out two galleys larger than our own. At once the order was given to prepare for the attack. But for the Spirit warning we had received, we would have thought they were peaceful traders like ourselves, and so we might have been taken unawares ; as it was, we soon showed that we were ready to receive them. Seeing this, they evidently thought it would be better for them to seize the smaller of our two vessels, and this they proceeded to do. But our oars were put out at once, and we bore down, running right into them. By this time two or three of our men, in the smaller vessel, had fallen in conflict with the marauders. On coming to close quarters, the negro giant, with the blow of an axe, split open the bow of one of the attacking galleys. She was fast sinking with all on board ; while their comrades in the other vessel bore away to the shore, leaving them to struggle for life in the water, and at our mercy. We did not hesitate, but did all we could to save life, and rescued many of them.

After landing at the watering-place, we buried our dead on a prominent point of land, marking the place as the grave of those who had fallen by the hands of robbers. Having got a supply of water, we proceeded on our voyage. But what were we to do with the robbers whom we had saved from drowning? It was usual, when robbers were thus taken, to convey them to the first port, and hand them over to the authorities for trial and condemnation. But, after thinking over the matter, we resolved not to do so, but to retain them as prisoners. My friend Ion, who knew their language and could speak it, and I also knew something of it, tried to open up a conversation with them ; but we

found them not disposed to speak to us, probably thinking that we were trying to gain information from them to lay before the authorities, into whose hands we would give them up. After repeated attempts to get them to reply to our questions, we failed. They would not open their mouths, trying to make us believe that they did not understand what we said to them.

Ion, who was getting angry at their continued silence, said, "It is of no use to keep your mouths shut, for I know you do understand me ; and better than that (turning to one of them) I know that you have an aged mother, who now sits in her cabin waiting your coming back, and counting on the share you are to receive for your night's work. There, now, she is calling on a neighbour, and that neighbour is a female who, when you have gained a certain amount of wealth, is to be given you for a wife. An aged man is there, and he leans upon a staff, and this young female is his daughter. Your mother is telling her what will be your share of the plunder, for you are captain of one of the vessels."

The man whom my friend was addressing looked amazed, and apparently troubled. He stared at Ion as if at one more than mortal. But he could see nothing but a kindly smile lighting up the coloured face of my friend, as he said, "Now, did not I tell you that you could understand us? Is it not true that you have an aged mother?" and then he explained what like the mother was, and also the old man and his daughter. "Is that all true which I have told you?"

"Yes," he exclaimed, "and you must be a god to know all this!"

"No," said my friend, calmly, "I am a man like yourself. I am an Ethiopian ; you are an Arab. You are brown, and I am black ; yet He who made you made me. In our powers of body and mind, we are alike ; but you have used yours for evil ; I am trying to use mine for good. You are my prisoner, and you know you have been the means of some of my servants losing their lives. What have you to say for this?"

"Well," he said, "did you not rob one of our vessels?"

"No ; we did not," was the answer. "We only took what we required to give as a recompense to the widow and child of the man whom you slew."

"I know that I am your prisoner," sullenly replied the Arab; "and that you will hand me over to be condemned; for that, I can go."

"No, no, my friend," said Ion, "I did not say I would do so. You are still thinking evil. I was thinking, when you spoke just now, what would be the best way to act towards you: not to take away that which I cannot give, but to try and make the life which God has given you better than it is."

The effect of this statement was easily seen on the countenances of this man and his companions. They listened attentively to the merchant while he continued to address them; and were evidently surprised at the treatment they were receiving.

"I am now resolved what I shall do with you," he continued; "I shall carry you to Egypt with me as my prisoners. I will make you my slaves."

On hearing this, I looked at Ion, and wondered what he meant; for well I knew that this was altogether opposed to his character.

He went on to say, "I know you are men who have committed the worst deeds. I do not know how many poor souls you have hurled into the world of spirits—all unprepared, sent suddenly into Hades, but, be sure, I will find out the number, and for each one you have deprived of life, ye shall be my prisoner, or slave, for one month. If any one of you has not slain a man, he is a free man at once."

A number of the Arabs here protested that they had never slain any one.

The merchant calmly said, "I am not asking *you* for this information. I will find it for myself. Meanwhile I will take you to Egypt as prisoners. I will speak with you on our way, and you will listen to me in chains."

I did not think them likely men to carry with us to Egypt; for they might, in desperation, sink the ship or take our lives.

But my friend was determined to carry out his plan. Day by day during the voyage he had them brought before him, when he addressed them on their past lives. Sometimes he got into a towering passion while speaking to them, while at other times he showed himself as weak as a child. I could not account for it; and began to fear that the Arabs might think him mad. I told him of my fears; his reply was, "I feel that this is not of myself.

I am controlled to speak and act as you have witnessed. I would not have kept these men an hour in this vessel ; but I have no power to act in this matter as I choose. Indeed, I have the idea that were I to let them go something would happen to the ship."

One day while he was lecturing his prisoners, one of them said that he had slain one man ; another cried out that he had taken two lives ; a third, that he had killed three ; another, four, and so on ; while their captain or leader confessed that he had slain six. On hearing these confessions, my friend said—"I know that you are telling the truth." And then he began to open up to them the nearness of the spirit-world ; and that the spirits of those they had murdered were ever near them. The leader said that he had often seen the spirits of those he had slain ; that they had haunted him, and that others had urged him on to deeds of rapine and blood.

We had now got near to Suez, and as we approached it, the weather got fearfully hot and oppressive. I had never felt anything to equal it. We landed at night, and got all the goods ashore, and the caravan put in order, so that we might start for Alexandria next morning before the sun rose high in the heavens.

After seeing to all this, my friend Ion and I retired for prayer and communion with the unseen ones. We went to a quiet place and there we knelt in prayer to the Great Spirit, thanking Him for His protection and care through the Desert and in Ethiopia, and through all our dangerous course : as also for the great good that had attended our labours as preachers of the truth. While thus we unitedly prayed and communed together, my venerable father Issha, my friend's father, and a great company of other spirits came round about us. Indeed, we felt as if we were in a little church. We were told by our spirit-friends to go on as we had hitherto done, and success would ever follow in our footsteps ; but that if we forsook the paths of virtue, both the things of earth and of the spirit-world would be taken away from us. It was a night to be remembered.

Rejoining the caravan as the day was breaking, we mounted our animals and set off. After a few days' march we arrived at Alexandria in safety. My friend Ion busied himself in getting his goods into the market ; and while he was thus engaged, being about the sixth hour in the evening, I went at once to our little meeting-house, and there, as I expected, I found the brethren

assembled. They looked on me as one who had risen from the dead, and come back in spirit-form to visit them. They feared that we had been lost, in consequence of our prolonged absence. I told them all that had befallen us since the day we left. When they thus heard of all that the good Lord had done for us, they rejoiced, and in praise and prayer, gave thanks for our safe return.

By this time my friend Ion, having got all his business matters arranged, also made his appearance at the church. After receiving the warmest expressions of welcome from the brethren, he laid before them the case of the captive Arabs, and asked their advice as to what he should do with them. They commended the course he had pursued with them, and thought well of his purpose of ultimately setting them free, when once they gave evidence that they were changed in their character. This change, he told the brethren, he hoped to be the means of effecting in course of time. With this object in view he took all the prisoners, twenty in number, into his own house, where they were treated by him as members of his own family, and where he took advantage of every opportunity of showing them the benefits in this life and the life beyond of pursuing a virtuous course. This treatment on his part, and bringing them under the influences of the brethren at our little assembly, led them at length to thorough repentance.

Thus ends the story of my mission to Ethiopia. I will, however, have something more to say about these Arab converts to the faith.

Fifth Sitting.

April 9th, 1878.

Roman Yoke in Egypt—The Church in Danger—Accusations—Conversion of the Captured Sea-Robbers—Hermes Suspected—Priests at Work—Plot Discovered—A Secret Staircase—New Mission Proposed—Trading and Evangelistic Work Combined.

(*Controlled by HERMES*)—Now, on arriving at home, we found that our little church had begun to multiply, not only to increase in numbers, but to shoot forth branches—to form small meetings round about it. This was as gratifying to us, you may be sure, as the results of our mission were to the brethren.

At this time disturbances were now and again taking place throughout Egypt. The Romans who had the power, exercised it in such a way as to create discontent and broils amongst the people. And this was not ill to do ; for although, as a nation, they had long been trodden down by one and another of invading powers, on looking back on their former height of national fame and glory, when they had, as it were, dictated to the nations—had educated and fed the world—resentment was stirred up within them, and they secretly met and concocted plans whereby they might shake off the yoke and drive the invaders from the land.

Now, we who were banded together as brethren of the same faith looked on these things in another light. We saw that it was folly for the Egyptians to attempt to rise against Rome, at that time the strongest power in the world, whose armies were spread from East to West, from North to South, conquering every country they invaded, and bringing their peoples into subjection. But it must be granted that, with all her faults, Rome was not destitute of certain good points ; for wherever the Romans obtained a footing and power, they were sure to try to improve the commerce and industry of the people brought under their sway. I have no doubt that their object was a selfish one—to increase their own revenue. Still, whatever the motive, it was a benefit to the people they controlled.

Betwixt these secret bands in Egypt, and similar associations in Judea, great intercourse was carried on ; for these Jews were also discontented with the Government of Rome, and began to grumble and growl at their rules—but they were notorious for their discontent and insubordination. At that time, I believe, they were much better under the Romans than they could have been as an independent Kingdom, with a Government of their own. Indeed, Rome found it no easy matter to keep these Jews down, and make honest men of them. But I am wandering from my object. I am not here exactly to interfere in such matters as the relative strength of nations, but to speak of myself and my brethren of the faith.

When we began, at our meetings, to speak against this display of insubordination on the part of these grumblers, and to show them that, in the circumstances, it would be far better to submit, and that they would come far better off to do so, they began to

look upon us as spies of Rome, and to rise and speak against us : so that our attempts to allay the discontent that prevailed only ended in broil and trouble. This might have been avoided had we held our peace and said nothing ; but this we dared not do : we were bound together in one great and holy cause—the redemption of our fellowmen from the evils which beset them. And in this case we saw men striving not merely against the foreign oppressor, but against themselves, and that, in doing so, they were becoming worse than slaves. Rome might, if she had so chosen, have put them into the market and sold them as slaves. But what was the case ? They, though governed as a subdued nation by Rome, had all the freedom of citizens of Rome. Every man was at liberty to keep his own slaves, and was not interfered with. If he paid his tribute money, he was all right. Rome, in serving herself, was at the same time serving the land she governed—saving Egypt the expense of keeping up an army for her own protection. Had the people looked at the matter in this light, they would have seen that, in the condition in which they were placed as a nation, they were wrong. Their ancient cities were fast going to ruins, and their great Canal had become, through neglect, filled up by the sands of the Desert. Had they given more attention to such things, and looked to the interests of their own country, Egypt might have long continued to be what she had once been, one of the most fruitful countries in the world. And now, at the present day, the people have become so mixed up with the tribes of the Desert that their identity is all but lost. It would, I think, be a hard task at present to find a true Egyptian.

And thus has it been with many nations—they have risen, and flourished, and fallen. Few of those which stood when Egypt flourished, are now in existence. But are the few who exist in name really and truly what they claim to be ? I believe not. The old stock is gone. But I am again wandering from my subject. You must forgive me, for when I look back on the olden times, I feel the old spirit rising up.

As I said, these discontented men began to cry out against our small community, saying that we were the paid spies of Rome. This directed the attention of the Romans to us, and they began to cast a watchful and jealous eye on us. Each night we met

for prayer, we looked upon that night as our last meeting ; for we knew not when the enemy would pounce down upon us like a vulture. We knew that he was nigh, and that when he smelt blood, he would dart on his prey, tearing the flesh from the bones. We knew we were closely watched, and that at the first offence we gave, they would come down on the little flock, and scatter us to the winds. Thus situated, we began to exhort one another to keep very quiet, for the time being, and let these political ills work their own cure. But it did come, which you know. I will leave that, however, for the present.

You will remember that, on the last night I was with you, I alluded to the Arabs we had brought home to Egypt with us as prisoners, and spoke of one who was the captain of one of the vessels. These men, as I said, were detained as slaves, if you might so call them, for they were permitted by my merchant friend to go at large. He kept them at his own house, where they ate and drank, and were treated by him as brothers ; at the same time, never forgetting to exhort them in words of kindness, and this he continued to do, till at last they gave in to him—they were conquered by kindness, and cried out—“What shall we do, so that we may be cleansed from the great sins we have committed ?” He spoke to them affectionately, showing them their duty as men one toward another, and how they ought to walk. From that time henceforth these Arabs showed that they were changed men. The wild marauding fishermen of the Red Sea became meek and humble servants of our Great Master. They met with us night and day in our assemblies for prayer ; and we found them ardently devoted to the cause we had all at heart. They not only prayed to the Great Spirit for their brethren, but they poured forth their supplications in behalf of all mankind. The Arab captain and I became from that time good friends ; and often had I cause to thank God for such a friend. He was young and strong, while I, though not aged, was not young ; and on one occasion, he carried me like a child in his arms, when I was foot-sore and weary, hardly able to draw one leg behind the other. When fainting with thirst, my tongue cleaving to my mouth, he carried me for miles over the burning sands till he reached a well, and lifting water in the palm of his hand, he dropped it into my parched mouth when my senses had fled.

Well, at the time I am speaking of, when our little church was so jealously watched by both Romans and Egyptians, I was set down as the ringleader of the Judean sect, as they called us. My merchant friend was wealthy, and could pay heavy tribute to Rome; he was also well known for his kindness in giving to the poor; and no one would ever think of molesting him, even though he was known to be my friend. I also could go free; but men looked askance at me—I was suspected. They knew the position I had formerly occupied—that I had been chosen a high priest, and ought, according to law, to have filled the office; but that I had left the religion of Egypt, and had gone over to a new one, which I was trying to establish amongst them. The priests, were, therefore, my bitterest enemies. When I was amongst them, there were some who professed to be my friends—men who would have bent the knee before me. These men now became my foes: men whom I had in no way injured—with whom I had shared my last morsel—who, having families dependent on them, had got my share of what was left in the coffers, while I sat in my lonely cell, living on bread and water;—these very men became my inveterate foes, and did everything in their power to injure me.

Such were the circumstances in which we were placed, when one day an Arab friend, through curiosity, wandered into one of our ruined temples. As he sauntered about, looking at the remains of former grandeur, he rested his shoulder on one of the pillars, and as he did so he fell into a train of meditation. There was great quietness within those ancient walls, which were fast falling into decay, and a feeling of awe swept over him, as he thought of all that had been said and done there in days long passed away. His mind, too, went back to his former wild life, and the deeds done in it, till he came to the time when he was captured and carried into Egypt; how he and his fellow-captives had been treated, and how God had dealt with them, in bringing before their minds the holy doctrines of Jesus the Nazarene. Then he began to contrast these simple truths with the system of worship that had been practised within these walls, and of which he had often heard, and thought that however beautiful and grand it might at one time have been, yet there was something grander in the worshipper being able to find a temple anywhere—

to cast his eyes upward to the blue firmament, when it was sparkling with the jewels of night, and adore Him who was the maker and upholder of the glorious canopy.

While thus he thought, his meditations were disturbed by some distant noise. He looked about him, but he could see no one ; the place seemed to be entirely deserted, yet the noise continued. He listened—it was the sound of voices, but from what point he could not guess ; it seemed as if the voices were all round about the pillar on which he had been leaning. He went very cautiously round it, and examined it closely, and at length discovered that what he had taken to be a pillar was that and something else. A part of it was moveable, and was made to turn beautifully on a centre, so that, when pushed round, a flight of descending steps met the eye. (Now I knew of this same pillar, and had I been in his company, I would at once have known whence the sound proceeded.) On making an opening a great volume of sound came up the concealed stair-case, but he gently closed it, and his curiosity being excited, he set himself to listen. He heard as much, so far as he could make out, as to give him the idea that the men, whose voices reached his ears, were forming a plan to entrap me, and consign me to one of the dungeons. He said it was proposed, first of all, that they should cast lots for one to take my life ; but on this being proposed, some of them spoke of my goodness, and against assassination—that it would be better to put me into a dungeon. (A little spark of generous feeling had been left in the breasts of some of them. Perhaps they thought that confinement in a dungeon was better than killing at once ; but I thought otherwise—better to be killed outright than be killed by the slow process of confinement. Had I been one of this band of conspirators, I would have gone in for killing at once, for so long as the victim was in life, so long would there be the possibility of retaliation.) So it was at length arranged that one of them was to meet me in my usual walk, profess great friendship for me, so as to deceive me. (No, it would have been out of his power to do so.) Gradually, as we became more friendly in our intercourse, he would hint that his brethren were beginning to think as I did, and were desirous of more light, and thus get me persuaded to go to the temple, where, of course, I would be caged up like a bird. And so these men, enclosed within stone walls,

thought their plans were a secret! They might have kept their purpose secret. But I believe it was an intervention of the spirit-world that brought the man to the spot, and thus laid bare the plot against me.

The Arab came at once to the church, and told them all he had heard. What was to be done? Doubtless those who are fore-warned are fore-armed: and I was quite prepared to take these men on their own ground—indeed, I was determined to do so. But I was advised by the spirit-voice of my old father, Issha, that, in the meantime, it would be better for the church were I to leave and go elsewhere; that, then, I might escape from them. But if I stayed it would be impossible, for these men had so set their machinery in motion that even the spirit-world would fail to protect my life. He said that I had more work to do on earth, both for them and for the Great Master. The assembled church heard the voice as I heard it (a voice such as you here have heard), and they knew at once who it was that spake.

About this time it was arranged that these Arab fishermen and sailors should go back to their own country, and see what they could do to display the light, which they had received, amongst their brethren. These men were determined that they would not put their candle under a bushel, but that they would go direct to their own land, and, if their own people would not receive them, they would go elsewhere. So he who was their leader, said—“Why, Hermes, I think you would do well to accompany us, for we look upon you as our father. Come with us, and if our people will not make you welcome, then they will not make us welcome. We can travel through the Desert, for we can guide the ‘ship of the desert’ as easily as we can the ship on the sea; so you need not be afraid.”

Accordingly, I agreed to start with them on the following night, not wishing to attract observation by going away in the daytime. Indeed, the following day was wholly taken up with making preparations; for our friend *Ion* would not allow us to depart on such a journey empty-handed. He wanted, he said, to give us a start in life, so that we might have the means of supporting ourselves. There were a number of camels loaded with merchandise of various descriptions, which he considered suitable for the different places on our proposed route. I was not a merchant—

nor had I any desire to be one. I knew nothing of prices, and would not have known when I was acting justly or unjustly; but the converted robbers were very acute in such matters. The merchant gave them directions how to deal in the various places they came to, laying down certain principles by which they were to be guided in their bargains. He did not mean them to make any hard and fast price, but to go up and down according to the circumstances of the customer they were dealing with. If they found that he was poor, they were enjoined to let him have the goods for so much less; if he was a rich man, then for a little more. This was looked upon as honest trading. One thing we were determined to give without price (and it was indeed priceless), and that was the truth, which we were ready to impart to all. For this we would ask nothing. It had been freely given to us, and we would freely give it to others. But the goods bestowed on us by Ion, we would use as a means whereby to keep soul and body together. (I leave off here for this night.)

Sixth Sitting.

April 17th, 1878.

Departure of Hermes and his Band—Intense Heat on the Shores of the Red Sea—Hermes in Fever—Singular Spiritual Manifestation—Hermes prostrate—No Water—Dry Springs—The Dying Arabs of the Desert—Prayer for Water—Spirits to the Rescue—O, Glorious Water!—Recompense refused: Thank God—A Strange Vision—A Market Town—Discussion in the Market Place—The “Wonder” in the Desert—“Water of Life”—The Robber Captain’s Address—Trafficking and Mission Work—A Spirit Concert.

LAST night we met I told you of the unsettled state of things in Egypt, and how the priests had got up a conspiracy to put me out of the way. Well, as I mentioned, it was agreed that I should accompany the Arabs on their journey home. So we started with our animals, and the goods which Ion had given to us to trade with, that we might be able to support ourselves as we journeyed along.

After crossing the Isthmus, we resolved to go round by the shores of the Red Sea, and continue the journey till we reached a small Arabian fishing village. On the borders of the Red Sea the heat was intense; the sun pouring down his rays in tenfold

strength, so great as almost to shrivel the skin from the bone. There was no green herb to be seen—all was dry, parched, burnt up. I had passed through many a hot blast, but none could be compared with this. My sufferings then were greater than any I had experienced before. If ever there was a time when I longed to go into the world of spirits it was then. The result was—I was seized with a raging fever, and between the heat of the sun and the heat of the fever I became a raving madman, and would have torn to pieces any one who came near me. The wildest animal was not so ferocious as I was. It taught me a lesson. There may be a time when the gentlest spirits have no control over themselves at certain stages of disease. Like a machine which has been set a-going, and over which he who has been appointed to guide it has lost control, so is it with man in such a case as that I am speaking of. The material organism gets damaged and out of order—the spirit cannot guide it or keep it right—and the bodily machine in its unguided course so damages itself that the spirit leaves it a wreck. I had been for three days in this condition, when I fell into a state in which they could hardly tell whether I was dead or alive. My breathing seemed to have ceased. Some of my companions alleged that they had seen my spirit-form walking from my body and go to the sea-shore, and return with sea-water, and bathe my body with it! It was hard for me to believe this; but I had implicit faith in the truthfulness of these men, for though once bad men and not to be depended on, they were now changed—the very opposite of what they had been. No doubt it was new, but having seen so many wonderful things done, I could not doubt it. When I recovered from my illness it gave me a great deal of thought and study to find out, if possible, the connection between my own self and my body—how the spirit could leave the body, walk forth in form so as to be seen, and do that which was so needful for the body—all this gave me much concern afterwards.

When I came to myself, I found I was a poor, weak creature. Our provisions getting exhausted, my friends were anxious to get on as fast as possible; but I was so very weak that I could not sit on the back of my animal. The camel is not a pleasant beast to ride on. They shake a man with all his strength, let alone one so weak as I was. The leader of the Arabs in this emergency

got a sort of litter made, on which I reclined, and in spite of all my protestations, he would carry me on his back through that broiling sun, which blistered the skin, although our route lay close by the sea. The hot rays striking on the skin seemed to eat into it. In that quarter night comes suddenly on, and at first darkness prevails, but it soon clears up, the bright stars shine out, and it becomes as it were another day without the oppressive heat. We would have preferred to travel during the night, but for the wild animals and robbers that prowled about, which made it unsafe, so we were compelled to travel by day, and encamp each night. My friend, the leader, carried me in the way I have described for many miles.

We had been all this time on the coast of the Red Sea ; but on coming to a certain point, one of the Arabs who had been in this quarter before, said that he knew of one of those green spots or islands of the desert a few miles inland, where we might get rest and be refreshed. It was, therefore, agreed to push on to it as fast as possible. But I felt to task my friend with the burden of carrying me, and told him I would try to put up with riding on the camel. I could no longer endure to see him tortured in bearing me along. He said he was willing to do that and ten times more on account of what I had done for him. I said I had only given him that which had cost me nothing. He had (he said) received new life through my efforts in placing the truth before him, and insisted on resuming his burden. But I would not have it ; and having got on the back of the animal, I managed to continue on it during the journey inland. We arrived at the oasis late in the evening. But, alas ! we found that the springs had become dry, and that the trees and vegetation around were also beginning to be dried up—withering away for want of moisture. The last place where we watered, the water was so bad we could not use it. The animals had taken it ; but we, in the expectation of getting a supply by the evening in this place, had rejected it. We did not know what to do. Our faith failed us a little. We began to wish we had continued our course by the coast, even though it was rough and rugged. Some proposed to go back again. I was completely exhausted ; but even those who were stronger, and had been used to this kind of life, were also sorely exhausted. It had been a very fatiguing day. The hot air had

dried us up thoroughly, and the blood rushed through our veins with great speed; indeed, we were so much heated our blood seemed to boil. Some spoke of slaying the camels to get at the water they had stored up; but the Arab leader and I protested against this, wishing to keep the useful animals alive, as something might turn up for our advantage before morning. I said that though I was very weak and exhausted by the journey, I would try and bear up without water, and that we should lie down for the night, and see what a new day brought forth. The tents were pitched accordingly, and everything prepared for the night.

I and my good friend, the captain, thought we would stroll about this island of the Desert before we lay down. It was not large, being only about one and a-half furlongs in length. We wanted to see if there were no springs on the other side of a little hill. On reaching the other side we found springs, but they, also, were dry; while beside them, in the last stages of exhaustion, there lay a small company of Arabs. We ascertained afterwards that they, after a long and tiresome journey over the Desert, making for the coast, had arrived at this place, and found no water. They had killed a few of their animals, and divided the scanty supply of water taken from them, but had suffered fearfully, and now they were at the very point of death. The camels that had not been slain were suffering much. To see these poor animals, with their tongues hanging out of their mouths so as to get moisture from the air, was fitted to make the stoutest heart bleed. But we could do nothing.

On telling our company what we had seen, they were deeply affected. I believe if we had got water at that moment, we would have given it to those dying men before taking a drop ourselves. If a stranger had come and looked on, he would have thought our people were all mad: they fell on their knees, and, raising their eyes to heaven, cried for "Water!" "Water!" not so much for themselves, but for the unfortunate beings who were perishing so close to them. We knew we had enough of strength to travel back to the coast, but these men, unless supplied with water, would not live much longer. Poor fellows, in their long march across the Desert, every well they came to they had found dry. They came thinking they would find water at this well, and that

their miseries would be at an end. But, alas ! here they lay dying, men and animals alike.

We knew not well what to do, but at last it was agreed to wait till the morning. It was better to let them die in peace, for we had nothing to give them—it was water they needed, and we had none. No doubt we might have killed the camels, and taken water from them, but that would, ultimately, only add to our difficulty—for then we would be compelled to travel on foot, or stay where we were, and perish. We thought, therefore, we would do the next best—lie down and rest. There is some relief to the sufferer even in sleep. For the time being his misery seems to be over ; the body being at rest, the spirit gets leave to go and mix with those like itself.

Having set watches, we lay down on our beds, and slept. About the middle watch of the night, I heard a voice crying,—“Awake, ye sleepers ! Awake, ye sleepers !” and the words repeated three times. So distinct was the voice, that each of those who were sleeping started to his feet. We all looked astonished—each one asking his neighbour if he had called, but all were alike at a loss to account for the voice. It was like the voice of one of ourselves. But, strange to say, the watchers who were not asleep had heard nothing. We thought we would retire again to our beds, as it was likely we were mistaken, seeing that those who were set to watch had not heard the voice. But, on pondering over the matter, I came to the conclusion that the call must have been made by our spirit friends on the other side. However, I said nothing. I had scarcely lain down, when again I heard a voice uttering these words,—“Arise ! why lie ye here ? Your brethren are suffering ; arise, and give them water.” The words were distinctly uttered ; but it seemed to me as if they were said in mockery by some evil spirit who had come to torment us—who would not allow us even to get rest in sleep—and held out the hope of obtaining water only to disappoint us. Such were my thoughts, when the voice was again heard, saying,—“Why do ye doubt our word ? Go and see !” I bowed humbly when the Spirit spake these words, but I saw no one. In bending, I felt as if drops of water fell on my head, which was immediately followed by a sensation of increased strength. I felt that I had received four times more strength than I had had for some time, and that the

“old man” came back again completely. I was myself again. So I went at once to the spring, and there I found the pure water gushing abundantly from the sandy bottom—pure, clear water, like unto crystal. O glorious water! Though my mouth and lips were parched—though I could have lain down on the brink and lapped it like a dog, I did not do so, but aroused my companions, and told them there was water flowing from the spring. They looked at me; they thought I was mad again—that the fever had returned. But at length I prevailed on them to go with me to the fountain. You may imagine their joyful surprise when they saw the stream of pure water bubbling out of the sandy bed. “Touch it not,” I said, “but fill every man his skin, and carry to those who are now suffering, and dying, and then we will help ourselves.”

At once this was done—the skins were filled with the precious water, and carried over to where the perishing Arabs lay. We at once moistened their lips and bathed their foreheads, and while we did so, they began to open their eyes, and look on us—at first with a wild glare, as if awaking from a troubled dream. We then cautiously gave them, little by little, of the water. After we had thus gone over all the men, women, and children—not forgetting the poor animals—and told them how we had found them, and all the circumstances which had attended the unexpected supply of water, we went back to the spring and helped ourselves. Having watered our animals and filled our skins, we thanked the Giver of all Good for sending the refreshing, life-giving blessing to us mortals, and then we lay down again for the night.

Next morning, those whom we had relieved, came round to our encampment. They related to us the great sufferings they had endured in their journey across the Desert. They expressed their gratitude to us for all that we had done for them, and would have given us the richest and most valuable presents of the goods they carried—ivory, gold-dust, etc.; but we would take nothing. We said, that that which we had given them we had received freely from the Great Father of us all. He who created us and preserved us in life had also created the life-giving water. He had seen their sufferings and our great need, and had sent the precious gift of water.

After a little conversation we became very good friends. Good

actions make good friends. While they remained with us that day, we did what we could to open their eyes to the light of the truth concerning God and the Spirit-world: how he, the Great Spirit by his spirit-messengers, comes to our aid when we cannot help ourselves, as seen in that which had taken place on our behalf and theirs. The Children of the Desert, however, see so many strange things, that they ascribed the sudden flow of the spring to a freak of nature.

As the day drew towards a close, our rescued friends made preparations to leave, as they wished to travel during the night. They were anxious to push on towards the coast, to get their goods disposed of at the market-place for such articles. They said they would see us again. Having got every thing arranged for their journey, they parted from us, and went on their way towards the coast. We remained for another night, so that we might rest, and make the necessary arrangements for our journey back to the shores of the sea. We were free to do this, seeing that we had now plenty of water,—thanks to Him who gave it!

That night I had a strange vision. I lay sleeping on my bed—that bed was the ground—with a small bale of goods for my pillow. I thought that I slept on this bed, but that my face was turned downwards towards the ground. I thought that my eyes penetrated down through the earth, and that I could see the course of that stream of water—which was bubbling up through the narrow channel formed in the sand—down, down through great masses of sand till it came to a rock, or hard substance, when it went hither and thither, first one way and then another, till at length I saw that it was connected with a large body of clear water. I thought that this body of water was spread over the underground Desert. My vision was enlarged so that it embraced hundreds of miles; and it seemed as if the great Desert floated on a vast sea of clear water. He who showed me this, explained how it was possible to make a spring anywhere, by making a hole down through the sand; that the reason why the springs became dried up was this: where the rents were small in the rock, allowing but a scanty stream to penetrate the sandy mass above, the little that did find its way upwards was, in certain seasons, sucked in by the hot sand as it approached the surface.

I related my vision to those who were with me, and they thought that the stoppage of springs from such a cause was quite likely, and they proposed to make one of those holes the first time they passed that way again, at this very spot. The depth requiring to be made was great, but nothing that could not be accomplished by man.

At length we started on our way. We had been four or five weeks away from our friends; and I often wished I knew how they were getting on, for my heart yearned after my flock which I had left to become a wanderer of the Desert. We hurried on so as to reach a certain town where we might do some good mission work, for that was our chief object. By and by we arrived at the place. My Arab friends had frequently passed through it. It was an agreeable change for us; for we had just been encountering on our march columns of hot stifling sand, which, if we had lifted our heads, would have suffocated us. And now we once more cast our eyes on trees and bushes here and there about the town. The Arabs, whom we had rescued in the Desert, were there, and having disposed of all their goods, were preparing to go farther down the coast.

When we got in that night, it was too late for the market. We, therefore, put up our camels at an inn, making the necessary arrangements for our accommodation. My Arab friend, the captain, and I, then walked forth to see the place, which was new to me, but not to him. He was well acquainted with many people of the town; and he took me to the market-place, where many of the foreign merchants and inhabitants met to talk over questions of interest, both social and political. On coming near, we were more than astonished when we heard them conversing on the wonderful phenomenon of the water rising at the dried up spring. It appeared that the people we had rescued had spread the story abroad—telling all about it—how we had found them in a dying state—how we had made diligent search for water, and found none; they told them how we had been aroused by a voice in the night—how the water was discovered, and how we had given them water before serving ourselves. The assembled people were discussing all about this when we came forward. We listened. There were different theories advanced to account for the strange thing. Some said the cold wind had passed over the

dry spring, and the moisture had come to the surface—that it was a stronger spring than the others round about, and it could force itself up, etc.

My friend the captain, after a little, went forward, and said he knew something of that which they were talking about. “You are a stranger here,” said one, “and what can you know of it?” and another, “Are you going to give us some new theory concerning it?” “It is an old theory,” he said; “such things have happened before, and will happen again. When such things happen once, they are sure to occur more than once. But as to our knowledge of this matter, I say we are the men who encamped at the spring that evening.” And then he gave them the whole account of that which had taken place, detailing all that I have already given. He told them that I was the person to whom the unseen one had spoken, and that I had obeyed the call. They stared incredulously at us as he told them this. “Oh, do not think we are madmen! what I tell you is true. Hear our story, and then judge; give us credit for what is due to us, and no more. Why should we tell you a lie? There were those beside us, though unseen, from whom we might ask help in our need. Do not look as if I were deceiving you, but listen to what I tell you. That night we lifted up our voices in prayer to the Great Spirit—He who made all things—asking him for water for ourselves and for our poor neighbours who were dying. We lay down in our beds and slept. A voice was heard calling on us to rise up. We arose, but we thought it was a dream, and we lay down again. But my friend here was aroused once more; and while the voice told him of the flowing spring, drops of water fell on his head. Now, men, that is how this thing came about. You may give what theory you please to account for it. I have told you the truth about it. The Great Spirit has water stored up in the bowels of the earth, and He has but to open the seals and that water will gush out. But, let me tell you of a better water than that—water which has passed through the filters of the Spirit-world, and been poured down on the souls of men. Drink of this water, and ye shall become like gods and live for ever.”

When he spoke in that way they *did* open their eyes. And some were astonished when they heard one speaking in this manner whom they had known as a notorious character—a

robber ; but, though they were quite well aware of this, they said nothing—they knew well that but for robbery and bloodshed they could not have had the goods from these sea-robbers at so low a price ; and yet, while thus taking part in this unjust dealing, they affected to despise—to look down on the band ! They began to exchange words with one another. “ Have we not done business with this man ? ” they said. “ Yes, ” he said, “ you have done business with me. You have bought from me goods which were not mine to sell—goods torn from people with a strong hand, and with bloodshed. We offered them to you, and you bought them. But now I cry out against such dealings. It is wrong to take that which is not our own, and wrong for you to buy what you know to have been stolen. I have in past life shed blood, and I have suffered for it, and *will* suffer for it, both here and also in the world of Spirits. There I will have to meet with those whom I have slain, and beseech their forgiveness for what I have done. ” He went on preaching the new doctrine of the Master, and earnestly and pointedly denouncing the iniquity which he knew to prevail in the place, until the people who stood round were astonished. But, night coming on, we retired to our quarters.

On the following morning we went to the market-place to get rid of our goods in exchange for other goods, and money, to allow us to pay for our lodgings, and also to buy provisions. While we were thus engaged, some one said—“ Is not this he who was last night talking of things he knew nothing about, and about which we have no right to know ? Here he is, driving as hard a bargain as anyone. ” My friend replied to this remark by saying—“ I offer you these goods at a fair value. Look at them, and put your own price on them—do a fair, honest bargain. ” The man who was spoken to examined them, and found them valuable. “ I will, ” said he, “ give you so-and-so for these. ” “ Why, ” replied my companion, “ you offer to give me two pieces more than I would have asked ! ” “ In that case, ” said this merchant, “ I can give you the two pieces less. ” “ Oh, no, ” rejoined my friend, “ you will get them at your own price ; you know they are worth that, for I know their value as well as you do. ” Thereafter we disposed of as much of our stock as we required, and bought some goods in return.

I found that my friend was a good merchant, who knew his business well in buying and selling. "Though appearing to you as a fisherman," he remarked, "I was something more. I could tread the deck of a ship; I could traverse the lonely deserts, and buy and sell to the best advantage. I know the persons I have to deal with in this place; and in leaving that man to fix his own value on the goods, I knew that I would get more than if I had myself stated the price."

We began to be known about the town, as we set about our missionary work. There was one man we met in with, of the same stamp as our Arab friend, but who had retired as a rich merchant. He had heard what had been said in the market-place on the evening of our arrival, and had become so much interested in the subject of the address that he opened his house to us. The interest spread as we continued the work, and one after another of the people became deeply impressed by the truths spoken. Every night we had a meeting with these inquirers in the house of the rich merchant. At these assemblies we got Arabic, Egyptian, or other books or scrolls—the languages of which were well known by my friend,—from which he showed the people around him that these books were all, more or less, driving at the same point as he was trying to place before them, and that was—a hereafter—the world of spirits. These men had some strange notions of a hereafter. We tried to set before them what we knew regarding the spirit-world; but as we began to give them some of our experiences on this point, we found that they were unprepared for them—they evidently could not take them in. We thought it better, therefore, to give them information of such things as they were able to receive.

One evening, before the room in which we met was lighted up (for darkness comes suddenly on in that place), some of those tiny lights, which you yourselves have witnessed, began to float about. They could not make out what these were; but we explained the matter to them. This was followed by a chorus of voices, singing Arabic songs and hymns. The assembled people were astonished—they wanted to see the singers. "No," I said, "you cannot see those who sing. I am sure that it is no one in this room who is singing; nor yet is it outside the room—you can send out and see. Then, consider the number of voices that you

hear. Some of these are quite nigh to you." We continued to sit that night for a long time, while the invisible band sang their sweet and delightful hymns, the sounds of which gradually died away in the seeming distance. Then we lighted up and spoke to the assembly. Night after night they wished to see or hear some of those wondrous things. But we told them we had gained our object.

I must now stop for this night.

Seventh Sitting.

April 24th, 1878.

The Doctrine Taught by Hermes—Abba, the Captain of the Converted Robbers—Spirit Help in Business Affairs to be Shunned—Character of Abba—Issha Predicts Abba's Success—The Rescued Caravan—Travelling on the Sea-Coast—Night Travelling: its Dangers—A Bloodthirsty Band—The Spirit Guards—Abba's Proposal to Form a Church—A Circle—The Angel—A Sea of Faces—The Spirit Choir.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)— Good evening, my friends. Have you any questions to put to me before I resume my narrative? You must be quick, for the time is far spent.

Mr. N.—Did you, in teaching these Arabs, bring prominently into view the doctrines you yourself had received from Jesus?

Certainly; I tried to impress on them the principle of justice between man and man—honest dealing with their fellowmen; that a bad, dishonest life was neither profitable for the life on earth nor for that of the spirit-world; and that Jesus, my Master, came for no other end than to try and improve mankind.

Mr. N.—What was the name of your Arab captain?

My friend's name was very short, but it had a great deal of meaning in it—*Abba*. His actions and character in his after life brought out his name, which name was given him by his mother, not thinking, when she gave such a name, that her son would act out the name in his future life. There was no mere chance work in this—there is no such thing in the wide universe as chance—all is done according to law.

We were at the town on the sea-coast, where we bought and sold and acted as merchants, disposing of our merchandise at the best market, and receiving in return that which we might sell again in other places, and also the necessaries of life. The goods were the gift of Ion for that purpose, so that we should be able to move along on our long journey without asking or taking from anyone. We were more of a missionary expedition than a trading one ; but I have no doubt, if we had gone into the latter branch, we would have been very successful. There were those of the spirit-world who could have aided us in this ; but we had no desire to do so, for spirits given to that sort of thing are not of an elevated character. You may think it strange in me to speak in this way ; nevertheless, it is true. It is the same at the present time, and many a poor mortal is led far astray by such spirits. The Arabs who were with me were not, of course, so far weaned from the consideration of worldly things as I was. They had not been brought up like me ; for my whole training, from childhood upwards, was of a spiritual kind ; though, in my early life, I was considerably in the dark—my eyes had not been opened to the light of spiritual truth—and at that time I might have been led away by such spirits.

Some of those Arabs consulted with me one day—they wanted my counsel. They said—“Last night, we dreamt that we saw a number of heavenly beings, who told us that we were to accumulate goods, and, if we would listen to them, they promised to inform us where we would find a ready sale for these.” I advised them to pay no attention to such communications—that such spirits showed, by the nature of their communications, that they were not those they should seek after, but avoid.

It was different in the case of Abba, their leader. He who, but a short time before, had been the captain of a band of robbers, addicted to outrage and crime of every description, had become united to me in the bonds of love and truth. We had, indeed, become as one. I was often astonished, when I was thinking of something, to find that he had been thinking of the same thing, and often he would take the very words from my lips before I had time to speak. I could not understand this for a long time. The change was so great, and accomplished in such a brief time, I did not then see what to make of it. One whose breast had

cherished everything wicked had become one of the purest and most saintly of men I had ever met with. But, remember, I was, at times, doubtful (not that I was jealous of him) whether this state of things would last for any time. But, day by day, he appeared to me to become more and more upright in every action of his life; and altogether he seemed to have been entirely changed—to be, as it were, quite a different individual. His experiences were laid open to me, he kept nothing back. He said that often his whole being was so far lifted up into the heavens that we, his companions, were lost to him. And I could see it to be true, for when, at such seasons, I spoke to him, he seemed to be quite absent, and I began to see that he had such a close connection with spiritual life, that it might truly be said of him that he lived in the spirit-world. The spirit of my good old father, Issha, told me, when pondering over this, that the welfare of his countrymen had taken so firm a hold of Abba, that he had become like a hen that spreads her wings over her brood. He said he could see in this man one of the finest and purest that ever was raised from the earth, one whose whole heart and soul burned with inextinguishable love for his fellowmen; and that he would do more good than ever I would be able to do, for this reason, that those to whom he was now going knew him—they knew him as one whose hand had been ever ready in the fray of blood and plunder. But they would find, when they came to look at him, that, though the same man in outward form, he was completely changed in his mind and actions; one who would never be afraid to lay down his life in behalf of the truth he proclaimed. This I could easily believe; for I had been witness that he was not afraid to risk his life in his old and wicked avocation. It was not, therefore, likely that he would be less bold in upholding that which he now held to be the very truth of God.

On talking with my brother Abba of our future movements and prospects, he said that when he came in contact with his countrymen, he would show them that we were men, banded together in one sacred brotherhood—not for the gaining of gold, the mere dust of the earth, which we could not take with us when we left—but that the gold we sought for was the precious souls of men. “Our gold,” he said, “must be that which will endure for

ever. We need not that of earth. If we receive, by honest merchandise, as much as will keep the life in our bodies, that is all we need, till once the Master, whom we have not seen, but whom we love, and have sworn faithfully to obey, calls us home to abide with him in his heavenly mansions."

I am wandering away from my narrative. We had tarried for a few days in that town or village. We paid for that which we had received, and went forth again, parting with those whom we had been the means of relieving in the Desert. They had disposed of all their merchandise, and were on their way back. We bade them farewell. The people of that caravan had become changed in their mind, and it made me very happy to know that, having embraced the faith of Jesus of Nazareth, these men would, in their wanderings over the burning sands of the Desert, carry it to places we could never reach; that, where our voices would never be heard, there they would be able to speak of the truths they had received; and that possibly all this might end in the conversion of the whole of the lawless men who roamed over the sandy wastes. If this was done, then truly the wild men of the Desert would be at length conquered.

My friend Abba said that he was anxious to get to his native village, for there were some there whom he wished to make like himself. It would be well if all who received good would act in a similar way. That which you have freely received, give it freely to your neighbour. That was the course we followed wherever we went.

Our journey now lay along the coast, which was rocky, and anything but agreeable. Sometimes, when crossing over the white and sunburnt rocks, we were almost choked by the hot, sulphury atmosphere and the drifting sand-clouds. It was nothing new to my companions, but it was new to me. I thought that it was the most painful and worst infliction that I had ever borne in the flesh. It was awful torture: you could hardly open your mouth to speak to your neighbour, when it was filled with sand; while you dared not expose your eyes, or you would have been at once blinded. I often wished that I could get into the waters of the sea, that looked so beautiful and inviting when we came nigh to them. I had, in my wanderings, stood a good deal of fatigue, but never till I undertook this journey had I suffered so much. I

was not only unaccustomed to this kind of travelling, but I felt that my recent illness had left me less able to bear it.

At length it was arranged that we should travel in the night time, and make for some sheltered spot of the rocks in the morning, where we might rest and refresh ourselves. This we did, but not without a great drawback; for, travelling at night, our way was infested by beasts of prey, continually on the watch—and even by worse than beasts—men who, living by robbery, might pounce upon us suddenly at any time. But it was evident that we were guarded on every side by a power unseen; for both the eyes of men and beasts were seen by some of our company to glare at us through the darkness, but that was all—they seemed either to be chained to the spot, or afraid to attack us. I came to the conclusion that they were held back by some unseen power.

When about a day's journey from the place we were going to, we reached a sheltered spot, where we encamped. Having attended to our camels (for we always made it a point to attend to them before ourselves; we were kind to them, and they were always obedient to us), I sat down at the fire with Abba while the morning meal was preparing. He said,—"Hermes, did you see the wild-looking men we passed in the darkness?" I said I did. "I know them and their captain," he continued, "and they know me well. They are as blood-thirsty a set of men as ever I knew; for not only do they plunder the poor traveller, but they take away his life, strip the garments off the body, and cast it into the sea, or leave it to the vultures or wolves. I have noticed, as we travelled by night, that the wild animals came to a certain distance from us, but no farther; and that these robbers seemed also to keep back from us. What can it mean, think you?"

I said I thought that we were protected by some unaccountable means, or by spirit friends. "Since the time of that fever which laid me low, things have puzzled me more than they used to do. I have been forgetful, I fear. Instead of going to the Fountain-Head for counsel, I have been trying to find out for myself."

Abba here remarked,—“Since we started last night, or rather since we passed these robbers, I have not been with you at all.”

“How is that?” I inquired. “You were certainly with us.”

“I was in the Spirit-world,” he said. He then began to explain

and to tell me what he saw. "There seems," he said, "to be a guard going on either side of us. We appear to walk in an avenue of spiritual beings."

All at once it came on me like a flash of lightning from the heavens: How could I have been so blind? At once I fell on my knees, and thanked God for his protection, and prayed that my eyes might see his guardian angels as before. These men and beasts could no more pass through the Spirit-guard than they could through solid rock.

Under the shade of a sheltering rock, seated around our camp fire, we formed ourselves into a little company; and Abba, my brother, said,—“Our brethren in the land of Egypt—that place where I received the glorious light—are at this hour holding their morning service, and praying for us and the success of our work. Why should we, assembled in this desert place, not have such services? Why not form ourselves into a little church here and now? This little company might, in due time, be swelled to thousands.” For the first time during our travels, we formed ourselves into a worshipping assembly, and went through all the services the same as in Egypt and elsewhere. We had no roof over our heads, except the thin camel (hair) cloth to shelter us from the sun’s rays, but there we prayed and spoke to one another. Abba read from one of the Arabic books certain divine passages, which were thoroughly commented on by the rest. We then sung some hymns, and prayed. Afterwards, we formed ourselves into a circle; we went on our knees, with our faces turned inwards, and bent our heads reverently in the dust. Then each one raised himself to a straight posture, and, as we did so, we beheld in our midst one of those lovely forms which my eyes before had seen. He lifted up his hands, and, holding them over our heads, blessed each one of the circle: and as this was done, drops of refreshing water, as it were, seemed to fall on us—an influence streamed from his fingers, which penetrated to our very brain, and we felt as if transformed into different persons. It seemed to give us more of the spirit than we had ever possessed before. The angelic form rose gently from our midst, hovered over us, and disappeared. And then we found that Abba’s words were verified in one way: the small church had swelled to thousands; for all around us we beheld a sea of happy faces

gazing on us, and then we heard, in sounds ravishingly sweet, an anthem sung by the heavenly choir; and while the notes rose on the morning air, he who had been with us to bless us, again blessed us. Each one engaged in silent prayer, and then we woke up from our trance; for we had really been in that condition, but how long we did not know. We felt ourselves refreshed and ready for our journey. Good night.

Eightb Sitting.

May 1st, 1878.

Hermes Meditates—That which shall be—Abba and his Companions at Home—A Vision of the Future—The “Isles of the Sea”—Abba’s Betrothed—His Mother—Her Conversion, etc.

THE last night we met, I had brought you within a short distance of the fishing village on the Red Sea, to which our friends, the Arabians, belonged.

Before resuming the narrative, allow me, at this point, to meditate a little on things in general. Coming thus in contact with earth, recollections spring up—subjects of meditation and study in my earth-life rise up before me. I remember now how I used to ponder on the things of the heavens and the earth, on the animal and vegetable creation; how I used to wish that I had the power to dive into many of the secrets of nature—to open up those things which lay hidden, so that good might flow out to myself and to my fellowmen; for in my day we were not so far advanced in the sciences as you are now, nor even so far as our forefathers. The arts and sciences known to them had in many cases been forgotten in my time. How worthy of our deepest consideration is the fact—that He who created all things arranged that, in the working of his handicraft, nothing should be lost! That that which is washed down from the mountains’ sides helps to fill up the depths of the valleys with soil; and thus vegetation is strengthened—thus is provision made for the growth of food for men, and also for herds and flocks, who feed on the sweet grass.

Where we lay encamped, I could cast my eyes on the sea, over which the sun in meridian glory poured his bright beams; and

beyond the silvered bosom of the sea, and the sun-burnt rocks on its borders, the great luminary sent down his strong heat in the interior, where waves of sand rolled hither and thither, and where no vegetable reared its tiny leaf above the surface ;—In the depths of the waters—in the sandy wastes—in the fertile valleys and plains, the Great Creator had, in all, arranged in His wisdom, that life should exist in vegetable and animal forms, and that man should be king over all. Then, thought I, how has man used this power? Ah, he has not used it aright. He has abused the gift ; he has taken all to himself, and forgotten the Great Giver ; he has become lord and master of the earth on which he treads, and sinned against the laws laid down to him by the Supreme Governor ! But from that position he must come down—whatever his station, he must bend the knee in lowliest humility before the Great Spirit. (Ever let it be yours to walk humbly before your God and before your fellows—seeking for opportunities to do something to help those who cannot help themselves.) I thought of all I had done in my lowly sphere, and yet how much more I might have done had I acted wisely ! I saw that I had neglected many things as not worth minding, but which, as I reflected on them, I perceived might have been the means of saving souls from Hades—leading them to repentance before they entered into the world of Spirits ! All this is past, and cannot be recalled. The purpose to do better in the future cannot alter that which is past. What we see to be good must be done at once ; it must not be left undone till to-morrow—for then it may have passed away from the brain ;—though it lies hidden for a time in the chamber of memory, and will yet arise to tell us what might have been done, but for neglect,—aye, and continue to haunt a man down through a lifetime on the Earth.

Many were the thoughts that floated through me on that occasion,—I but give you a few of them. I was coming to a place in which I knew not how we should be treated. If the people thought fit, they might lay violent hands on me. But if they took my life from me, that would only shorten my pilgrimage a little, and give me a quicker entrance into the Spirit-world. Something, however, told me, “No ; something greater, more important than anything you have done, remains for you yet to

do on earth ; and when that is over, you will die like a dog at the road-side." Ah, well, the end is a glorious one, when a man has done his duty—done the work given him to do. He has a clear passport, that admits him into the company of the glorified. I earnestly wish all you who now hear me to be guided by the same principle, for we are still as anxious for the deliverance of men from evil as when we were dwellers on the Earth—still as zealous in the good work as ever we were, and will be so long as there is a spirit left to be redeemed, until Hades be cleared of its inhabitants, and there be one blest, happy Heaven from end to end. The dark places of the Spirit-world will yet be made bright, and the heavenly sun shall shine throughout eternity ; no one shall be in darkness, but all shall walk in the light of truth and love. That is what I know shall be. That will be a glorious time indeed ! You talk about the Golden Age, and I, too, heard of such a time when I dwelt on earth—it seemed like a fable to me ; and some with us can speak of ages far superior, before evil had entered the Earth—when man was glorious and happy. But there is a better time still in the future, when all that stands in the way of man's happiness shall be swept for ever from the Earth and from the Spirit-world. Those who are now suffering for evil done in the body, and those of the Second Sphere, will then become one glorious, happy band ; each one will seek after and study that branch of knowledge that he loved on the Earth—the scientist will inquire into science—the chemist into chemistry, and so on, with nothing to keep them back. Some will penetrate into the depths of the universe in search of worlds they never saw on Earth ; they will find them, and in them they will see wondrous things, to tell to us when they come back to our Great Temple of Science.

Such ideas and thoughts passed through my mind at the time I refer to when on the borders of the Red Sea. Now I see with clearer vision of the Spirit far beyond that which is present. Some of my friends in our Great Temple have said that I am too speculative—that I must wait and see. But, no ; I can see it now,—even as the sun dawning on the earth : there it rises and spreads its beams, giving light to all creation. Do not wonder that we have still to encounter opposition,—we cannot do without it ; for if we got smoothly on we might even now get into a dormant state. Here

we have the man of science going forward as firmly rooted in his ideas as when on Earth, only farther advanced. The astronomer still uses his telescope, only not the same instrument he used on Earth. We have those who delight to travel far away into other planets, who talk with the inhabitants of these worlds, finding them better and wiser than are the dwellers on the Earth; and there are those with us here who search deep into the very bottom of things, as to how the seed germinates and the tree grows. There are some, again, that search into spiritual matters—and I am one of these. It was my calling from infancy while in the body, and it is still my calling. I am not altogether ignorant of scientific matters; but the salvation of mankind has been my great object, both on Earth and in the Spirit-world. I spent that night in thinking over these subjects: at intervals I prayed for success in our mission.

Early in the morning some of the inhabitants came out through the gates of the town and visited us. Some of these were friends of my companions, and when they saw them they ran and fell on their necks and kissed them, according to the custom of the East. They thought they had been dead, and on finding them alive and well they praised the Great Spirit in their own way. By this I could see that even men who cared neither for the laws of God nor for those of men were not altogether unmindful of their duty to acknowledge, in their own way, the Great God who sustained them.

My friends very soon began to try and open the eyes of their townsmen, and to tell them all that had befallen them since they had last parted from them—how their lives had been preserved, and something better and more precious than their lives—their never-dying souls—preserved from wickedness; and now they wished to do for them—their townsmen and friends—what had been freely done for themselves. They then asked me to speak to them, which I promised I would do.

Having had a vision the night before, I thought I would make some use of it on the occasion, and that I might gain their attention by relating it in the course of my address.

I thought I had fallen into a sort of trance; that I stood on a high mountain peak, whence I could see all the world from end to end, with all its peoples, of every colour and tongue. I saw

beautiful isles studding the bosom of vast seas, and ships passing from one isle to another bearing rich merchandise. I saw mighty cities, and people moving about in their busy streets. Again, I saw ships encountering other ships in deadly fight. I saw on land armies contending with each other in battle, while sword, arrow, and spear glittered in the sunlight, like flashes of lightning, as foe met foe in the hot strife of battle. He who showed me these things showed me the rising and falling of those nations. He said to me—"These are the nations of the Earth lying before your eyes. But, do you see those little spots lying in the water? From those little isles of the sea shall come forth laws to guide all nations. The nations around you, and the barbarians also, shall become subject to the control of those islanders." (I have since seen that the isles referred to are those of your own country.) "This shall go on until all nations shall speak in one tongue—till the time of the regeneration of men has come on, when every man shall look on his brother man with love. There shall then be no more war—man fighting with man on land, and on the sea—but all the world over there shall be peace, and ships shall carry in safety the merchandise of one nation to another. Thus shall the world be guided and governed—not as now, by the force of arms. These waters beneath your feet shall in that happy time become the highway of peaceful commerce; no longer the haunt of robbers, but the great resort of honest merchantmen. You and those who are with you are now beginning this great work."

Such were the words addressed to me when I lay in trance, and when my spirit-guide had ended, I expressed my thanks to him for disclosing to me the things of the future.

As I have said, I made this the subject of my address on the following morning to the company assembled about us. I showed them how much better it was to turn themselves to commerce, and live by the work of their hands, than to pursue the evil course they had hitherto done, and that, by turning away from such ways, they would assuredly become happier and more powerful than they had ever been. My words were not in vain; neither were those of my companions, for the people were willing hearers, and some of them united themselves to us in our mission.

My friend *Abba* was looked upon still as much a chief as when

he went out from them with his fellow-robbers to get riches by the plundering of trading vessels. He found, on meeting with his betrothed, that she did not despise him, and shortly thereafter she became one of us. She was the first woman admitted into our little mission band. His mother, also, was brought under the power of her son's appeals; and it was gratifying to see that old, hardened woman, completely broken down, and a suppliant for the mercy of Heaven. Formerly she had been so hardened in the practice of evil, that in her eyes there was no such thing as crime; she could have stood and seen the head of one of her own sex taken off as unmoved as if she had seen the same done to a fowl. Now she bent herself to the very dust, and cried hysterically for mercy. She seemed to experience great anguish. Looking at her son and his companions, she saw how happy and peaceful they were, and eagerly asked where she might find such happiness. She would not live long, she said, but she wanted to close her eyes in peace. It was something to witness the devotion of this son to his poor mother. He stood over her, weeping, and tried to open her heart to receive the truth about God—her Maker—how that He was ever ready to forgive the greatest sinners who turned from their evil ways, and that He, the Great Spirit, loved all mankind, loved all His creatures, and even the most wicked. After many such dealings with her had been made by him, she at last wakened up to see these things for herself, and great was the change. She was the second woman that was received into our little church.

We remained in this place for some time, labouring in the good cause to which we had devoted ourselves. We did not convert the whole inhabitants, yet we made many converts, some of these having been notorious robbers.

It was here that I thought of visiting the land of Midian, that place to which Moses, the Hebrew law-giver, fled after killing the Egyptian. I knew that in that district of country we might find some who did not altogether disbelieve in the truths we held and taught—that there were still left among them fragments of the old beliefs. But I will not say more to-night.

Ninth Sitting.*June 19th, 1878.*

Hermes resolves to Visit Midian—Man Proposes, God Disposes—Prayer for Guidance—The Spirit Guards—Appearance of an Old Acquaintance—The Spirit's Message—A Vision of the Summer Land—A Glorious Scene—“One Clothed in Pure White.”

I TOLD you at our last sitting I had formed the purpose of going on a mission to the land of Midian. I had a strong desire at one time to go there, as I might be able to find some of those individuals who, it was said, still continued to uphold the pure spiritual religion of far back times. There was a great extent of Desert and other tracks of country to traverse, but, as a band, we were animated by earnest desire, willing to put forth every effort to gain all the knowledge we possibly could—not mere sight-seeing, but true, useful knowledge, fitted to benefit us not only during our Earth-life, but also for that which follows. Besides, we knew that the people of those regions had not received the knowledge of Him who had come—our Prince—and it was our duty to enlighten them.

So we went forth on our journey to the land of Midian. Man, it is true, possesses the power to cut out for himself a certain course of action, but he must not forget that there is One alone who can guide his destiny aright; he may, at times, feel as if his freedom was interfered with, but believing as I do in man's responsibility, I also believe in his perfect freedom of thought and action.

After we had travelled a great distance on our way, we were stayed in our course. One of our band, who had gone forth in search of a suitable resting-place for the evening, came back hurriedly, saying he had met a certain individual, who had warned him not to go further on, and to return and tell us to turn our backs on the course we had been pursuing. On hearing this, we held a council. I thought thus: were we to be dictated to by a stranger as to the way we should go; he might be one employed to lead us astray, so that we might be entrapped by a party lying in wait to despoil us of our goods, which we carried with us as merchants; for we still acted as traders, but were ready to give to others who stood in need of help. After

consultation we concluded to lay the matter before those who were sure to know, and that prayer to the Great Spirit was the proper thing in the circumstances. There and then we alighted from the backs of our animals, and went down on our knees in circle, and thus we silently asked the Great Spirit (through His servants of the upper world) to direct us—whether we should go forward or not : if there were some other mission designed for us, to show it to us by some sign, and we would be ready to do as we were directed : His will, not ours, would be done ; and we would wait and abide His time. After rising from our knees, we thought we would just settle where we were, there being not only water and provender for the animals, but plenty of wild fruits.

Having partaken of our evening meal we held, as was our custom, a devotional meeting ; so that, if any of us left for the “other shore,” we would not be unprepared for the change. In the lands of the East, when the sun goes down beneath the horizon, it becomes dark almost immediately—so dark that you cannot see one another till the stars shoot forth, and then there is starlight.

It was just at this change, when the darkness was most dense, and it began to clear away, through the appearing of the worlds which roll in space, that we discovered, on looking about us, that our company had swelled in number. There were those with us whom we did not know by sight. We asked whence they came, and whither they were bound—and whether they were friends or foes.

The reply was—“We are friends. We are your brethren.”

“Well,” I said, “you may be brethren of ours, but we do not know you.”

He who had acted as our messenger in the afternoon here said—“There is the individual who told me you were to go back.”

I looked at him, and I thought that he was not one who was likely to deceive. I had begun to read in their face the character of each individual I came in contact with, but there was something in the appearance of this individual I could not determine ; he looked angelic in countenance. At last, with bent head, I approached him, and he approached me at the same time. The moment our hands clasped, an electric shock passed through my whole system, and then I knew I held one who came from the

upper regions. He said—"We have met before on the Earth plane. You look on me with your earthly eye, I am here in the material form. I was sent here as a messenger, and those who are with me left the earth long ago."

I wondered, and said, "I am surprised how you should have left the better and happier land and come to us."

"Your old father," he said, "sent us to you. You may remember me when I tell you that I am he, on whom, on your way from Judea to Egypt, you conferred a great service.* When afterwards I tried to do good amongst my fellow-men, they took my life as they did His. I am at the feet of that good old man, at which, when a child, you yourself sat; and what I did not learn when in the body, he is now teaching me in spirit-life. He has sent me to say that if you go into Midian, you are sure to meet your doom."

I said—"If it be the will of God, what does it matter? We are ready to lay down our lives."

"No," he replied, "you are but rushing on danger. By this course you are pursuing, you would become your own destroyers. There is work for you in another direction. It will not be long till you join us in spirit-life. Meanwhile there is work for you to do in the body. Do that work well. There is something grand awaiting you in the land we come from."

I said—"When it is God's will to call me home, I go. I look for no honours, but only long to meet with the dear ones I loved on earth, and to see him who was to me as an earthly father and teacher in my childhood and youth—that is all I am wishing for when I cross the river to the happy land beyond."

"Take the course for Aden," he said, "and before you turn your face to the land of Egypt again, you must visit Persia. You have much work to accomplish, and the time is short. Those who are now with you will return, but you will never see Egypt again."

When I heard these words uttered, notwithstanding what I had just said as to my readiness to pass away from earth, I felt that I was still somewhat earthly, and not wholly spiritual. I had a desire to see those I loved in my native land before leaving the

* See "Hafed," page 484.

body ; for, though not an old man, they were my children in the faith.

After this, it seemed as if a thick darkness again came over us, and then the scene changed, and we were transported to a happy land, where all looked bright and shining ; and yet, there was no sun, and there were no shadows cast from the mighty trees—light seemed to be everywhere. The imagination could have formed no idea of that which we saw, for there was no place on earth like it. We would have wished to stay all our material life on that beautiful spot. Looking around, we observed bands of little children plucking flowers, and picking up pebbles from the margin of the river ; while little fishes jumped up now and again from the water, displaying all the colours of the rainbow. There also we saw groups of old and young : aged women and maidens, young men and old men, and all seemed to be so happy. We thereafter began, as it were, to travel, and, passing a wood, we saw before us a city, with its spires and towers glittering in the bright light which everywhere prevailed ; and the streets of the city seemed as if they were paved with silver ; while the mountains in the distance appeared to be of deep blue.

The same individual that I spoke to some minutes before, came out from the band, and said,—“ I will now show you the life we live here ;” he then led us to one of the gates, through which we passed into the city. Walking along, we looked down, and saw ourselves reflected. I was astonished, for the walls and trees cast no shadow, neither were the forms of our guides reflected as we were.

I asked how this could take place.

“ You are now,” he said, “ in the Summerland ; you have left, for the time being, the earthly sphere.”

“ I thought,” I said, “ that we had been really translated.”

“ No,” he replied, “ you have merely, for a short time, left the material body ; but you carry so much of the earth with you, that your forms must be reflected on the streets. Even though you walk here with me, every spirit knows that you are still connected with the earth-life.”

Guiding us through one street after another, and showing us the grandeur of the whole, he took us to another place, and told us to look. We did so, and there we beheld a gateway of

pure marble—so it appeared to us—with steps leading up to it, and these steps of precious stones were inlaid with gold. Going nearer, I looked up, and then I saw written on the gateway, in very large characters, the words—“*None but the holy can enter here.*”

“Are there any,” I asked, “who are not holy who are dwellers here?”

“Well,” he said, “it depends greatly on what *you* call holiness and what *we* call holiness. You and those who are with you are good men; you may look through the doors, but you cannot enter in. The place is too sacred for those of earth. There is still that about you that would defile the holy place.”

We looked in, and, Oh, the ravishing sight that met our eyes! As far as the eye could see, it was full of the blessed ones, who appeared bent on their knees in the act of prayer; while, in the midst, we beheld an altar, before which stood One clothed in pure white, with a golden crown on his head, and on his forehead there burned a bright star. His hands were lifted on high, but we heard not the words he uttered. I turned and said to him who was with me—“Surely the countenances of these beautiful ones are familiar to me. And he who stands at the Great Altar, he looks so Godlike! and yet there is the resemblance of Him whom I loved. If I could but speak to him—if I could but touch his feet!”

“The day cometh when you shall be with him,” he said. “These holy ones are now at their devotions. If you could stay, you might see him as you see me. But now you cannot further go. Even I, myself, and those who were with me, could not enter in at the present time. Being connected with you, we have had to take on so much of the earth in order to fulfil our mission that we cannot now mingle with those within.”

All we saw tended to elevate us—to make us more spiritual, and to forget that we were mere men. The beautiful gardens through which our guides led us, were filled with golden fruit, which was given to us; and as we did eat of these fruits we felt wonderfully refreshed in our spirits.

All this time we did not know that we were otherwise than in our true material bodies.

He then said—“We will go back.” Darkness once more

came over us, and the stars above shone down on us. Here was all our company—but the strangers had vanished.

At first, I thought I alone had been there, and that I had only imagined my brethren to be with me; but one and all began to speak of what they had seen in the holy and happy place which, in spirit, they had been taken to; and all expressed sorrow that they had left that beautiful country. In course of our conversation, I told them about him who had been the messenger, who had been sent from the Spirit-world to us; and that all we had witnessed was but a foretaste of the portion awaiting us if we stood true—the bright home promised to us, and to all those who walked in the steps of the Great Master. All seemed happy and no one discontented—each one striving to make the other happy. I told them we would turn back as we had been directed. I would likely be the first of our company to leave the world, but I said I would like to do as much work as possible before I went to the beautiful land beyond the river.

I must leave off at this point to-night.

Tenth Sitting.

June 26th, 1878.

Towns on the Arabian Coast—A “Sign” in the Heavens—Panic among the People—Hermes tries to enlighten them—How he studied Astronomy—The Priestess and Hermes—A Bird’s-eye View of the Earth—A Spirit Teacher—Address in the Market-place—Mercantile Transactions—“The Best Goods”—An Arabian Love Story—Meeting of the Lovers—Imprisonment—Abba in a new Character—How Abba punished the Unjust Ruler—The Female Slave set free.

{*Controlled by HERMES.*}—I said at the previous sitting with you, that we resolved to obey the directions given to us when on the borders of Midian, and turn back. We wished to reach, if possible, one of the small towns on the coast. The region towards the sea being mountainous, and, at the time I am speaking of, rather thickly populated, we had a good deal of work before us.

As we journeyed on from day to day we spoke, as we had opportunity, to the people, of those things which concerned their welfare, and of which they had never heard before. We told

them of the way by which they could come nearer to that heaven that had hitherto appeared to them at a great distance—how near the spirit-world was, and how closely connected it was with the material world. Those Arabians were not ignorant of spiritual things; for many of the Hebrew people had been located there, and had brought their religious ideas with them. Neither were they strangers to Abraham and other worthies recorded in the sacred writings of the Hebrews; but there were still some remnants of the ancient faith of the tribes of Arabia to be found among the people of the coast towns. Unlike those Arabians who travelled about from place to place, they were a settled race, and had well-built towns, or cities as they called them. Over every city there was a chief or ruler, and a number of such chiefs were subject to a head-chief. Each of these petty chiefs ruled within his own city, but all were under the control of this district ruler or head-chief. We tried to get an audience of one of these head-chiefs, knowing that if we secured his goodwill, we would be all the more successful in our work amongst those over whom he ruled.

On coming to a small town near the coast, we found the people very much concerned about a strange appearance in the heavens, of which many of them were much afraid, thinking that it must be one of the stars that had lost its moorings, and was now coming down to crush and burn up the Earth. As I have before said, there were amongst them certain theological ideas, derived from the intercourse with Hebrews in by-past times, and one of these was that it had been foretold that the Earth at some future time was to be destroyed by fire. The people thought, therefore, that this phenomenon was a sure sign of the coming destruction, and were, consequently, greatly alarmed. But it was just one of those "wandering stars" that now and then fly throughout the heavens that had made its appearance. I had been told about them, but I had not till then witnessed any of them. There were also many of my companions frightened, and who imagined they would be swept from the Earth by this strange visitor,—a star with a tremendous tail! With all their faith and knowledge of things spiritual, they were really afraid. I tried to explain, as best I could, the nature of the strange appearance; for, having been instructed when in Egypt as a student in astro-

nomy—that forming a portion of the teachings of Egypt—I knew something of what I was speaking. I said that such stars, or bodies, had been seen from time to time, and the exact time of their appearance recorded, and that there was no fear of any mischance to us or to the world. The wisest among them had tried to persuade the more ignorant that there was no ground for their fears; but all would not do—the stories from their old traditions and Jewish records confirmed them in the belief that the world was about to be burned up: they would not listen, but went about in great consternation of the coming destruction. I stood up in the market-place, and addressed myself to the people collected there. I spoke of the wisdom and power of the Great Creator; how He had taken such pains to bring the Earth into existence, and all the other worlds scattered throughout the heavens, each one a world complete in itself. From that I went on to show them how the Creator formed these worlds by gradual processes, and that that which caused them to be afraid was but a new world in course of forming: that the great ball flying with such velocity athwart the heavens was gathering up, in its fiery flight, the elements which were required to make it, in time, a world like the others. But, entertaining the common ideas as to the constitution of the heavenly bodies, they could not see through my theory. Our world stood still, they said, and the Sun and Moon moved. The Sun retired behind the hills at night and came back again in the morning. At that time I knew that the Earth moved in a circuit—that it was no vast plain, but that, like the other great worlds which roll in space, it was a ball or globe.

It may be asked how I came to know this. By this means: At one time, when I was but a mere lad, shortly after Jesus our Prince left us (in Egypt), I took a great fancy to study the nature of the heavenly bodies. My venerable instructor, Issha, had made several charts of these bodies, and it was by seeing such charts stretched out, in sheets of lead, that I became interested in the subject. He then began to explain them to me as they were marked on the sheets. Afterwards, in the dark, starry evenings, he would take me out to the open air, and on the great sheet of the sky point out the various stars to me as he had previously done on the sheet of lead. When I questioned him as to

these worlds of the sky and our own world, he said that many had thought that the Earth was a flat plain, but that view of the subject had always caused him much trouble and thought; he could not see how the Earth could be flat and the Sun and Moon, as seen by us, should be circular, and thought that if help was not given him from on high he would never be able to discover the problem. He showed me a plate of copper perforated with small holes, so small that you could barely detect them, and told me that he used these plates with the small holes to look at the planets. By such means he found that these were round in form, and concluded that the Earth must also be round. Though he could not be positive about the results of his investigation, he still thought it good that I, a young man, should study these things for myself. I went into it with a will, and, with Issha's assistance, I became a very successful student of the starry heavens—what you call astronomy.

One night I went to the upper chamber, where one of our female oracles (or mediums) was kept. I had been occasionally there, as the lady high priestess had been very kind to me, and had acted towards me as a mother. Finding her, on this quiet night, by herself, I told her at once what I came for—that Issha had been giving me lessons on the heavenly bodies, and how desirous I was to know more about them.

At first she tried to persuade me against the study. She thought it would be better for me to search deeply into spiritual things, and let the material worlds alone; but I said that a knowledge of material things would be of great benefit to me and to my fellow-men. I was young, and it was better that such knowledge should be acquired by me ere I became a leader of the people.

As we sat thus and discussed the subject, I seemed to lose my senses. At first I was stupified, hearing her voice, but seeing her dimly, till at last my vision was closed, when I could neither see her nor the place we were sitting in. At length I seemed to waken up, and to find myself on the top of a vast mountain, so great that were the great pyramid laid at its foot it would have appeared like a small stone. On looking down from the top I could see no base to this mountain, yet everything around me appeared to be most substantial—hard rock and green shrubs—

while I was the solitary living object. Very little space existed betwixt the spot I stood on and the sides of the mountain, so that I was able to witness all that lay below. A great cloud of mist rolled around the base of the mountain; and gradually the cloud began to break, and at length it was drawn away like a mighty curtain; and then I saw, far away beneath the mountain, a great globe floating. My eyes became so powerful that I thought I saw the windings of the Nile and the mighty pyramids rearing their tops skyward, but looking so dwarf-like; I saw the very temple in which I was then seated, only I did not then believe I was there. Turning round I heard a voice, and before me stood an aged man. His forehead was bald, while his hair was whiter than the snow, and his flowing white beard reached to his knees. His countenance was beautiful; and as I gazed on it I fell at his feet, exclaiming—"Oh! am I in the presence of a God?" He said—"No; you are in the company of a man—a man like yourself—one who has walked the Earth long, long ago. Even before those great pyramids beneath you were built I was on the Earth. I come from the upper regions of the Spirit-world." (Here I began to think on the teaching we had received—that all that were admitted into Paradise were gods after eating the golden fruit.) Perceiving my thought, he said—"That is the doctrine of your theology; but you must no longer teach such. You may call us gods if you will, for we are all Divine, but we will not take the name of gods. We were not all goodness on the earth. Man's admission to Paradise depends on having a character of goodness and truth; he who hath been evil in his life on Earth, will find a place to suit him in the World of Spirits; there is no lake to cross, nor boatman, nor ape." I gazed at him who spoke to me in this way: for in doing so he thrust aside much of that mythical jumble which was taught in the Temples of Egypt—as to the crossing of the lake, the boatman, the ape, the entrance into Paradise, eating golden fruit, etc. I felt very unwilling to give up the doctrines which I had imbibed. But he entered very deeply into many things, and showed me the true meaning of "The Book of Death," the doctrine of which had long been perverted by priests for their own ends. I began to think of what should become of me as a rising priest. What he told me never left me. Above all, he showed me that the Earth was a round ball,—and for maintaining

which I was afterwards treated with contempt by my brethren the priests.

But at length the vision faded from my sight, and I opened my eyes, sitting beside the high priestess. I then related all that I had seen and heard. She held up her hands, and said that the gods had blessed me above many.

On returning to my good father, Issha, I told him all that had occurred. "The gods be praised!" he exclaimed; "you have been admitted into the secret place, to see the things which are hidden, and the mysteries revealed to you. Go on, my son; the day cometh when you shall behold grander and brighter things." And this prediction of my old father, Issha, was fulfilled, for I was permitted, while still on the Earth, to see the brighter and better land, and to recognise friends and others who had passed on long before.

Standing in the market-place, I tried hard to show the people the reasonableness of that which I had advanced regarding the formation of worlds. I showed how the Creator never worked apart from means by which he accomplished his ends; and that in this God gave us a lesson in the use of means to bring about that which we had in view. I led them on from this to the consideration of their spiritual state, urging them to turn away from their old superstitions, and to listen to our words; showing them how to live in this world, so that they might be happy both on the Earth and in the Spirit-world. After speaking to them for a long time, I concluded by referring to their fears, caused by the appearance in the sky. Why should they be afraid of death? It was because they knew not where they were going at death: and, after urging them to think well of the hereafter, and of what I told them about preparation for it, we retired to our inn.

As our money was getting low, we required to do something in the way of merchandise. Accordingly, early in the morning we set off with our goods to the market-place, where the merchants were assembled, to dispose of them. Some of the merchants began to deride us. "Here come some of those philosophers! to sell and buy just like ourselves! Philosophise at night, and come back in the morning to sell their goods! Let us see whether they will be as consistent in buying and selling as in their philosophy about the fiery ball which has passed over us!"

Such were the words uttered, but we listened quietly.

Turning to some of them, I said—"My friends, we did not philosophise, we spoke honest truth to you. Try us, and you will see we will deal as honestly with you in selling our goods as we did last night when we philosophised, as you call it."

One of the merchants—a Jew—said, "Is he not an Egyptian?" I said, "I am; but my brethren are Arabians like yourselves, and more likely to be understood than the Hebrews amongst you. But we come here not only to philosophise, but to sell these goods; and, let me tell you, we have goods far surpassing these in value, which we dispose of."

"Show us your best," they said, "and then we will know what the worst is."

"No," I said, "we will show you these first, and then the best."

We laid out our goods, and they were examined, and in some cases fair prices were offered, while, in others, prices far below the value were proposed.

"We wish," I said, "to deal honestly in coming here. We sell our goods at a fair value. We have no wish to accumulate money, we merely want as much for them as will enable us to be independent of all men; for we have to provide for the keep of ourselves and our animals. There are the goods at the prices we ask—if good value, take them; if not, leave them."

We sold a good deal of our stuffs, and bought some from the merchants in the market, articles which were saleable in the different markets we intended visiting. Of course there were some of our band who understood these things better than I did.

When our business was concluded, and we were ready to start, the merchants reminded us of what we had stated about the best goods. "Surely you do not mean to carry these away with you?" "No," I said, "but we make no charge for such goods. And here I lay these before you: walk uprightly; act honestly; serve your Creator—first render homage to Him, and then give due honour to your fellowmen. First of all, love God, then love thy brother man—yea, love him better than thou lovest thyself. That, my friends, is our best, our most valuable merchandise. We give it you freely, for it was freely given to us. All we want is, that you think well of what we give, and, putting it into daily practice, you will prosper."

We tarried there a good many days, and were very successful.

Here I may give you some account of an incident that took place at this time. One of the young men of our band had, when in his wild state, been engaged to be married to a young female; but he had never been able to raise the money that was sought for her by her parents as a dowry. It so happened that during our sojourn in the place, while he was walking down one of the narrow streets, he saw two female figures passing—one of them, close-veiled, following the other. He heard a voice, and thought he knew it. He thereupon mentioned the name, and the female looked at him. He then thought he had made a mistake, for the one he had known was not a slave. But, being so interested, he thought he would make sure; and notwithstanding his knowledge that it was death to meddle with a female slave, he boldly went up and touched the maid on the shoulder. The moment her eyes fell on him, she screamed, and fainting, he caught her in his arms. The lady whom she had been following turned round, and perceiving the state of matters, raised an alarm; and a number of the inhabitants gathering round, she accused our young friend of attempting to carry off her slave. He was at once arrested and taken to prison, when he was placed in a dungeon and loaded with chains.

But all this had been witnessed by one who, though not exactly believing in our teachings, sympathised to some extent, only afraid that his acquaintances should know of such sympathy. This person hastened to our inn, and told us all that had happened. On hearing this, I resolved to go to the head magistrate of the town and ask permission to see the young man. It vexed us to know that one of our band had done anything to lead to the disgrace of being sent to prison. I and the others felt grieved in heart because of this; for we had sworn so sacredly to do nothing, in any place we visited, to bring evil repute on us. Accordingly, I went to the magistrate and asked him to tell me what charge had been laid against the young man. He said that he had attempted to steal a slave. I said there must be some mistake, that he was not one who would seek to steal anything from his neighbour; so confident was I of this, that I would give myself as a slave should he be found guilty of such a charge. He said that the charge was true, as he had witnesses that had

seen him trying to take her away. Thereupon, I asked permission to see the young man ; but he refused, and said that our band must leave the town, as the inhabitants were against us, as also the priests, for causing a disturbance in the market-place. I said if he would not comply with my request, I would at once appeal to one higher than he was. On saying this, he granted me the desired permission, but that I must be accompanied by a powerful guard of soldiers.

Accordingly, I went quietly along with the guard to the prison. On the door of the dungeon being thrown open, I beheld my young friend loaded with chains, and guarded on each side by an armed soldier. I asked my friend to tell me all he knew as to the cause of his arrest, and he narrated the whole tale. He said he had merely touched the young woman on the shoulder, as he felt assured she was the one he had loved so dearly from youth to manhood. He had tried hard, he said, to get as much gathered to pay the dowry to her father. They had cherished real love to one another from the time they were children. "I cannot see," he said, "how she is now a slave." When their eyes met their hearts at once spoke the truth, that they loved each other dearly. He said that there must be some foul-dealing at work, as she could not be a slave, for she came of the upper class, her father being a large proprietor of land.

I exhorted him to be calm, that there was such a thing as intervention from the higher world, and that he should never cease to pray.

"I have," he said, "prayed since I was thrust into this dungeon, and my prayers have been answered, for you have come—I asked that you might come. I am free from any charges they may bring against me. But, even though she may be all they say she is—a slave—I would have bought her ; for I know my brethren would have helped me. You have come, and I feel persuaded that I shall not remain here long."

I returned to the inn, and I related the circumstances to Abba and his Arab companions. He seemed to understand how the thing had happened. They started to their feet, and so indignant were they that I thought their vindictive savage nature had come back. They appeared as if they would have swept the city of its inhabitants.

I tried to allay the outburst of feeling manifested by the band. "If wrong has been done to our companion, do not let us resent it. Let us appeal once more." So I went off, accompanied by Abba and others, direct to the magistrate and asked a hearing, but he refused. I demanded it, but it was of no use, he would not hear me.

My Arab friend Abba then told him that if he did not at once set the young man at liberty, he would appeal to a higher than he. "Why," demanded he, "have you not brought him up before a court for inquiry into the charge before casting him into a loathsome dungeon?" "And why," I added, "have you loaded him with chains?"

The magistrate said he had given no such order. Here the warder contradicted him, and said he had got such an order from him.

I said,—“We must have a fair and honest trial in this matter. We are freemen, and while we stand here as merchants, we are entitled to protection, and we will have it.”

After a good deal of shuffling, he consented to call a court. As we had not been very well received by the merchants of the town, we had a good deal to contend with. We experienced some difficulty in getting his consent to our demand that the lady and her slave should be brought into court as witnesses, as it was unusual to receive evidence from slaves.

Everything having been arranged, the court assembled, and our young friend was brought in loaded with chains. Abba, my Arab friend, on seeing the condition of his young comrade, went right up to the magistrate, and with an air of authority, said—“Strike these chains off this man, and if you do not at once do so, you will take his place!”

I was astonished at his boldness. He spoke with such authority that I began to tremble, thinking he had lost his senses; but my wonder was increased when I looked at the magistrate, who trembled, and appeared to shrink from my Arab friend, who steadily kept his eyes on him. Indeed, I believe, if he could have crept underneath his seat, he would have done so. He could scarcely speak, and with shaking hand and faltering speech ordered the chains to be taken off. This done, we said that we must have a fair trial. The judges that had been brought to sit

in judgment on the case, looked with surprise at the condition of the head magistrate—they could not then understand the cause of his apparent disquietude.

At length the lady came in and took her place. Our friend Abba looked toward her, and said,—“What charge have you to make against this young man?”

“He tried to steal away my servant,” she replied.

“What authority have you for making that statement?”

“I make the statement on the authority of those who saw him take her in his arms to carry her off.”

“Where is your servant?”

“Oh! *she* can't come as a witness,” the lady exclaimed.

“But she must be brought here. Bear in mind that I am not ignorant of the constitution of your courts. It is but justice that the young woman should appear.”

Here one of those who sat in judgment rose and said,—“We cannot permit a slave to give evidence—especially a female slave.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed Abba,—“Is not the word of a female slave as good as that of a male? Why not accept the testimony of a female slave equally with that of a free-woman? Who made them slaves? What right have you, or any one, to claim either man or woman as your slave? He who created you created them. In creating mankind, did the Great Father make free-men and women of a few, and slaves of the rest? No! every one—man or woman—who breathes the breath of life, is free! But, alas! man has wickedly and selfishly traded with his fellow-creatures, tearing them from home and kindred, and selling them as they would sell the cattle of the field, for gold, thus sinning against God. God created his children free-men and free-women. Why, then, do you speak of slaves?”

Some of them got up and threatened to put him out of the court. They appealed to the head magistrate, but he uttered not a word, at which they wondered.

At last the slave was brought in. She did not know what had transpired, and knew not how things were to go. She knew this—that if she went against her mistress, and the case went against us, she would most assuredly suffer for it—perhaps death itself. The question was put to her by Abba:—“Did this young man try to carry you off?”

"No," she said.

"What, then, did he do?"

"He merely touched me on the shoulder. We were old acquaintances, and when I saw him I screamed; and then all other things faded from my view."

Turning to the judges my friend Abba said—"Do you hear this confession?"

The young man seemed greatly moved, and appeared ready to rush over to the young woman, who having thus spoken, had cast a cheering glance at her lover.

Addressing himself to the lady, Abba asked—"How does this young woman come to be your slave?"

"She was born of slave parents, and I bought her," she replied.

"You say what is false," said Abba. "How did you," addressing the girl, "come to be in this place, your own home being in a village far away from this?"

The young woman seemed surprised; she thought she recognised the voice of one she had known in her native village, and at length became sure that it was so, though he was greatly changed. With this conviction she, with more confidence, said—"One night I went, along with some companions, to the fountain for water, but remained there long after the others had left, for I began to think on one, and knew not what had become of him. He had gone away with you on an expedition, and I feared that something had befallen you—that he was lost to me for ever. I grieved also that my own father, by demanding from him a large dowry, had induced him to go off with you and your band. While thinking sorrowfully on these things—and just as the bright moon was hidden behind a cloud—I was suddenly seized, my water-vessel dashed away, a hand placed over my mouth, and I was carried off. And there," pointing to the magistrate, "is the man who did it, and this lady is his wife, who has kept me since then as her slave."

The effect of this simple statement on the part of the young woman on the minds of those present, was plainly seen. The judges appeared to be surprised, and the demeanour of the magistrate might be accounted for. But how account for the assumption of authority by this stranger to them, Abba, the Arab

chief? As the examination went on, it was evident that the trembling magistrate and the bold stranger knew more of each other than the court were aware of. This was brought out, however, in further examination, from which it appeared that this man who acted the part of magistrate in this town, was a native of the same town to which the young couple belonged ; that the young woman was the daughter of a man who possessed land in the district ; that this man (the magistrate), in a dispute concerning land with the father of the girl, was compelled to fly from the district, and, in doing so, resolved to be revenged upon his enemy by stealing away his only daughter and enslaving her. He fled to this town, where he found his uncle the chief magistrate at the time. The uncle, having no children, adopted him, and the nephew afterwards took his place as magistrate. I said at the beginning of my address to-night that there were rulers of districts, to whom these village magistrates were subject. Abba, my friend, though but a young man, was one of these chief rulers ; but his love of a roving life had led him to indulge in wild and reckless courses, not at all in harmony with his position as a hereditary ruler ; and up to the time I am speaking of, the duties of his office (which he had delegated, in his absence, to his brother) had cost him very little thought. This village was one of those that was subject to his rule. The moment he had cast his eyes on the offending magistrate he recognised him ; and, judging from the craven conduct exhibited, it was evident the recognition was mutual—only, my friend did not know the lady to be his wife.

“And so,” said Abba, addressing the trembling magistrate, “you, out of pure revenge, lay in wait for that innocent girl, as a beast lies waiting for its prey, and stole her away from home and friends—to make her a slave. Leave that seat on which you now sit, and take the place of this young man.” The chains, which had been taken from the prisoner, were now, by order of Abba, used for the binding of the magistrate and his wife, and they were conducted to prison.

The young female, after an affectionate meeting with her lover, was sent off on the following day with a caravan to her native place. A letter was received at the next town we visited, inform-

ing the young man that he was free to claim the young girl as his wife.

The next day the court again assembled. The prisoners were brought in, while Abba, dressed in the robes of office, took his seat as Judge. Rising, he addressed the judges, saying they all knew the crime laid to the charge of the prisoners, and asked what punishment they deserved.

“Imprisonment in the deepest dungeon of the castle,” was the answer.

Turning to the prisoners, he said—“You have heard judgment pronounced on your crime; but you will find that I am one who has not only learned to be just, but to be merciful.”

Addressing the female prisoner, he said—“You, as the wife of this man, was induced to aid him in the crime he committed. Being under his influence, you are pardoned. But I said you bore false witness when you said you had bought the young woman; for that you must seek the pardon of Him against whom you have sinned, and learn henceforth to be truthful in all you say and do.

“As for you,” he said, addressing the magistrate, “here is your seat, and, in taking it again, see that it be no more desecrated by acts of injustice; for, remember, whatever you do of evil on Earth will be recorded against you in the other world. You know well that I might have consigned you to linger out your life in that dark prison-house. But, no; come, take your place here!” He then gave orders that the chains be removed, and that the pardoned criminal be re-installed in his seat of office. While this was being done, that hitherto evil man cried like a child, exclaiming that he had never imagined there was such kindness in man. His property also, which had been confiscated, was restored to him.

Though this episode began sadly, it ended well. It leaked out who our friend Abba was, and it was soon known over all the town. This once wrong-doing magistrate became a changed man, and turned out to be a great preacher—not so much of the views of truth that we proclaimed, which were those of Jesus, but of a strict morality. We could never get those Arabians to preach the simple loving truths of Jesus, because he was a Jew; there being a great many of that nation mixed up with them, and

knowing them too well, they were prejudiced against anything Jewish. Had my Lord and Master been of any other race, I believe they would have worshipped him.

[In reply to a question, Hafed said—"There are no injuries in spirit-life. If so, there would be wars in Heaven."]

Eleventh Sitting.

July 24th, 1878.

Good Results of Abba's Interference—A Church Formed—Disposal of Surplus Money—A Wild Community—Village of the Rocks—Worship of the "Demon of Evil"—The Goodness of God preached—An Anxious Inquirer—The Old Priest's Story—Hermes tells of Jesus—He addresses the Old Men—Conversion of the Tribe—A Noble Resolution.

(*Controlled by HERMES*).—The results of the trial of the unjust magistrate were good. When the whole story became known, and the people had learned who it was that had exercised authority in the case, they were much pleased; for justice had at length been meted out, but in a wonderful way. Had Abba been as before, the result would either have ended in bloodshed, or this magistrate would have been cast out as a dog. For all this we gave glory to the Highest and His holy messengers. A church was established in that place, but it was not of the character we would have liked (that of the church in Egypt), though they believed in the advent of Jesus. They practised the rite of Baptism, as a symbol of cleansing, in the admission of members.

Having purchased or provided goods necessary for our journey, and seen to our animals, we found that we had a good round sum left. We made it a point, in such circumstances, that, when we considered our gold was above what we required for our use, we should distribute the amount we had over to the poor. This we did, not, however, in the shape of money, but of useful articles of food and clothing, to prevent some of them from hoarding the money and then begging for more. By this means we gained the favour generally of the population; though there were those who looked on us as madmen for so doing, but others, again, as angel visitors from heaven.

We set out on our way towards the southern end of the Red Sea, passing through two villages, where we met with some

opposition. In the course of a two days' journey we reached a secluded mountainous district, where we met in with a community of individuals who had banded themselves together, having found that the world did not suit them, or, rather, that they did not suit the world. We had been travelling by a sort of byeway across the mountainous ridge, when an armed body of them came upon us. They saw we were not a warlike party—though, if we had been attacked, we would have defended ourselves, for our band carried arms, but did not expose them. But it seemed to me that we would get on our way without danger; for I knew that the company of our spirit friends was even greater in number than our band.

That wild-looking band, composed of old and young men, clothed in the skins of beasts, came upon us in hostile fashion, flourishing their arms, calling out—"What brings you here to disturb our peace?" We told them quietly that we wanted to do no such thing, that we were a peaceable band, and wished to pass on our way. They seemed at a loss how to pick a quarrel, and asked why we did not show our goods like other merchants. We said we had no goods but those we kept for supporting us on our journey, and that we were not regular merchants; but we had goods of a certain kind which we would gladly give them, free of charge. On hearing this, they invited us to go with them into their village. They seemed to wonder that we accompanied them without fear. We found that their habitations were in the holes of the rocks. These excavations had been made in olden times, whence former generations had procured iron, and in these caverns this wild set of men made their homes.

The day being far spent, we resolved to pitch our camp beside a pool of water in the neighbourhood; but on their learning our intention, we were warned not to approach the pool on any account. We, therefore, selected another place where we might get the benefit of the cool winds, for we had been travelling through the hot sands all that day. After the unburdening of our beasts, giving them water, and attending to the other duties of encamping, I was walking along a path towards this village of the rocks, when I met with an old man, near to a circle of trees. He was clothed in a white dress; his arms were bare, and he was girt with an iron girdle. He seemed to be struck with my appear-

ance, for I wore the garb of a priest. I asked of him the meaning of the circle of trees. "He whom we worship," he said, "stands therein. He is the Demon of Evil; and as all good demons have long forsaken us, we worship and sacrifice to the Evil God, so that we may escape from his evil." I was amazed when I heard the old man utter these words. We had then a long debate, in which I found it hard work to convince him of his errors.

At last I said—"Let us no longer dispute. We are your guests. If you can give us nothing, we will try and give you something. My brethren and I are bound together to do all the good we can—to harm no one, but to try and raise the fallen, and reclaim the wanderer from the paths of goodness. For this purpose we go about from place to place, supporting ourselves by honest fair-dealing as merchants, but only for support, not for gain. Our great aim is to tell what we know of that Great and Mighty One—the God of Goodness. Old as you are, you are not too old to learn about Him who is your Creator, who has been your ever-loving Preserver through all your life. He is our Father; all mankind are his children. He is not the God of Evil, but the God of Goodness and Truth. He hath sent the Son of his love from the highest heavens into the world as a man, to declare all this; and I have walked and talked with him who was sent."

This and much more I told him. He stared at me with open eyes as I spoke of my intercourse with Jesus, my Prince,—of his sinless character, his wondrous acts of goodness, of his cruel death, resurrection, and glorious ascension.

"There is no use in staring at me," I said. "It is the honest truth I have uttered. I deceive no one, but I serve this God of Truth, and want all mankind to do likewise."

He began to meditate on what I had said. At length he said—"This is wonderful, indeed. We invited you to our village with the intention to rob and then murder you—for this we are allowed to do by our Demon-god; but, to our surprise, you put trust in us, and accept our invitation."

"Now," I said, "do not wonder at this; for the Great God whom we serve watches over us, and guides us by his angels in all we do. They will not suffer you to harm us. We have seen them. Ask your demon if he can do this? We saw that you were robbers and murderers when you met us, and yet we went

on with you, not for traffic—but to give you goods that are without price.”

With these words I left him, and went on towards our encampment. As I proceeded I saw groups of persons collected outside the caves; these I accosted with kindly words. I told my brethren the conversation I had had with the old man. They were not altogether surprised, for they said they had heard of this colony of outlaws, among whom all sorts of villains found shelter. In the evening a number of them came to our camp, and we presented them with a number of things.

Early in the morning, before the sun had sent out his bright beams, I heard my name called at my tent door. I said, “Come in,” when who should present himself but the old man with whom I had had the conversation. A great change had evidently passed upon him; he was haggard looking, and not so bold.

Addressing me by name (for I had given him my name the previous evening), he said he had had no sleep, and he had taken the earliest moment to renew the conversation with me. “The words you uttered last night are giving me great concern. I see that, on looking at and pondering over the things you have told me, I have been wrong; that which I considered good and true is altogether evil, and those things which I reckoned or imagined to be evil, are no evils at all. And now I am sure that you and your brethren are men I should like to live with. But hear my story.

“My father was a priest, and from my earliest years, I was educated for the same office. As I grew up, I began to entertain strange notions at variance with the common and received ideas as to the worship of the God: my mind was sorely troubled; I knew not well what to do. But at length, as I advanced in age, I came to make changes in my mode of worship. I prayed to God the Holy and Good Spirit, and to his holy ones. This change was very soon noticed, and efforts were made by some to get me to give up what they considered as my wrong views of the prevailing worship. They warned me of the consequences if I persisted in my course. On my father coming to know of my defection, he was enraged, and cursed me by all the gods. At length that which was threatened came on me—I was expelled—driven out from their midst—from my home—from my young

wife and child; for the parents of my wife tore her and my child away. All spurned me, and lifted their foot to kick me from their path as an unclean beast. After suffering greatly (for a time I had been deprived of my reason), I left my native place and wandered to another town, where I thought I was not known. I tried hard to get a place in their Temple; but the evil reports of my enemies had followed me, and I was again driven out from my fellow-men as unfit to live. At this time the country was subjected to outrage and plunder by a strong band of robbers. I was desperate, and cared not what became of me; so I joined myself to them. I found that the band was made up of men like myself—outcasts—driven from the company of their fellow-men, some for one thing, and some for another, but among them were educated individuals. In course of time our outrages became so flagrant, that the king raised an army which hunted us down. Reduced in numbers, we came here for refuge, and here we have remained. We found it a hard matter to live in this place; but we made it a law that if merchants passed this way, they should be robbed and murdered. Likewise, as we had been cast out by the priests, we would no longer worship their gods, whom we blamed for all the evils that had befallen us, but that we would worship and sacrifice to the God of Evil, turning evil into good, and good into evil. Thus have we lived for many years; and after a while I believed in neither God nor Devil, and that I would go down to the dust, and there would be no more of me.”

After telling me all this, he said,—“After what you told me last night, I retired to rest; but I could not sleep. I thought reason had left me, and I wearied for the morning. You spoke of the Great Spirit, and of the good angels whom He sends to protect you. I believe they do watch over you; for our men do not seem to be able to move a step to injure you—there seems to be a mighty charm on them. I do not understand it. I am now four score years and ten, but I want to learn more about Him who was your Teacher.”

The old man listened eagerly while I told him of much that I had gone through for the cause of Jesus of Nazareth. I told him of the wonderful works he had performed on behalf of the sick, the lame, the blind, and the deaf: of the glorious doctrines he taught—doctrines that showed men how to live and how to die—

the doctrines of love and truth which he had received from God, "This is He in whom we place our trust; and he never deceives us. He is our Prince; he sees us, and knows well what we need, and he sends his holy ones to guard us from evil, and to guide us on our way."

For two hours he listened to me, word after word, when, rising somewhat abruptly, he said—"I have got enough for the present. I will see you again," and left.

After morning prayers, and breaking our fast, and looking after various necessary duties, we went out towards the caves, though there were some of our brethren who doubted whether it was safe to do so. But we went boldly onwards, and entered a cave that appeared to be common to the villagers. On penetrating it we came to a great chamber, which was lighted up by oil lamps. Here we found a circle of old men, sitting in council. The old priest, with whom I had conversed, was of the number present. He had been telling them all that I had said to him, and now he declared before them all that, old as he was, he had become a new man; he said he renounced for ever the wild and wicked thoughts he had cherished for the sixty years he had been amongst them, and had come back to the ideas he entertained when he was a young priest. This change he ascribed to the conversation he had with me, and asked me to tell the assembled council all that he himself had heard from my lips. I was not slow to comply with the old man's request. After discoursing to them for a long time on the life and teachings of Jesus, their countenances exhibited a wonderful change—they seemed to be under deep-felt conviction of the wicked and wretched life they had hitherto lived; seeing this, I earnestly besought them to abandon their wicked and inhuman habits—their hatred of their fellow-men. I showed them that they had no cause for their continued enmity; that, by pursuing such a course, they shut themselves out from all the benefits attendant on social intercourse, and entailed misery on their children, whom they thus trained up in the same evil ways. "Be no longer," I said, "banished men, but, abandoning this wretched life of yours, join your fellow-men. What profit is there in all this robbery and killing of peaceable merchants? No doubt you are a terror to them; but you are a despised tribe, and dare not leave these

rocks and mix with your countrymen. But all this may be changed by believing the truths taught by my Lord and Master, Jesus of Nazareth, which I have laid down to you. Take these precepts and be guided by them, and then will you know what it is to have the Mighty One as your Father, and to have the angel of his presence to watch over you and protect you from all evil."

The circle of old men were deeply moved by what had been spoken, and they were determined, along with the old priest, to bring about a change. I asked them to leave their old haunts amongst the caves and come with us, so that they might be brought into the society of their fellowmen, from whom they had been so long estranged. But my proposal was not considered feasible. The old priest said,—“Willingly would I accompany you in your mission, but my work is here. I have all along been looked up to by this people as a father and guide, although I wickedly encouraged them in their evil ways; now, however, it is all changed with me. I came here to live with them—to die with them; but before I pass away, I have resolved to bring the light of truth, as seen in the precepts of him whom you follow, to bear on my people, to whom I have bound myself. Henceforth, I devote what remains of my life in this world, with the presence and help of the Great Spirit, to undo the evil I have taught, and endeavour to raise my poor people from their degraded condition to a higher and happier life. God helping me, this I will do.”

After this meeting with the elders, the whole tribe manifested a kindly spirit towards us. Their wives and children were brought forth; for it was a custom amongst them that these should be kept from view when strangers were present. The whole community numbered about 800, of whom there were about 200 men, the women slightly preponderating. We gave them a few articles of clothing, receiving a quantity of corn and other necessaries required for our journey in return.

We stayed a few days with them, during which we opened up the truth more fully to many who waited on us. Thus, this once wild and malignant tribe became changed; we afterwards learned that the old priest laboured faithfully in proclaiming the truths we had been instrumental in bringing to him and his tribe, and that he lived to see them become an industrious and prosperous community—their chief occupation being as workers in iron.

Twelfth Sitting.

July 31st, 1878.

The Eyes of the Spirit ever on us—Spirit Guidance—Subsequent History of the Outcasts—A Fishing Village—A Degraded Remnant—Ill-treatment of Mediums—The Apostolic Band—A Pleasant Change of Scene—Rest and Refreshment—The Band erect an Altar—Thank-offerings accepted—Spirit Presence Realized.

(Controlled by HERMES.)—Next morning, after parting with the exiles of the caves, we set out on our travels, but not till, at our morning service, we had raised our voices in thanksgiving to the Most High for all that he had done for us and for the lawless men from whom we had parted; at the same time, we thanked Him for the protection granted to us by his ministering angels, who hovered around, giving evidence, day by day, of their watchful care over us; and we besought their aid in the journey we were about to take.

It would be well for men, in all circumstances, to bear in mind the fact, that the watchful eyes of the Spirit-world are on them. When we thought ourselves least watched, we found that our Spirit friends had their eyes on us. Great need we had to listen to those silent voices, ever whispering in our inner ear, when tempted to trust in our own strength rather than on heavenly aid. Every man should give heed to what he may imagine is reasoning within himself; by doing so, he would often find that it was not of himself, but one of the Spirit-world trying to impress him, to point out the proper road for him to walk in. This was better shown to me at this time than at any other stage of my former life. It would often rush into my head,—“Well, go such and such a way,” when suddenly I would think,—“No, do not take that way.” And, on many occasions, I found that the latter was the better advice, and, in obeying it, I never ran my head against a wall. There was a great deal in how we journeyed. We could, at times, have taken what appeared to us a much smoother and a more advantageous road, than that which we took, but this fine and smooth way might have led to many of your miles of additional travel; while, by crossing a bit of desert, we shortened our journey by forty or fifty miles.

After the morning service, we went forth much refreshed in body and mind, singing anthems as we went, and with the

blessing of the old priest. The tribe had not all turned away from their old practices, but we learned afterwards that they all came so far round as to acknowledge what was righteous and just. From all I could learn, after I entered the spirit-world, as the new generation rose, as they became more enlightened, they saw that they were living a savage life, and not as they ought to live; and when the old generation passed away, and the new took its place, they went forth and built a city.

We travelled onwards, in the direction of the mouth of the Red Sea, so that we might have some communication with Persia and the brethren there. The first and second days of our journey all went well with us. As usual, we travelled in the morning, and during the heat of the day we pitched our tents in some sheltered spot till the heat began to lessen, when we again started on our way, and continued till darkness came on, when we again camped.

The third day we came in sight of a little fishing village on the sea-coast, where we were very well entertained. There were not above fifty grown-up men. Some of these, in the course of their trade in fish in other towns, had come under our teachings, and were acquainted with the case of the unjust judge. They had learned that we were approaching their village, and came out and welcomed us. As we proceeded, these men cried to their neighbours—"Here are those men we told you of; come and hear what they have got to tell you." At the outskirts of the village, we were shown a place where we could get accommodation for our beasts and ourselves. After getting the animals put up, and other necessary duties attended to, we met with the people, telling them all that we were in the habit of giving to the people in the various places we had touched at. Then we bought from them things we required, and sold them various articles. What seemed to surprise them more than anything else about us was our honest, straightforward dealings with them. They had not been accustomed to have such dealers. What they had heard of our doctrines from their neighbours, before we came, had not been much; but now they had a full statement of these from our own lips. When we spoke to them of the life hereafter, they began to laugh at us. They had been sadly neglected; living apart from their fellowmen, they had neither priest nor service, and every day was alike. They believed neither in God nor devil; here

to-day, dead, and no more of them. This was their present state ; but it was astonishing how many different views had previously been held in this little place. At one time all had believed in the Great and Good Spirit, when they had honest and righteous laws. This was the quarter (the Midian) whence the Hebrew law-giver derived the best of all his governing laws for the people whom he led. It was something surprising to find people, whose forefathers had possessed so much, sunk to this low condition, showing clearly that it is possible for nations to be raised to a high state of civilisation, and yet go back into darkness and barbarism. A lesson this to be learned by you, for yourselves as well as for those who come after you, to guard carefully and sacredly your spiritual rights and privileges.

Like many others, this people had got hold of one here and there to be mouth-pieces for the Spirit ; but, throwing aside all thoughts of such communications, their mediums were often made to suffer, and driven to such a condition that they could not be used as mediums. Thus the work of the Spirit-world loses through the persecution of those who are our ministers. And this was how this once elevated nation, or people, lost their spiritual position. We accordingly spoke to them of that righteousness and truth which had characterised their forefathers, and urged them to the consideration of conducting themselves in accordance with the teachings of Jesus.

I cannot say exactly that they came round to our way of thinking ; but, at least, we opened up their minds, and trusted that they would advance on the way we had pointed out. Nor were our labours altogether lost, for we had brought them from believing in nothing to believing in something.

The young men of our band were eager to become ministers to their brethren. These young men who had been brought up to a wild, roving life on the sea, had now become loveable beings. Formerly, they loved to revel in robbery and bloodshed ; now, they were disciples of the Prince, loving to proclaim his doctrines, and ready at any time to lay down their lives in his service. Formerly, they had shown themselves revengeful and vindictive ; now, they were prepared to die rather than lift their hand to give a blow in defence. The weapons they now wielded cut deeper than those they once used.

Having rested for a day at this village, we set out on our way for Aden, which was nigh at hand. We found the country in the neighbourhood of the town something like a civilised place. I had travelled through sandy deserts and over stony wastes in this country ; but now all was changed as we approached Aden ; the luxuriant vegetation, the trees laden with dates, cocoa-berries, and other fruits of the earth—food for man and beast—all this was so different from that which we had experienced, that we did enjoy the change. And we were not slow to put forth our hands and eat, for the fruits were wild, abundant, and free to every one.

The place was so suitable for refreshing ourselves and our animals, that we agreed to remain for two or three days. We saw very few of the inhabitants of the country, and were quite by ourselves, and so we formed ourselves into a circle for pure worship. Night after night, and day after day, those of the upper spheres came amongst us. We were in such condition—so wholly given up to worship—that we saw them walking in our midst, and so like ourselves that we could scarcely distinguish them from ourselves. Message after message was got from my father (Issha) as to how we were to act, etc. And here the brethren raised an altar on which were placed fruits of the earth. Though I had long given up altar-worship, and thought it not right to present an offering to those good and bright ones, I did not offer any opposition. If my brethren thought it good and right, why should I object? I even helped them to build that altar and to lay on the fruits—not as an act of divine worship, but presenting merely a thank-offering to these good spirits for guiding us in our wanderings—(all we could give them). I have known such offerings disappear before our eyes,—seeing no hand nor individual,—the fruits seemed to dissolve into vapour and rise from the stones upward. I now know how and why they were so accepted. It was not as an act of worship, but as an offering. They dissolved and took the spirit from the fruit. And it was indeed a great good to some who were with us. They saw greater manifestations of spirit-presence than they had ever witnessed before. They saw farther into the Spirit-world. We had told them of what we had experienced, and they believed ; but now they, too, had seen for themselves, and said how much nearer the better land appeared to them—nearer than they had ever thought. It seemed but a

step, and the bright and beautiful angels led you up the river-bank of the happy land. It was truly refreshing to hear those blessed ones speaking of the good things of the upper world—how they lived there and how they acted in reference to those still in the material world ; how they strengthened our spirits, buckling on us, as it were, fresh armour for the battle we had to fight, by giving us such insight into the Spirit-world. Our Father, who is ever ready to send help, had given us these bright ones to be nigh to us, to open our eyes to the glories of the happy land, which on some future day would be our home. (We trust that some of you may see that land before you leave the body—that your eyes may feast on its glories, and thus encourage you in the work of preparation for entering in.) Heavy with the toils of the body, I often wished that my spirit would take its flight to those mansions above ; but in this I knew I was wrong ; for when my Father saw fit to call me home—when my work was done—the angel would come and take me with him to the better land.

I will not go further to-night.

Thirteenth Sitting.

August 7th, 1878.

Suanna—Visit Aden—Meet with Old Friends—Stock Sold at High Prices—The “Best Goods” Offered—Something about “The Brahmin”—A Secret Disciple—More of the same Kind—Hermes sends a Message to the Brahmin—Condition of Arabia—Female Power in the Ascendant—Husbands alarmed—A Church Formed—The Spirit Choir—Find Heaven on Earth.

(Controlled by HERMES.)—At our previous sitting my narrative carried us as far as the neighbourhood of Aden. The place we tarried at was called *Suanna*, not far from Aden.

Being a very fruitful place, we thought it better to stay here in one of the beautiful groves, rather than take up our quarters in the city, as we knew not what sort of reception we might meet with. But we resolved to pay them a visit—to spy out the place. Accordingly, having seen all things put to right in the camp for the night, a few of us went into the city as strangers on a visit. We found that most of the higher class of merchants and chiefs had finely built houses of burnt brick, which was not very common

in Arabia ; while the lower classes used houses built of sun-dried bricks. We always found, on coming to large cities in which there were inhabitants of some influence, that it was much more difficult to make an impression than in the villages inhabited by a simpler and humbler class. We did much more work amongst the latter class ; for we found that there was always the barrier of prejudice in favour of certain doctrines, handed carefully down from father to son, existing in the minds of the higher and educated class. When we tried to open their eyes to something better than that which they had been taught, they would spurn us away, and order us to leave their city ; and so we always liked to first spy out the land.

We made direct for the market-place, where we found the merchants doing business ; and among them we observed that company whom we met with in the Desert, when they were in great distress for water. We greeted one another in true Eastern fashion. We learned from them that they had made many long journeys since they had parted from us, and had often wondered where we had gone to. The chief of the company, as spokesman, thought we had gone away back to Egypt. We conversed with him for some time, when he gave us information as to the character of the city merchants. He said we would not find them easy to traffic with, as they were very close and selfish ; but he promised to see us next day, when we were ready to transact business. He then introduced us to a few of the merchants of the city, after which we left for our encampment, and on the following day we had our goods exposed for sale in the market-place. Our friends again met with us, and the chief agreed to aid us in our sale, as we were strangers. We accepted his offer. He then called the attention of some young merchants to our goods, and was not long in effecting sales, and got more for the goods than we could have got. Having got our stock entirely under his charge, he scrupled not at asking very high prices—indeed, I thought they were extortionate, and I told him so. He said it was not thought to be extortion by the people with whom he dealt—he offered the goods for so much, and they willingly gave him the price he asked. “So don’t be angry,” said he. I saw that we could not help it now, and said—“Now that you have been so good, and got such a ready sale for these, will you intro-

duce some other goods which we have for the market?" I explained what I meant, and he thought there might not be such a demand for the kind of goods I had in store. There were so many merchants of different persuasions in the city that this task would be much more difficult than the other. "There were," he said, "merchants from Persia and India and other distant lands, and all holding the various theologies peculiar to these lands." But he agreed to go in with me on the day following.

Accordingly, next day, on entering the market-place, we happened to meet with some Brahmins, and also some Persians. We entered into conversation, and went from one thing to another till we got into a very hot discussion. These men, who had a thorough knowledge of their country's history and theology, we found to be very able in discussion. Brahmins were generally well instructed in the various points of their own religion—indeed, they would speak on any subject. If we introduced astronomy, we found that they knew more about it than we did. Regarding commerce they showed great ability, knowing well where they could get the best price for their goods. Desiring to introduce the teachings of my Prince, I mentioned his name, when I was interrupted by one of the Brahmins exclaiming—"We have heard all about him and his doctrines long ago;" and then he began to tell me of a young man, miraculously raised from the dead by him whose name I had mentioned, who had come from Persia; and how this young man afterwards went throughout India expounding the doctrines he had received from him who had restored him to life; so that all which I had been speaking of, he said, was nothing new to him.

This statement, you may readily imagine, interested me greatly, and I questioned him somewhat closely on the subject, asking him what he really thought of it. He took hold of me by the cloak, and, pulling me aside, he said,—“I am a thorough believer in all that you have been saying to us. I believe in him who taught these doctrines. Being a near relation of the young man who was raised, I know the whole statement as to the wonderful work to be true—that my friend was dead, and was raised to life again by the power of him of whom you have been speaking. But I have to be cautious how I talk of this subject.”

At this I expressed my wonder.

“Do not be surprised,” he said ; “those in the ship with me are not believers, and if they discovered that I held the same doctrines as are now preached by my young friend, I would never cross the Arabian Sea with them—they would cast me into the sea. It would be a brave act if I would but speak out boldly, and what I ought to do. But I know the consequences—death. I am determined, however, when I reach home—having accumulated as much wealth as will maintain myself and my family independently—to give myself up to spiritualistic work, and join with my friend in the work of proclaiming the truth. This I had resolved to do before I undertook the present voyage.”

I set off, accompanied by this secret disciple, for our camp, on reaching which I found that he was not the only one who sympathised with our teachings, for there I found some Jews who had got the length of this Hindu.

I soon saw the necessity of enlarging our camp, so as to accommodate the visitors from the city, who came out in the evening to our meeting. The service was held after sunset. In so doing, we avoided interfering with any of the religious services in the town, and thus the priests had no cause for complaint. In the course of a few days we got leave from the headman of the city, on explaining our mission to him, to occupy the place in which we were encamped.

At this time Arabia was much broken up into districts, and destitute of a wise ruler—one who could look properly after the people. There were many petty chiefs, continually trying to extort as much as possible from the poor people over whom they ruled—caring not whether they starved, so that they got what they demanded. In the larger towns it was different. In these, commerce and trade asserted their influence, and better government was the result. There were various trades carried on ; among others, workers in gold and silver. Goldsmiths appeared to be the largest business in this town. Their workmanship adorned the female, and, in some degree, the male portion of the population. The town lay in a most convenient spot for commerce, near the Straits (of Babel-Mandeb), and was consequently much frequented by merchants from all parts.

While we sojourned in this place, the Brahmin merchant resolved to set out on his return to India. We accompanied him

as far as Aden. Before parting with him, I asked him to give my greeting to his friend, he who had been raised from the dead, and to tell him how I was, and what I was engaged in; for we were known to each other, though we had never met. I told this Hindu merchant that though I had never seen my friend with the bodily eye, I had seen him the evening before in a dream or vision, and gave him a description of the person in my vision. He said I had pictured him to the very life. I was much pleased on hearing this, confirming me, as it did, in the correctness of vision while in the trance state.

We had a good large company, who attended night after night, the larger number being females. The women, in that part of Arabia, were generally more masters than the men; so that, what they (the women) said, was law. The Arabians, in my day, were of a quick, fiery disposition, not easily led; but they submitted readily to female influence. So that, when we saw our meetings so much prized by these females, who belonged mostly to the upper class, we were sure they would influence their husbands for good in due time. Being of the higher class, these females came out more freely than those who were of humbler rank. At first, coming out with their servants to walk in the cool of the evening, closely veiled, they found their way to our camp, apparently to look at it; this act of theirs somewhat alarmed their husbands, who made a great cry about it,—saying we were there under guise, and that we intended to run off with our female visitors. But, notwithstanding this suspicion on the part of their husbands, these women continued to attend our meetings at the camp. They were attentive listeners, and many of them became thorough believers of the truths proclaimed, and very devout worshippers. We had no doubt but that before long, they would be able to make a deep impression on others.

A number of those who had been attracted to our meetings, both natives and foreigners, requested us, before we left, to form them into a small congregation, or church, within the city. This we agreed to do. At the first meeting of the little church, we all felt truly in the spirit, each one vieing with his neighbour how much they could do for one another. The feelings that swelled our breasts were heavenly. It could not be otherwise; for, while we were sensible of the presence of the heavenly host surrounding

us, our ears were ravished by the most delightful music, as if ten thousand voices mingled in harmony with the assembled mortals in our lowly house of prayer. Though we had experienced nothing else at the end of our long and toilsome journey, over sandy and rocky deserts, this was sufficient to repay us. But, as you know, it was only one among many of those experiences vouchsafed to us.

If men on earth would but give their whole powers to such work, and rely on those who have gone to the better land before them, there would be greater success in the work of redeeming those who have wandered from the paths of virtue. The teachings of the Spirit-world, first of all, show man how he is to worship God, and then how he should act towards his fellow-man. Man is not to find heaven after he leaves the body, but he must endeavour to find heaven on earth—not far away, but near to him, even within him. Let him not calculate on change when he leaves the earth—if change there is—for it is but a throwing off of an old cloak and putting on a new one. Wrapped in this new and spiritual clothing, when he reaches the summer land, he scarce knows he has left the material body—his old cloak.

Fourteenth Sitting.

August 14th, 1878.

Village of the Sea-Robbers—Prayer for Direction—Hermes in Danger—Abba, as Judge, Interferes—Ghosts of the Murdered—"Work to do Here"—Getting quit of an Ill Name—Visit to the Grave of the Murdered Man—His Spirit Appears—Incense as a Thank-offering.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—After the formation of the little band of worshippers into a church, and parting with our Brahmin friend and others, we set off on our journey, and soon came nigh to a small village on the coast, where dwelt the people who, in my journey with Ion on the opposite side of the strait, desiring to deal with us, not only ran off with our goods, but killed one of our band. We had, doubtless, on that occasion, taken from them goods sufficient to make up to the widow of the poor man for her loss; but they might not look at it in that way. Although those who were with me now were known to the villagers, having changed their faith and taken to a new and a better occupation,

we were not very sure what kind of reception we might get. But on consultation, we resolved to go and try to overcome them. They might look on me as one of those who had used them badly, but I would try, by reasoning with them, to show that it was not so—that we had not robbed them. They had robbed one of our band of a precious life on Earth, deprived a family of its support, and what we had taken from them had gone for their benefit. (It would be well if that rule were more common among men—that he who took the life of a man should be doomed to toil for the support of those who had been dependent on him ; it would be far better than to thrust him from Earth into the world of spirits.)

Accordingly, we went on towards this village ; and when at some distance from it, we thought we would pitch our tents and rest ourselves, and in so doing get an opportunity for devotion, and requesting aid and direction from the Higher Powers. After seeing to our beasts, and to ourselves, we assembled as usual. The time of our devotion was early in the morning, as we travelled in the evening. The sun was rising in the east when we bent the knee to Him who was symbolised in the luminary of day ; and thus, in the attitude of prayer, in silent, unspoken words, the deep breathings of the sincere heart went upward to those angelic messengers who would carry our supplications to Him who answers prayer—the Source of all blessing. We soon found that what we had desired was not far from us. Those bright ones, our guides in all our weary wanderings, soon made themselves manifest to us. They told us that we were not to be afraid ; that as we had prospered in the past, so would we then. Indeed, what had we to fear ? We had those with us who were ready, as on former occasions, to cast a cloud around us like a wall—to protect us from seen and unseen enemies. We had seen, when there were hostile parties lurking about, ready to pounce on us, that their evil purpose was foiled by our angel guardians ; on coming up, it seemed as if we had vanished from sight—they found only a thick wall of mist. It mattered not whether we were in darkness or in sunshine, this wall was always around us when threatened with danger. And so, as the heat of the day passed away, and evening came on, we once more struck our tents, packed our beasts of burden, and went forward.

We arrived at the village late in the evening, and were made welcome to enter in. But when some of those who had been engaged in the expedition I have alluded to, discovered me amongst the band they had welcomed, an outcry arose, and an attempt made to lay hands on me as one who had robbed them. But, seeing how matters were going, my friend *Abba* stepped forward, and requested them not to lay hands on me, but to lay their complaint before him, and he would judge. It was out of his jurisdiction ; nevertheless, there being no greater judge there at the time, they knew he was entitled, in the circumstances, to sit in judgment. Accordingly, they laid their complaint before him, telling how we had used them. *Abba* saw that hard words would not do, and he began to reason with them calmly. He said that I had nothing to do with the matter, being but a fellow-traveller in the company. He reminded them that, on the occasion referred to, they, when they found themselves beaten off, had sent on a messenger to him, telling him that there was a rich prize on the way north ; how he had set out in sufficient force to capture the caravan, and how he and those that were with him had been defeated in fight, and captured. It had been a blessed defeat for him, and those that were with him. Though they had lost all, they had gained something of priceless value, that would endure for ever. When he began to speak in that way, they appeared to listen as if spell-bound, and, as he warmed on the subject, the feelings of his hearers deepened. He said that, in former times, he had disgraced his manhood, not only by taking what was not his own, but by shedding innocent blood, and thereby hurling many into the unseen world of spirits, not knowing where they would go : and such souls, he said, might come back to torture them.

At this, they began to whisper among themselves. This one had seen so-and-so, and another had seen that—(men whom they had slain in their marauding expeditions)—how their faces had risen up from the deep blue waters of the sea, and had spoken to them, and even cursed them.

My friend *Abba* began to remonstrate with them. He said they must have been imagining these things, that such ideas were the results of conscience within them, bringing up their evil deeds before their eyes. Those whom they had deprived of life were

not in their dead bodies in the depths of the sea ; but inhabitants of the world of spirits, and there was no likelihood of them coming back to drag them to the place where they had sent them to before their time—no, but to turn them from their evil ways on earth, in order that they might obtain a higher and better state hereafter.

These men were not disbelievers in a heaven and a place of punishment, and my friend's words did not fail to gain their attention ; but they, from what they said, had no very clear idea what kind of life it would be in heaven : while some amongst them asserted that they had in visions seen such a place, but they could not make much of that which they had seen.

Abba here beckoned on me to come forward, saying—"Here is one who is able to tell you something of that place. Along with him I have walked the golden streets of that beautiful city above, and there we have met with friends whom we had known when in the body."

I said—"My friend Abba speaks the truth, and many of my brethren here can say the same. Our spirits did walk there, though our bodies still lay on the earth."

They appeared astonished and awe-struck, and we continued for some time to address them, setting before them the truths fitted to lead them to a better life. We found that thus the great lion which we had conjured up had become a very lamb—that the impassable rocks and walls which had risen in our path had crumbled away, and had become as sand of the desert.

We resolved to abide here for a time, for we saw that there was work for us to do. And it was not long before we had some converts to the faith, by which we were encouraged to persevere in our endeavours to bring all the people of the place to a better course of life than they had hitherto pursued. We did not, as I said before, attempt to enforce any particular doctrine or point of theology ; we were satisfied if we could but get them round to something like our way of thinking in reference to daily life. If they became better men and women under our administrations, it was all we wished. We were not disappointed, for we soon observed a change on the people.

Being a place where fresh water could easily be had, many coasting vessels called at it for a supply, and we made it a point

to have intercourse with these sea-faring strangers, and thereby get an opportunity of sending abroad the truths which had become so precious to us, and through us, to so many of our fellow-men. Some of the smaller vessels, we found, would not venture in—indeed, they would not even come near the place—because of the dishonest character it had acquired. The larger vessels, however, being well armed, were able to contend with them, had they shown any disposition to act dishonestly in their traffic with them. These vessels coming for water, and buying and selling, carried off with them a report of the change that might be witnessed on the character of the villagers. This soon spread to other vessels, and the small vessels began to come in.

Being near the mouth of the Strait, I had a wish to cross over to the other side, so that I might take a look at the burial-place of the man who had been slain in my first journey. When I mentioned this, one of those who had taken a leading part on the occasion I allude to objected. He seemed to shrink at the mention of it. He said, since we had come and spoken to them, he had come to see that he, being the leader of the expedition, was guilty of the murder. He had seen the mark which we had put up at the grave, and they, when in that quarter, would have pulled it down—but they were not able to go near it. This man, however, when I and another friend sailed across, went with us. On reaching the spot we held a devotional meeting, and, after sitting for some time, he who had been slain appeared and talked with us. You would have thought you looked on a man; he just appeared in all respects as I had seen him last in the body. He thanked me for helping his wife and family. He had seen us often, he said, having joined the band of those who were our guardians. I asked why he had not appeared to us before. He said he could not; but he had been the means of bringing us here along with him who had been instrumental in cutting his earth-life short, in order that he might have an opportunity of saying that he forgave him. His wife and child were well provided for; and as for himself there was no harm done—he had only been sent into the Spirit-world sooner than he would have gone.

On saying this our companion completely broke down, and cried like a child—he, the strong, hardened Arabian robber, became like a little child.

Our spirit friend said he would likely be seen by us again ; he had been permitted on this occasion, for the benefit of this Arabian, to take from us that which assisted him to materialise, but when he next appeared, it would be to our spiritual vision. Afterwards we had a good deal of conversation with him, when he told us of some little incidents that would take place, and then he left us.

On this the friend who accompanied me said that the grave of this deceased brother was really a holy place, and proposed to rear an altar over it. I cared not much about such things as altars then, but those who were with me had still some of the old ideas. So they reared an altar of huge stones, on which they kindled a fire, and laying on some sweet smelling herbs which they found in the neighbourhood, a fine incense rose up, filling the atmosphere around us ; and as it ascended, I could not but pray that it might be received as a thank-offering by the blessed ones hovering around us. You have no idea of how much pleasure it gives to the Spirit. You may look on it as a *heathen* custom to sacrifice. I do not go so far as to sacrifice animals, burning their flesh on the fire, but sweet scented *herbs* is a different thing altogether. The essence being the spirit of the plant, it flows into the spirit atmosphere, and gives to the blessed ones spiritual food. After this we re-crossed the Strait, and rejoined our company. I will not go further to-night.

Fifteenth Sitting.

August 21st, 1878.

Reflections—The Converted Robbers—Wandering Arabs—Hygienic Remarks—A Lovely Spot of Earth—An Altar for Prayer—Hermes' Notes of the Journey—The Arabs at Prayer—The Band in Rapport—An Old Chief in Search of His Daughter—The Spirit Voice—"I have seen Her!"—On the Trail—Arrows Turned Aside—The Culprit Confesses—The Maiden given up.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—He said—We left the sea-port we had been staying in for some time, accompanied by the once robber chief, and a number of others, all of whom were anxious to show us kindness as a return for that which we had done for them. We set off on our journey in high spirits, because we might say

that the Great Spirit, through his angels or servants of the Spirit-world, had done great things by us and for us. We ascribed nothing to ourselves. We had seen those who had been our implacable enemies brought to their knees, asking not only the forgiveness of men, but forgiveness of Him who ruleth over all—the Great Creator of the universe. Men may turn round on you and say: “You tell us of a Great and Mighty Ruler of all things, but show Him unto us!” It is true, you cannot show such doubters Him who is the Invisible—it would be presumption on your part to make the attempt—but, then, you might point to the manifestations of His presence in the world of material things; and when Earth is thoroughly awakened to the things of the Spirit-world, such men will not only see God in Nature, but they will see Him in Man—in themselves—and in those who have entered into Spirit-life. When I have tried to reason with those of the priesthood in regard to this matter, I have been met with the objection, “I know as well as you do that there is a something that guides mankind which you call God, and you say you know Him—but let me see Him.” I know Him by the manifestations made known to me in spirit. If you admit that man as a spirit never dies, then we may well assume that he, as spirit, is the offspring of God, who is the Source, the Father, of all being—all spirit. There is no one born into the world without an earthly father, unless it be a case of miraculous conception, which does not often happen on this side of Nature. The leader of the Arabs (who was now escorting us) had brought up certain objections to my doctrine—even to that of a future life for the spirits of men; and when some of his neighbours spoke of seeing in vision certain individuals who had passed away, this man set it down as mere imagination. It was well, however, that after we had laid all the evidence before him, and getting him to admit that we were right, he went over with us to the grave of the man he had slain, where he was confirmed in the truth we had imparted, for there he had seen, and had even been forgiven by, him whom he had hurled out of the world,—and the words of that forgiveness were uttered by the spirit in his hearing. It was testimony which could not be set aside.

Our Arab friends had gone on with us on our journey for a whole day, and resolved to return home next morning. Before

leaving, we held a very pleasant meeting together, and they departed, promising to spread abroad all the knowledge they had received, whether that regarded body or spirit. We had not confined our instruction to matters spiritual; for in our sojourn with them we saw that they were not at all particular in eating, drinking, and sleeping. Now, however, they looked to higher things; they saw that they themselves had been helped to, and benefited by, a knowledge of spiritual truth, and they resolved to be a help to their brethren—those who were worse off than themselves—both spiritually and materially. Though I never saw them again in the body, I have since been informed by some of them in spirit-life that their small village became a very pleasant town, and that they did a great deal in the way of commerce, both with India and Persia, and even Ethiopia.

It was well, perhaps, that our Arab friends had accompanied us so far on our way, for their presence was likely to save us from annoyance on the part of wandering tribes who frequented that part of the country, who were in a half-barbarous state. They had once been civilised, but had gone down, like many other tribes in Arabia, who lived a good deal by plunder. Though we had that "*wall*" that had often protected us, we were yet in dread of them. We lacked faith, notwithstanding all the evidence of protection we had received. When we knew that danger lurked near us, we always kept a sharp look-out, so that we would not be taken un-awares; though it must be confessed that an enemy would have but little to be afraid of, for we were men of peace, and each one of us had solemnly sworn never to draw a weapon against his brother-man, that we might not be guilty of the sin of thrusting men into the world of spirits before their time.

I believe that all men ought to live to old age, and that every one who is born into the world would do so if they would but take proper care of themselves. But the day is coming, and fast drawing nigh, when such things will be properly attended to. Even since my day, the world has not improved in this matter—indeed, to a certain extent, it has gone back. It has advanced with mighty strides in civilisation, in certain directions—that is true; but, in another direction, it is standing still, or going back, and it will take a long time before it can retrace its steps, and redeem that which it has lost. As mankind advance in true civilisation,

they will gradually come to see the necessity of living a true spiritual life, and, as they do so, their children, which proceed from them, will grow up under these favourable conditions, and become still further advanced, and so on, till man shall have attained to the proper standard of civilisation. I say *proper*, because, viewing man from our stand-point, and with our eyes, his civilisation is a mockery. He may be advanced in learning, science and art, and think himself far beyond what he terms the barbarous nations, that have long since passed away, and whose cities are now lying in heaps ; but I say that we, of those times, and long, long before my day, stood as high in science, and art, and philosophy, as you do at the present day—just as much a civilised people as you and other nations are. Why, when you are making your discoveries and inventions of this and that, you are, in many cases, only finding that which died with us. Year by year, as the world goes on, you will make greater “discoveries,” but all such will help to let men see that we of the olden time were just about as much advanced as they are themselves.

In all this, however, I am away from my story. Our Arab friends having left us, we started on our journey, so as to get as far as possible before the heat of the day prevented us. As we were going along, we came to a delightful valley ; surrounded by high hills, it was well watered, and, consequently, a fruitful spot. It seemed to have been at one time a beautiful garden, but had gone to waste ; yet, though the fruit-trees were growing wild, we found on them abundance of dates, apricots, peaches, and grapes, being the season when these fruits were ripe. We thought we would do well to pitch our tents in this lovely valley, and remain for a time, and there refresh ourselves, being somewhat secluded, and not often visited by wandering Arabs, except it might be by some tribes in their journey to the towns, where they wished to buy and sell. We felt, too, that as we had been mingling a good deal amongst our fellow-men for some time, we would be the better of something like solitude.

We encamped on the banks of a pleasant stream, whose waters, flowing over their pebbly bed, made sweet music in their course. The birds sang sweetly in the early morning, and in the evening the valley presented the appearance of a paradise on earth. It brought up beautiful recollections of what we had seen in our

heavenly visions, and we felt, while our eyes rested on the lovely scene, that it was as possible to have a heaven on earth in the material form, as it was to experience it, in spirit, in the world above. O that man could but see it in that light!

We set up a tent for worship; but those who were with me still held to the idea that an altar should be raised in the place appointed for prayer. And I never objected to this, for I liked to see every man have freedom in reference to belief. A part of our service was taken up by the reading of my notes, for, while on our journeys, I always took notes of what I considered might be profitably brought before the assembled brethren. These notes were spread on the altar, and read over twice a-week. By this means every one saw the work that had been done on the journey we had undertaken, and we could exactly tell what had been the means of doing good, and there and then give thanks and praise for it.

As our friend *Hafed* means to give you a short address on Prayer, I will not now say anything on it. I know the benefit received at that spot from the exercise of prayer.

Truly that place was a heaven—or the roadway to it—the porch outside the Gate. I have seen those who were with me, when they thought no eye was upon them but the eyes of the Spirit-world, bow down reverently, with their heads in the dust, in deep and earnest prayer. These Arab brethren were not like myself or the Persians when we prayed or addressed the Divine Spirit; we stood erect. When they engaged in devotion, they brought their head betwixt their knees—thereby showing their humble submission to the Great Hearer in all things. I have often stood behind a tree, and listened to them with joy, while they breathed out their thanksgivings and supplications to the Great Spirit, not in formal, set words—mere words are not required—but the half-expressed thoughts from the grateful heart for whatever they had received, and the way in which they had been led, from the time when they were in darkness, up, and onwards, through all their wanderings, till then. They took no praise to themselves, but gave God all the glory. I may say that their whole demeanour exhibited men who had given themselves up entirely and unreservedly to spiritual things, and had left the things of the world behind.

The days spent in that pleasant valley were the happiest I ever spent on Earth, and there I could have willingly remained till I ended my earthly pilgrimage : we were all so happy. To see such a company all standing on an equal footing—no one master—no one greater than another ; for he who had been a slave before was now as free as the one who had been his master ; to see so many men living together without an unpleasant word or dispute—to witness all this was something truly grand, and was cause for great joy and encouragement. And when even a dispute did occur, which was very seldom, it was laid before the little assembly, or church, for decision, and he who was adjudged wrong cheerfully submitted without a word. Among such a number of men, each of whom had his failings, we did not expect to see perfection ; and accordingly we agreed to certain rules of life, which were strictly observed, and thus we were saved from disputes or ill-feeling.

I may here observe, also, that, while encamped in this pleasant place, we had many visions ; and some of those who had left the Earth, and who had inhabited this part of the country, appeared to us—they seemed to love to come back to the old place as Spirits. But we alone did not enjoy this happy resting-place, our beasts of burden seemed to relish the cool, refreshing breeze of the evening as much as we did ourselves.

After remaining away for a short season from our fellowmen in this solitary but refreshing spot, we struck our tents and began our journey again. We wished to make friends of the Arabs if at all possible, as we travelled along on the route we had agreed on. I had the idea that by pursuing this route I would be able to reach Persia, and once more see my venerable friend *Hafed*. I did not think that I would be permitted (for I had many hints given me from the Spirit-world) to reach Egypt again. After we started, being thoroughly rested, we felt strong in both body and mind. Our spirits seemed to possess double the ordinary strength. There was one peculiarity which I noted at this time—that was, a sort of sympathy appeared to come over the whole company, connecting, as it were, one with another,—so that if one got disheartened it seemed to affect all ; and if, on the other hand, one felt himself in a cheerful mood, a similar feeling spread over all the rest. We seemed to be one great family—each one feeling

with and for another—how, or by what means, we could not then tell. The truth was, however, we had become one great circle; there were magnetic currents passing through and through us from one to another. Even though not touching one another, the chain always kept us connected. By this means we were kept in close harmony—if one were sick, all sympathised in some degree till he recovered.

We had been on our way a day's journey from our resting-place, when we came up to an old man, who was riding on a camel. He had no servants with him; and we wondered how the old man came to be in so lonely a place by himself. We could see that he was a chief, or a man of high rank. He appeared to be very old, the hair of his head and beard being white as the driven snow, like the finest linen for whiteness. On coming up to him he seemed frantic; there was evidently something wrong with him. At first we thought he was mad, for he began to abuse us—men he had never seen before—calling us robbers and destroyers of his house. He said we had come and eaten salt with him, yet had repaid his hospitality by robbing him of his brightest treasure.

We could not understand it at all. I asked how he could charge us with the doing of this evil; none of us had eaten salt with him—nor had we sat under the cover of his tent, or had looked on his eyes before. I told him he was far wrong to take us for robbers: we would rather give than take, and so on.

He began to calm down, and then said—"Forgive the ravings of an old man." We saw that some great grief had been laid on him; that someone had done him harm, and that this had deranged his mind.

We asked him to tell us the cause of his grief. He said—"Someone like you," pointing to the friend who stood by me, "came to my tent two nights ago, in the cool of the evening, and asked for water to drink. I gave him water, and then I took him in and gave him shelter. He thanked me, and I gave him a tent to sleep in. When I rose in the morning he was gone—but what with? He had not only gone away himself, but had carried off my only child!" Now we could see the cause of the poor old man's grief and distraction.

I may state that some of those chiefs of Arabia took young wives when they themselves were old; and when the young wife

bore a child, especially if it happened to be a daughter (as in this case), the child was more thought of by the aged man than had his wife borne him a son. When a son might forsake him, the daughter would keep by her father and nurse him in his old age. And this was the cause of the old man's grief.

We asked him to stay with us, and we would help him to search for his missing child. To this he would not listen at first ; but I showed him how absurd it would be for him to go alone—that the same man who stole away his daughter might have a party in ambush to waylay him and take his life, when he would not only lose his daughter, but he himself would be lost to her.

He began to see the force of this, and asked how we could help him. I said—"Stay ; we have the means of discovering secret things. If you stay with us overnight, you might learn something of your daughter." He at last consented to remain.

He then sat down with us to our evening meal, which consisted of fruit (of which we had abundance) and pure water from the stream. We drank nothing but water in our travels—carrying no wine or anything of that sort with us.

Night came on, and we asked him to take part in our devotions. After reading a few of my notes, we engaged in prayer and praise. The old man appeared to wonder at our mode of service, and listened attentively. The worship over, we formed ourselves into a circle, the old man sitting just outside of us. We asked our Spirit-friends if they could give any consolation to this aged man. The unseen ones responded—a voice was heard telling us that they would : but the voice was strange to us, for we knew all the voices that spoke in the direct way to us.

On hearing the voice of the Spirit, the old man was startled, and cried out a name, and with a shriek fell flat to the earth. We allowed him to lie there, knowing that the guardian spirits would take care of him, while we sat still, desirous of further information from the Spirit. After some time, the old man gradually raised himself to a sitting posture ; and at length he said : "I have seen her !—I have seen the mother of my child !"

Thereafter darkness seemed to come over us all. At length, the clouds of vapour were rolled away, and a beautiful scene was presented in vision. We beheld mountains rising above mountains from a fine table-land, on which grew many date palms. On

this spot we saw a great number of red-and-white striped tents, with the inhabitants of these tents moving about hither and thither. Then our eyes were attracted to a spot where we observed several horsemen struggling up an incline which led to the encampment. We saw that one of these horsemen carried a burden of some sort—we could not make out what it was. At length they reached the outermost of the tents, when the burden was lifted from the arms of him who bore it, while his horse dropped down. At this point of the vision, the old man immediately cried out: "My daughter! my daughter!" and the vision passed away.

Here the old man started to his feet, exclaiming that he knew the spot which had been presented to us, and swore vengeance by the God of his fathers on that tribe that had taken from him his most precious treasure. We spoke to him, and showed him that vengeance was not his, and that the man who had done the evil deed would be punished for it in a way he little expected. We asked him in what direction lay the place we had seen? He said that we were then on the way to it, that he now knew who it was that had carried away his daughter, that the tribe came to that place every year, and that he once heard that the son of the chief of that tribe had seen his daughter, and had tried to make love to her, but she would not listen. Now he understood all; he had come in disguise and taken away his child. He still spoke of being revenged upon the tribe; but we advised him to subdue such a feeling; that he would have his daughter returned to him.

Having rested, early in the morning we struck our tents, and went on our journey. The hills seen in vision lay a good way inland; but we thought we would diverge a little out of our way and see if we could find the lost maiden. As we journeyed on in the direction of the hills we had much conversation with the old man concerning the truths which we taught, and he seemed to be greatly impressed by what we said. He invited us to visit his tribe, as he wanted to know more of that which he had seen and heard amongst us. We promised that we would visit him, and we did so afterwards.

After three days' travelling, during which we had taken very little rest, the old man being so impatient, we arrived at the foot of the declivity up which we had seen in our vision the horsemen struggling. It was resolved that only four of us should go for-

ward. The rest of our company encamped in a thicket of wood. The old man was mounted, while we went on foot ; but before starting we made him lay down his arms. On gaining the height we were challenged by an outpost party, who drew their bows and sent a flight of arrows in our direction ; but the wind seemed to carry them right about. Arrow after arrow was let off at us, but none came near us. They thought they were good marksmen ; but we knew that we were always under protection of our guardian angels, who turned those darts aside. It seemed to strike terror into these Arabs that some of their finest marksmen could not hit us.

We marched boldly up to the camp and saw the chief of the tribe, and charged him at once with robbing our old friend of his daughter. He protested against the charge, saying that he knew nothing about it. He would never think of depriving a brother chief of his child ; he only grieved that he himself had not a child like her. We here explained that it was his son standing beside him whom we charged as the guilty party. The young man at first denied all knowledge of the deed ; and, addressing the old man, he asked him to look at him, and say if he was the man whom he had sheltered in his tent. The aged chief evidently felt himself in a difficulty, for it was a bearded man whom he had entertained, but this young man had no beard, and we saw that as yet he was beardless. The old man was puzzled ; but it passed through my mind that the youth had worn a false beard. Looking him, however, straight in the eyes, I said,—“ You carried a burden on horseback when you returned.” At this he jeered at me, and said my eyes were old. “ Yes, it is true,” I said, “ that my eyes are old, nevertheless, though you were many furlongs from me, I saw you ascending this hill along with your companions, and on your horse you carried a burden, and that burden was this old man’s daughter.” I could read in his eyes what was passing at the time through his soul. His father, at the same time looking on him, commanded him to leave the tent, as he had brought disgrace on him. Here I interfered, and said,—“ Do not be so severe with your son, he is but a young man, and you have been young yourself. Let him confess his sin in this matter, and give up the daughter to her father.” Turning to the young man, I said,—“ Had you waited patiently you might have

got her honourably from her father, or waited till the old man had passed away."

After some farther words with him, he confessed, and actually broke down, bursting into tears. He saw that even his own father was against him; and no wonder, for, by his wicked deed, he had brought down the vengeance of a stronger tribe against his own. I said to him,—“Be not afraid, but return the maiden to her aged father, and no vengeance will be taken on you.”

He went off at once to bring her. But in doing so, some of those who had abetted him in the outrage sought to put ill in his head, saying,—“Keep the female; they are but four, and we will soon manage them.” Though at some distance from us, these words were not unheard by us—they seemed carried to us by some spiritual intervention, for which we had once more to thank our friends of the unseen world. We told what was passing outside to the young man's father. He seemed vexed, and said that he could scarcely believe that his son would listen to such advice, for he had, up till that time, been always a dutiful son. He said he had no wish to go to war with the old chief, knowing that the old man's tribe was not only a stronger tribe, but in much better condition for such a purpose.

The evil counsellors of the young man, had, however, been unable to make an impression on him; and he himself saw that if he followed their advice, his father would assuredly cast him out; so he brought forth the young woman, and gave her up to her father, at the same time asking his forgiveness for the wrong he had done. When the father and daughter saw each other, they embraced; the young woman clinging round her father's neck, while he wept tears of joy over his child, now restored to him. The young man stood by, looking on the happy scene. The old man's heart was touched, and he cried,—“Now, young man, since you have chosen to do that which is right, I solemnly vow that if my daughter wishes to be united to you, and if you behave well, that you shall have her when I leave this world.”

Thus, without any great fight, this matter was settled. The chief of the tribe wished us to stay with him for some time; but the old chief was anxious to hurry on, and after thanking the chief for his invitation, we went our way. Those of the tribe who had given evil counsel to the son of their chief, looked rather strange

when they discovered the great company that waited our return from the encampment. In the course of three days we arrived at the old man's camp.

(Mr. N.)—You said on a recent occasion that your company was composed of men only—that there were no women :
 What had become of Abba's wife ?
 We left her with her mother.

Sixteenth Sitting.

August 28th, 1878.

Progress Reported—Arabians v. Persians—Arab Characteristics—A Cloud of Locusts—Coffee—The Locusts a "Judgment"—Answer to Prayer—Congenial Men—Arabian Sacred Records—Religious Service—Jesus Preached—Jews in Arabia—Mission Work and Merchandise—Pleasant Travelling—A Vision of the Past, Present, and Future—Records Older than the Hebrew Writings.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—Good evening, my friends. In this second journey we had travelled over a large tract of country. As far as I understand your measurements, through this medium, we must have travelled more than 2000 miles. It had taken us a long time to do that. Men wandering on foot beside animals (for only those rode who were footsore) could not make much progress over rough roads, and generally no roads at all. The greater part of the distance I walked on foot, for I had no liking to riding on the camel.

In our course which we had taken, on the margin of the Arabian Sea, we came into a mountainous district of country. We found the valleys and plains at the foot of the mountains well watered by the streams from the higher parts, and very fruitful. We found also that the Arabians in that quarter were more civilised, inasmuch as they inhabited towns. They kept up small standing armies, and frequently made harassing inroads on Persia by uniting their small armies ; for they were at no great distance from the shores of the Persian Gulf.

On our arrival we found them preparing to make a raid on Persia. On learning this, I felt somewhat concerned on account of my old friend, Hafed ; for, though he no longer took part in such worldly matters—no longer a leader of Persia, but rather an

outcast among his own people—I knew well, when he saw such inroads made by those he called barbarians, that the old war-spirit was likely to trouble him again. Though he had managed to curb all the passions of man, and though now far advanced into old age, he could not but feel deeply when he saw his beloved Persia laid waste by fire and sword. I could not blame him; for had I been a warrior in my younger days, as he had been, I might have had the same feeling. But it was different with me. I had been brought up to be a man of peace, and one, therefore, whom men would expect, on every occasion, to make peace. I thank God that at this time I wished not to injure my neighbours, and did not like to see Arabian and Persian fighting. It would have been better for the dwellers on the Arabian coast had they paid attention to their own country—developing its resources and commerce—instead of now and again setting covetous eyes on their neighbour's territory and wealth, and carrying fire and sword into a peaceful land. But Rome, also, was just doing what less civilised Arabia was doing—trying to enrich herself at Persia's expense.

This part of Arabia yielded a great deal of gold, ivory, and feathers, and much fine, rich linen was made here. But, with all that, they were not content, and persisted in stealing from their neighbours. It seemed as if it were born with them that they should take what was not their own. On the other hand, if you once secured their friendship, you always had it. If they caught your caravan, be sure they would plunder it; but if you laid your hand on their tent, they would kindly ask you in to eat salt. If you made no attempt to defend yourself when they attacked you they would let you off with your life. Altogether, they appeared to me not so bloodthirsty in their character as fond of plunder.

Shortly after leaving the old chief and his daughter we had a long and dreary march, at the termination of which we were much annoyed by what seemed to me to be a dark, dense wall before us. At first I did not understand what this was; but, as we drew nearer to it, several of our band well understood its nature. It was a moving mass of locusts. This was rather a strange predicament to find ourselves in, for it was just time for us to encamp; but for miles around us there was not a blade of grass to

be seen for the use of our animals—the locusts were everywhere. Fortunately we had got some grain from the old chief. That evening we kindled fires, slew locusts by thousands, and roasting went on all night. If there was but little for the beasts of burden, there was plenty for the men. It was the first time in my life I had eaten of them. Their size varied from the first, second, and third joints of the finger (one to three inches). On leaving our camping ground we marched for about eight furlongs, or a mile by your measurement, over a solid mass of these locusts, crushing them at every step. I had seen them before, but never in such numbers. Such visitations were not common in this quarter of the country, and this one was considered a great plague. A plant grew here, much esteemed by the Arabs, bearing a bean. This bean was dried in the sun, or burnt, then boiled in water and sweetened. It was used constantly as a beverage by the Arabs, and we also enjoyed it very much. This plant suffered fearfully on this occasion, and great was the outcry amongst the people of the district. So far as we could learn from our spirit friends, the locusts had been sent, in part, as a judgment. The course the locusts had taken was not their usual course. This special infliction was accounted for in this way: The tribe that inhabited this part of the country had been very successful in their harvests for a number of seasons; they had plenty—abundance. Not so was it with a neighbouring tribe not far from them, who had been very unsuccessful in their harvests for some seasons; the crops of barley and other vegetables had been destroyed year after year by drought. The one tribe had abundance—the other was starving. They had bought from their successful neighbours season after season, till the one was impoverished and the other wealthy, proud, and unfeeling. Their poor neighbours had parted with their gold and ivory for bread, and then with their animals. But, not content, the greedy tribe even demanded their daughters as slaves.

This tribe, which had suffered so much, appeared to me different from their cruel neighbours, being descendants of the old Arabian race, who were worshippers of the true God. The tribe still supported some spiritual teachers (as we ascertained when we came amongst them). The poor people had parted with everything they had—not an animal left to carry them to another part of the country. The place, or district, had, in former days,

yielded plenty; now it seemed the reverse. They were greatly cast down, for it seemed as if nothing would satisfy their neighbours but giving themselves up as slaves. In their great extremity, the prayers of the true worshippers amongst them ascended to the Great Spirit for help, and help did come.

Some time before our arrival in this district, a water spout broke on the mountains not far from the valley where this famished tribe had their dwelling-place, and the plains below were well watered that season by the little rivulets. The unfortunate tribe had now cause for rejoicing, and perceived in all this an answer to their prayers. On the other hand, their neighbours, who had dealt so hard with them, had just had their crops destroyed by this visitation of locusts. After these locusts, it is some time before any thing can be reared as food for man or beast, so that it was their turn now to be buyers and not sellers. In all this it appeared to me that the Spirit-world was at work. The appearance of the country as we passed along was truly dismal—everything black—every green thing cropped to the very ground, even the roots had been devoured by these little animals.

Leaving this desolate region behind us, we made our way to the other tribe, whose spirits were now reviving at the sight of their well-watered fields. We found them the most congenial men we had ever met with in our journey. They seemed at once to take to us, and we to them. Though very poor, and still suffering from the previous dearth, they would have shared everything with us; but we had plenty. In their deep distress they had parted with much of their body-clothing, and were almost naked. We gave what we had to those who needed clothing—knowing that it might be our turn to-morrow.

Before pursuing our journey farther towards the Persian Gulf, we resolved to stay with this tribe for some time, and help them in the reaping of their harvest, many of our young men being strong and willing to engage in such work. It was something new to them after so much travelling.

At the same time, while thus they aided these people in the ingathering of their harvest, they themselves were greatly benefited by what they got from the old spiritual teachers of the tribe. Being Arabs themselves, and knowing something of the Spirit-world, they wished to know more concerning the old records the

tribe had in their possession. Accordingly these old men would gather them together, after field work was over, and tell them of the wonders done for the Arab people in days long gone by : how, when first their fathers came from the East, they met for worship in groves on those mountains, and communication was opened up with them betwixt Heaven and Earth. Those of the Spirit-world had then ascended and descended, and even dwelt among them for a time. The teachings received by their forefathers had been written on large scrolls, which had been secretly preserved from generation to generation ; but there were only a few who could read them.

I sat day after day with one of those men while he read what had happened long ages before (when I scarcely thought the world existed)—showing that, even this same country, in which we were then travelling, had been greatly changed ; that those vast inland seas of sand had been, in bygone ages, seas of water, and that the mountain ranges we saw had been the walls around those seas ; that there had also been islands in the inland waters, on which large cities had been built, and mighty trees of the forest had grown ; but that all had, by the hand of the Most High, been made a desert—the vengeance of the Mighty One had overtaken them because of their wickedness. Following after their lusts, the Upper-world had abandoned them, and they had sunk lower and lower till there was but a scattered remnant of their descendants—a small remnant of a great and mighty people.

It was truly a wonderful history which the old man laid before me. They were the only people who held by the truths recorded in these old scrolls, and who had stood true to the faith throughout past ages. They had, doubtless, lost much of what had been handed down to them ; but they still were in possession of some most precious truths, and really we could hardly find fault with that which they had.

We joined with them in worship on several occasions, on the days set apart for religious service. These days were entirely devoted to worship, there being no labour done, except in cases of necessity—nor business of any kind. We assembled in a large building, the aged seers occupying the centre. One of these began the service by reading from the old scrolls what was called an Anthem ; it was not sung, but read with a sweet melodious

voice. After the Anthem, he put up a prayer to the Great Spirit, and all the minor spirits. During prayer all the assembly, including ourselves, fell on their knees with their heads bent on the floor, while he who officiated stood erect. He then addressed the people from an ancient scroll; he spoke of their forefathers, what they had done and how they had lived in times gone by, and of the visits of those of the Upper-world to their brethren in the body. "Yea, brethren," said he, "these holy ones visit us still; for we are the remnant left who hold the truths contained in their sacred records. May it be ours, through all the ages, to continue faithful!" He then earnestly urged them to shun that which was evil, and seek to do good. "The Great Spirit," he said, "sees all things. If you pursue evil courses, when you come to pass from earth you will find yourselves unable to rise, for long ages, to the happy plains of the blessed."

There was something very impressive in what he said; indeed, we had not heard or seen anything in all our travels like this. We felt that here we had no great field for our efforts—still, we asked leave to speak, and did so. We tried to bring before them the new faith, as it was called, yet it was not the new but the old faith. I told them how I had seen and spoken with Him who had been so long promised to the nations. I told them how I had followed him, of his wondrous works done in Judea, and of the doctrine he proclaimed—of his blameless life and shameful death, and his glorious re-appearance and ascension.

When I was done speaking they told us that they, too, had been instructed from their sacred books to look for the coming of the Prince, but they knew not that he had come. They said they knew something of the Hebrews to whom he came.

It would be a strange corner where a Hebrew could not be seen—they were scattered over every land; and we found some of them here too. These Jews were as ignorant of his coming as their neighbours among whom they lived. They knew their own sacred books, but they never tried to bring them under the notice of this tribe, quietly accommodating themselves to the worship of the tribe.

We lived with this people for some time, assisting them in harvest work. We did not forget, however, our own great mission work; but we found that though we had something to tell

to this people, we had also something to learn. The oldest among us was never unwilling to learn. We found that such a disposition was always a benefit to us. I have found that even in Spirit-life, the experience acquired on earth assisted me greatly in my work with spirits in the body, both spiritually and materially. Look after the spiritual, and the material is sure to follow. In our business affairs we always acted honestly, and found that we prospered, while those who acted otherwise, though gaining a temporary advantage, were sure to lose it before long. One who deals fairly comes to be trusted. "Here are my goods; my charge is so much; take them or let them alone." In doing thus we were fairly successful. The goods seemed to be multiplying on our hands. There were many who looked on us as regular merchants. We carried ivory, and sold it, and with the money which we received for it we bought other goods.

At last, after a lengthened stay, which we had much enjoyed, we once more went forth on our journey. It was certainly more pleasant than when we first started, for we had not sandy deserts nor stony paths to cross, but the scenery as we went on was diversified by the objects which met our eyes in plain, valley, and fields. We could always look on something green, to whichever side we turned. This pleasant experience kept the mind in an active state, and set us a-thinking how this and that took place, always looking upward for direction, and the aid of our unseen guides.

As we were now drawing near the narrow strait that connects the Persian Gulf with the Arabian Sea, I thought I would soon see my beloved friend Hafed. I had wished much to get into Persia again, so that I might look on the form of the old man once more.

One evening, just as we were coming in sight of the Persian Gulf, our service being over, we retired to rest in our tents. I lay down, and fell into a sweet sleep. During this sleep, my eyes were opened, and in vision I beheld the early scenes of my youth. I was once again a young priest in the Temple, and going out and in to the holy places in which were the representations of the Great Unseen One, who dwelt behind the Cloud. I saw my aged father Issha walking about, while I went from altar to altar to trim the fires that burned on them—the

priests gliding about like spirits, and the female priests feeding those sacred birds (which, when I think of it, we foolishly paid so much reverence to), and I seemed happy—all went well with us. I saw, in my vision, crowds of people, clothed in gorgeous raiment, coming to the temple to worship. I thought Egypt was then in all its glory—not as it was when I was connected with it—I seemed to be taken back to an earlier time in our history. We appeared to be all busy in the services of the Temple, when the cry was raised, “An enemy has come into our land!” In a moment all was confusion—all was dark and dreary. Then I seemed carried back to the cell, where I and my venerable father lived. He appeared to be stretched on the bed of sickness. Then all that then passed betwixt us (of which I have already told you)* was repeated in vision. The old man prayed for a blessing on me, and tried to impress on my mind all the good teachings he had given me, but my spirit was overpowered with grief. I shut my eyes, and could not think that he was about to be parted from me. He tried to show that there would be no separation—that he would always be nigh to guide me. At last, in my vision, I saw him pass away, leaving his body like a piece of marble before me. I seemed to pass through all my agony as before, and when I realised my loss I prayed, blasphemed and cursed in turns. Then I saw, in my vision, the return in spirit of him who had left that cold clay form. He spoke words of kindness to me; while the cell seemed to become as the centre of the sun itself, and sweet music seemed to drive the demon of anger, bitter curses, and vexation from my brain. I became as meek as a little child. My eyes were opened to spiritual things. I saw that what he had taught me was true; and though parted from him in body we were still one in spirit. The vision continued—detailing the incidents of my labours in Egypt—of my visit to Judea—of my Prince’s ministry and work—of my after wanderings as an evangelist, and return to Egypt. The picture went on, and I saw myself driven out with nowhere to lay my head, accompanied by a few strangers. I saw the journey over the sands of the Desert. Once more I viewed the land of Persia, when the days I had spent with Hafed rose up before me. Then

(* See “Hafed,” page 379).

it seemed as if I was away for a time, and then I saw Hafed as an outcast like myself, trying to bring the truth before his brethren, yet few appeared to listen to the words of the aged man. (Ah! had they known him as I did, when he stood as the head of the magi, they would have worshipped him. They said he had thrown up the old faith. Well I knew that he never abandoned the truths of that old faith. As head of the magi, he was as honest as he was when, forsaking all, he went out in his old age to proclaim the faith of the Master, our Prince.) The vision then carried me in spirit to the place where he was, and I saw him surrounded by a small flock—I saw how happy they were altogether. This gave me great joy. The vision passed away, and I awoke to find myself lying on my bed in the tent.

I lay for some time pondering over the vision, and wondered what all this meant. Why were the events of my past life brought back to me in vision? Would not a vision of the future be much better? Just as these and such like thoughts were passing through my brain, I fell into the same state again. I saw the spot where we had just pitched our tents; I saw myself lying on the bed. I saw all our wanderings along the shores of the Gulf, but I could not see Hafed. The vision continued, I looked on various places that were brought before me, and at last I was brought to a place where I saw myself lying on the cold earth, with my eyes cast upward, and then I saw myself with my old father in that land where we were never more to part. So this vision seemed but a rehearsal of my life on earth, to show me what I had done and what I would do, and what I might expect when I reached the other shore.

We will go no farther to-night.

(*Question.*)—Were those old records of the Arabians older than the Hebrew records?

Yes; the records which I spoke of went much further back than the Hebrew books.

Seventeenth Sitting.

September 4th, 1878.

Hermes on his Foreshown Death—On the Shores of the Persian Gulf—War Preparations—Hermes Expostulates—The Galleys Set Out—The Storm—Destruction of the Arabian Fleet—The Remnant—A Mad Old Chief—His Flight—Restored to Reason—"Battle of Gorbindoon"—The Old Arab Subdued—Becomes One of the Band.

LAST night, I had taken you to the shores of the Persian Gulf; but still we were far from Persia, that land I was so anxious to see before I laid down my old garment and took on my new and more enduring one. But, as foreshown me in my vision, I was never to look on Persia again, for the end would ere long come. One might have thought I would have become sad, seeing that, after all my toil and trouble, *that* was to be the end of me. But, no; it seemed to lift my heart upwards towards that land which I knew would be my inheritance when I passed away from earth. I had nothing on the earth to hold me back. I had nothing but that which I received every day. Like the fowls of the air, I looked not to the morrow. I knew that while I was in the body I would have enough: my faith in that which had been revealed to me was so strong, I could not feel otherwise. All that had been foretold and foreshown had come to pass, and I could not but be strong in faith in regard to that which was yet to come. So that, after the vision which I have described, my heart was uplifted, and I felt glad in spirit.

On the morning following that vision my brethren wondered at my changed demeanour; they had never before seen me exhibit so much life and spirit. I spoke to them in such a lively way, with a smile on my countenance, that they imagined something was wrong with my mind. When at length I told them what had taken place, sadness seemed at once to come over them; and they felt (they said) that if I was to be taken away from them, the life and soul of the company would be gone. "But, my friends," I said, "even if I should go away to-day, I will still be one of you. I will go with you wherever you go in all your wanderings."

And so we set out again, along the western borders of the Persian Gulf. It was a much pleasanter country to travel over than the last; and as we proceeded it got better. The vegeta-

tion was luxuriant, and pleasant to our eyes ; while our ears were delighted morning and evening by the sweet songsters of the air. Numbers of four-footed animals roamed about the brushwood, which covered the hills. We did not care to hunt them—it was not animals we were seeking for, but men ; we wanted to see what good we could do for them. It was not long ere we found that which we wanted—men. They seemed busy, like some other Arabian tribes, preparing to take part in an inroad on Persia. All seemed busy in fitting out galleys, and preparing other things necessary for their expedition.

As I stood on the hill-side, I looked down towards the shore. What a beautiful scene presented itself to the eye ! But why this noise of hammers and hum of human voices—this decoration and pomp of galleys ? To convey merchandise in a peaceful way to a neighbouring nation ? No ; these were war vessels for the plundering of a neighbouring people who, at the time, were defending their country against the Roman armies. There was more need that they should go and assist them in their extremity. The day might come when they themselves might be placed in a similar position. But while thus they were busy preparing to attack their near neighbours, who were powerless to resist them, the power of the Upper-world was against them.

We went down to the shore and mingled amongst those who were working at those war vessels, and tried to reason with them. I said to them that had I the wealth of a mighty king I would pay them to leave their work undone. We urged reason after reason why they should give up their idea of invasion ; but, no—they had so many grievances to advance ; Persia had done this, that, and the other thing, and they must have satisfaction. I knew, however, through *Hafed*, a good deal of Persian history, and could fight them with their own weapons. Both had their grievances (I said), but they would never get these redressed on either side by war. Mankind were not made to fight, man against man, or nation against nation, but to live in harmony one with another. Were this done, Earth would become a Heaven—not a Hades. They would not listen to us, they were so determined on making a raid on Persia—notwithstanding, they were quite friendly, and bought and sold with us.

We remained with them till we saw them start on their expedi-

tion. The place was beautifully situated ; unlike most parts of Arabia, the climate was temperate and pleasant ; while the people seemed well-to-do, and very well dressed. It was no doubt a fine sight, in the eyes of that people, to see their warriors, in their gaudy costume, marching in bands to the galleys to embark on that beautiful sea, which seemed like a great silver mirror on the bosom of Earth ; but the lovely scene contrasted ill with the object they had in view—plunder and bloodshed.

We sat in our encampment looking over the placid waters, watching the progress of the galleys in the distance. We gazed seaward till the fleet disappeared below the horizon. At noon, clouds began to appear, and soon the sky was quite overcast, while the wind rose, moaning and howling, and at length swept fiercely over the dark waters. That sea, which had looked so peaceful in the morning, became a raging mass, dashing its angry waves on the rocks of the coast. As we continued looking over the wild and troubled waters, we thought of those who had gone forth in the morning in all the pride and pomp of war,—what now would they think ? The anger of Heaven rose against them. Towards sunset—though no sun had been visible, nothing but vivid sheets of fire bursting from the black clouds, with a grand roar of thunder—we saw some of those galleys returning, but labouring hard in the storm. Before the morning light, the greater part of that mighty fleet of war-galleys lay strewed in fragments on the beach.

Such was the fate of those headstrong men. Had they but listened to us, this would never have been. Hundreds of men would have been alive, instead of perishing in the sea, and those beautiful galleys safely moored, instead of lying as heaps of firewood on the shore. But they would not listen. They found the elements much stronger than they, and the wild waves more destructive than the weapons of war. They were not like you of the present day, who have vessels much better fitted for contending with the waves. And yet ours withstood some mighty storms.

Some of the galleys came safe to land, and were drawn well up on the beach. (These vessels were not so large as yours are, but they had many men on board.) When they had secured the galleys, we met with them. They were a pitiful sight indeed. Their gorgeous and ornamented raiment was soiled and tarnished,

and they themselves greatly downcast. One very old man, who seemed to be the whole life of the expedition, was amongst the saved ; and when he saw us, he raved and swore by all the Gods that we were the cause of the disaster—that we had drawn this judgment on them. I stood up and pleaded our innocence ; they had brought the judgment on themselves ; for they went forth to take advantage of an oppressed people then contending with the iron legions of Rome. But there were (I said) unseen guardians watching over those Persians, and mentioned what I had overheard, how an army of spirit-horsemen had been seen at one of their battles fighting against the enemy. When I mentioned that, the old man fired up, and asked how I knew that—it was all a fable, a lie ! I said that it did so happen, on such a date, when the Arabians were driven into the sea by an army of spirit-horsemen. Here, one man standing by, said that what I mentioned was true ; he had been there, and that then, as now, he believed that they were opposed by the hosts of heaven. Saying that, he turned away, and then another and another till not one was left beside us but the old man who still stood out obstinately against us. Perceiving the old man still raving frantically and abusing us, a number of these men came back and accused him of being the sole cause of their disaster, by which distress had been brought on the wives and children of the men who were lost. He seemed stupified, unable to utter a word, and at last ran off out of the place, no one knew whither, nor did they appear to care.

We found him shortly after, wandering on the mountains in a state of madness. We took him amongst us and tended him. He had been a short time with us, when one morning I found him seated quietly with two of our young men who kept him. In the middle of the night he had burst out crying, the tears coursing down his cheeks, and sobbed and cried till morning light. His reason had come back. I told him all that had happened. He said it was all a blank to him till he found himself a prisoner in the tent with the two men. Now everything seemed to flash back on him—the expedition and its disastrous end—the leading part he had taken in it. When he thought of it he cried like a child. We told him how we had found him on the mountains, and how we had kept him, and he appeared

grateful for our attention to him in his mad condition. He said he had been one of the leaders in that inroad on Persia, mentioned by me, when in their panic at the appearance of the spirit-horsemen they were driven into the sea. From that time he had cherished a determination to wreak his vengeance on the Persians before he died. He knew of the Roman invasion of Persia, and chose that time for his inroad to break them down, and carry off women, children, and cattle. Only a few had made their escape from the shores of Persia on the occasion referred to, and he was one of them.

I told the old man that I knew the leader of the Persians at that time—that he had been to me as a father, but that he had long ceased to draw the sword for the slaying of men, and wielded one much stronger in the conquest of evil.

He said he was but a young man at the time of the battle, and was a leader in the Arabian host. He concluded that he would stay with us, for if he went back to his own people they would very likely take away his life, and he did not find himself ready to leave the earth just yet, having much to undo.

After conversing with him for some time, I turned to spiritual matters, and at some length put before him the leading truths of my Prince, pointing out to him how, by putting these doctrines into practice, he might undo a little of what he had done in his lifetime. He gave in to all I said, and would gladly, in order to carry out his purpose, come along with us.

Thereafter he sent off a few of our young men, by a road which would take them to the district of country where he resided, giving them at the same time a large signet ring which he wore. He said they were to show that, and they would get what he told them to ask for. When they returned they came laden with wealth, and this he threw into our common stock. He had sent word that his heirs should take the ruling powers with which he had been long invested, but which he for ever threw down. He went on with us, and left earth a few days before I did so myself.

[Benediction.]

Eighteenth Sitting.

September 11th, 1878.

The Lion Changed to a Lamb—The Old Chief becomes a Healer—"A New Creature"—A blessed Walk on the Shore—Waiting for a Vessel in Sight—Meeting with Hafed's Two Brethren—Tidings from Persia—The Old Chief Recognised by the Brethren.

LAST night I carried you on as far as the shores of the Persian Gulf. After telling you of the destruction of the Arabian galleys, how the Arabians suffered for their persistence in doing wickedly, I told you what became of him who was the leading spirit in the whole affair—how we met with him—of his repentance and thorough abhorrence of his evil life. He became one of ourselves, and was admitted as one of our brotherhood. But still, he lamented the course of his past life. I heard him myself one evening after the pitching of our tents, when the sun sunk behind the hills on the west, grieving over his ill-spent life, saying, if he had only known what he now knew, how much better it would have been—there would have been far fewer bereaved homes; and now that he was a wanderer and an outcast by his own free choice, he thought it better to remain with us, because, from the visions he had had in the night time, he saw that his time on earth would be short.

I must say we passed some happy hours together while he did live—he the once fierce leader of a barbarous people became like an angel. He spoke like one gifted to teach his fellow men. He could not tell where or how he got his knowledge; the only way we could account for it was that he had it through his friends who had gone to the Spirit-world. He sprang from that old race who clung so tenaciously to the first principles of religion or spiritual knowledge. They seemed in spirit now to have become his teachers, and he was an ardent student, old as he was; and he resolved to devote the remainder of his days to the benefit of mankind.

Some wonderful things were done by him in the way of healing the sick. Fever seemed to fly before his hands; and by giving his patients a mouthful of cold water, they seemed to get medicine enough to raise them from what their friends considered to be the bed of death. His name began to be noised abroad over all that coast. He had changed his name when he became one

of our band, for he did not wish to be known as the same individual that had been the chief of that district we had left. Had they recognized him, the people we had come amongst would have despised him; but from the night of the storm, or rather from his recovery from madness, he had been greatly changed, his hair (which had been partly grey before) was now white as the snow on the mountain tops. His beard was small, and as he grew old, the skin of his face had become like parchment. Now, however, his whole countenance was lighted up—transparent, indicating the great change—so great, indeed, that one might have thought that he would be translated without any change in the body. He became a favourite with the people of the place where we were staying, because of the wonderful works which he did in the healing of the sick, and they prayed him to stay with them, and they would build him a temple and worship him. But he refused; he said he was but a man, and that an old one; that he must go on as he was doing, while he had life and strength; that during his long life-time he had sinned greatly against the Great Spirit, and now he must do what he could to atone for the ill he had done; he would be glad if he, with the help of the good and holy ones who surrounded us, could raise some father from the bed of death to become the stay and support of his family—though that was but little. He would often burst out and cry like a child, as he pondered over his past life, while I would try to reason with him—showing him that, forgetting the past, it was our duty to press on in our present good work of healing the bodies and souls of the people with whom we came in contact; that by so doing we would have the blessings of the people and the approbation of the Spirit-world—and not only so, but we would thereby make for ourselves a better home when we reached the Spirit-land—the land of the blest.

When nigh the head of the Persian Gulf, we sat down one evening on the hill-side by our tents. It was a pleasant spot; for the country was well watered and very fruitful—indeed, we wanted for nothing. (We kept close by the sea-shore.) The old man sat down with me, as I have said, beside the tents; and as we sat and talked about spiritual things, all at once he looked up and said—“Behold, I see a speck on the waters away on the horizon. Now, look! it appears to be a vessel coming to this

shore." I looked, but could see nothing, and said—"You must be mistaken. But, though old, you may have a clearer vision than I have, and I doubt not that you do see it." (I generally credited what any of the band said he had seen, though I myself might be unable to see it at the time.) In course of a short time I did see it in the distance. He said that it was a large galley, but it appeared a very small one to me. "It will soon reach the strand if it goes on at the same rate as now." He thought it had come from the coast of Persia. I said—"If so, I will not lay my head on my pillow to-night, or stretch myself on a bed till I see those who are on board that vessel; for something whispers to me that they are in some way connected with us." So we rose from our sitting posture, and walked down to the beach. When there we walked to and fro on the pebbled shore for four hours before the keel of the vessel grated on the beach. But those hours, in the quietness of the night, with the beautiful moon sailing overhead, were certainly four of the best hours I had ever spent in my life. He who was with me seemed to become possessed by some angelic being, not himself, and the subjects he spoke of were so interesting, and the words so beautiful, that I could have sat and talked with him, not for four hours, but for as many years.

The boat at length reached the shore, and those on board jumped on to the beach. Two of them, I observed, were in the garb of priests. I went down to them, and the moment I approached within ten or twelve arms-lengths from them, one of those in the priestly garb rushed towards me, and clasped me in his arms, exclaiming, "It is you, Hermes!"

I stood amazed, and gazed on the man, and tried to mind where I had seen him, but I could not remember where I had met with him before, and told him so. He said—"It matters not; you will know me when we speak together. First, let me tell you that I am from your old friend Hafed, and that he has sent forth my brother and I to the world to speak the truths we have received from him."

I asked him as to the welfare of Hafed, and how he was getting on with the work in Persia—telling him how much I had longed to cross the gulf, and see my dear old friend again.

"We know about that," he said, "but you *did* see us."

“Yes,” I replied, “but that was in vision.”

“If in vision, was it not strange that we saw you also in our midst? When we were sent out by Hafed on this mission, he told us in what direction our boat should be steered so as to find you. Having found you, I have many things to tell you and to talk over. It looks as if a storm was about to break over Persia. The little flock we have left will soon be without a shepherd. On this account Hafed sent us away. We two, in our youthful days, fought together, when he led Persia to the field of battle; I was with him when, as Head of the Magi, he officiated in the centre of the Sacred Grove; and I, with my brother here, adhered to him when he was cast out. We would much rather have remained with the brave, good, and holy Hafed, in view of the coming troubles, to be beside him when the time came when he would be offered up, a martyr for the truth he is trying to impress on his countrymen—the love of God to all mankind—that man might, in very truth, become an incarnation of Deity. We should have liked to have remained and died with him for the good cause we have all at heart, but he would not consent, and so we are here. I have, he continued, but a short time to remain on earth. Hafed and I were boys together, and I remember when you, Hermes, was a child, and now, here you look old like ourselves, though not so old.”

He continued in this strain as we walked towards our tents. I observed the old Arabian looking earnestly at the strangers while we were talking together, and at length he approached, and, saluting him who spoke, asked pardon for interrupting our conversation.

“Nay, my friend,” said the Persian, “there is no interruption. Though old myself, I can pay respect to old age.”

The Arabian, having thus introduced himself, said—“You and I have met before somewhere.”

“Yes, my friend, said the Persian, we have met, but where or when I cannot tell”; and our Persian friend looked at him very keenly, but could not make out whether he was Arabian or Persian—the very colour of his skin was so much changed, he could not decide. After a time, he exclaimed—“Ah, I know now where we met—it was on the field of battle!”

“On the field of battle, yes!” said the Arab. “It is a long, long time ago, when I was leader of the Arabian host. At that

time we made an inroad on Persia. We were opposed by a mere boy, the leader of the Persian horsemen on that occasion. You, my friend, could only have been a boy yourself at the time. I am older than any one here ; for I was then a man of thirty summers. Woe to the day my countrymen landed on your shores. I was one of the chief instigators of that invasion, trying to take advantage of Persia while she was contending with Rome, calculating that, in such circumstances, it would be easy to plunder your homes and carry off your women and children as captives. Alas ! we found it quite different. We imagined our task would be an easy one, but the warriors, led by that boy, were not the only force that opposed us, the very host of Heaven seemed to come to aid the Persians in driving us back into the sea. I, the chief leader of that inroad (few of those taking part in it ever reached their own country), cherished vengeance in my bosom for years ; and but recently, knowing Persia to be troubled by the Romans, I attempted another invasion. What was the result ? Heaven again seemed to fight against us ; the elements— lightning and the winds—conspired against us. Our vessels were destroyed, and their wrecks strewed our own shores. Many a household was bereft of its sole support, and many who expected to come home laden with spoil lay stretched on the beach cold and stiff in death. And I was the cause of all this. Heaven forgive me, for I have sinned greatly ; and I pray God to give me strength during the short time I have to live to make peace with all men, and do all the good I can. You, my friends, once looked upon as enemies, I now esteem as brethren, children of the All-loving Father." Saying this, he affectionately embraced them.

Nineteenth Sitting.

September 18th, 1878.

A Love Feast—The Brethren Depart—Image Worship—Bit-by-bit Reform—Hermes in Search of an Old Friend—Flying from the Plague—Men Worse than Beasts—"Wash and be Clean"—Staying of the Plague—A Welcome Epistle from an Old Friend. .

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—I must be brief to-night. Last evening I spoke of three of Hafed's friends who came across the sea to

us. There were the two special individuals, and an attendant on the two old men (Zitha and Anah)—three in all. That night, after these three had joined us, we sat a long time with the rest of the band.

Having resolved to tarry in the place for a few days longer, we agreed to have a love-feast with our three friends before parting with them ; for they said they would not accompany us, as Hafed had laid out for them a certain course to take, and that they must attend to ; and, notwithstanding their knowledge of what would befall them, and the treatment they would meet with, they wished to reach Egypt as soon as possible. They carried a special message from Hafed to the little churches he had formed when on his travels.

At the love-feast our spirits were greatly refreshed. We felt as if born again to new life. Giving up ourselves to devotion, and mingling with the spirit-messengers that came amongst us, they and we seemed as one. There was no partition between us and the world of spirits—our material part seemed so separate from the spiritual that we appeared to be spiritual beings entirely ; and the spirits even ate and drank with us.

Thus we passed two days in this way. The three Persian friends said that all this reminded them of those brethren of the Church in Persia, whom they had left behind, and whom they might never see again on this side the grave ; but they rejoiced in the thought that they would see them in spirit.

After three days, or thereabout, they left us to accompany a caravan of Arabian merchants, who were passing through the country on their way to Egypt. My aged Arabian friend, knowing the merchants, introduced the three Persian brethren to the chief of the caravan, that they might bestow on them some care and attention during the journey. As they were leaving us, and when embracing us, one of them remarked, "It is strange, yet true, that all this was told us by Hafed before we set out on our present mission. In beginning our journey, we found that what he had foretold came to pass, and, therefore, we concluded that all other things which he mentioned would take place also."

In bidding them farewell, I said, "I part with you, my friends, just the same as you parted with your brethren in Persia : we shall never meet again in the body."

They looked at me when I had said this, and thought that perhaps it was sorrow at parting that made me speak in that way, saying—"You are not nearly so old as we are. Why speak thus?"

"Well, my dear friends," I said, "I know, like you, what is before me, and be assured, we shall never again meet in the body."

He said—"It is a pity, for I thought we would have met when you returned to Egypt; although there was no mention of you further than that we should meet with you here."

"My friends," I rejoined, "I would have been glad to see you in my native land, but I have come to know that I shall never return to Egypt."

So we parted—they went on their journey and we on ours.

We went along the coast of the Persian Gulf about 500 miles. This was a long distance, and, including our halts at various places, it took us some months to accomplish—though we did take pretty long journeys at times. At that time that part of the country was well peopled. There was abundance of fruit,—and a great many minerals of various kinds were to be found there. I wished, if possible, to visit a town on the banks of the Euphrates—a town or city of considerable extent—for there was one in the place who had been with me as a boy in Egypt, and I longed to see him. He was, I knew, a priest in one of the temples in that place, and occupied a high position. I was anxious to know his condition—whether he had followed the advice of my aged father Issha when training us up for the priesthood, or whether he had gone back, like many other priests, who looked more after the things of the world than they did after the things of God and the Spirit-world.

Many priests bowed down to graven images, yet were sincere worshippers of the Great Spirit, using these images merely as symbols. Others, again, bowed down to these images, not as symbols of the Unseen One, but merely for a show of devotion, thus leading the ignorant devotees to imagine that the power was in the block of stone or wood. If men, who occupied the office of priests, had only considered why such symbols were introduced into the service, their use would not have led to such bad results. I often thought that, had it been possible for me to have remained

in the temple as a priest, I might have had more opportunities to clear off old superstitions and resuscitate old truths. But I could not. I never thought of reasoning on such matters when there—I must sweep all away at once. Had I gone about the reformation bit by bit, piece by piece, I might at least have cleared my own corner. But I was too ardent for that—I would not wait. I thought that I could reform all at once; but, I learned better afterwards. I had not reckoned on the barriers that lay in the way of changing men's opinions in matters of religion. The time is fast coming on, however, when those barriers that have so long lain in the way of the truth will be broken down—stone after stone thrown down and ground to pieces—when we of the Spirit regions will be able to have closer communication with mankind, even to walk with you and talk to you. That is the golden age coming on the world.

I was anxious to push on as quickly as possible towards the city, that I might meet with this friend whom I had loved dearly in my boyhood. We had been brought up together under the same tutor, but I had never heard from him by letter—only occasionally he would send greetings with merchants passing that way towards Egypt. But, from the time I was cast out and became a wanderer, I had had no communication from him. I knew, however, where he was, and thought that we would get a good reception from him.

Before we could reach the city we had a long distance to travel. We were often very footsore, toiling under the burning sun, and frequently with parched lips. All this we did out of pure love for our fellowmen. It was for no benefit to ourselves that we endured these toils; but we felt it our duty to do what we could to help those we met with on our journey who required our help. Neither did we neglect to do a little business in the way of buying and selling, that we might not only supply our own bodily wants, but enable us to give some assistance to others.

When on our journey towards the Euphrates we met a number of individuals, with their household goods, flying as it were from some danger. We asked them what was wrong. They told us to turn our faces the other way, and go no farther in that direction. We paid no attention to this, but pushed forward, and, after travelling for four or five hours, we found others lying by the

wayside dying. They had fled from their native place, a village of 400 or 500 inhabitants, that had been visited by a plague. So panic-stricken were these villagers that even fathers and mothers left their children to die, and fled for their lives. How unnatural are some, when they have not true spiritual light, in thus doing what even the beasts of the field would not do! The lion or tiger—would they leave a cub to perish? No: the mother would fondle it till its last moment—aye, and even after life had fled. Man, who thinks himself far above those beasts of prey, drops his sick offspring by the wayside, and flies off, leaving them to die.

I had never witnessed such unnatural conduct as this, and my whole soul rose up in anger. I could have slain these hard-hearted parents. We saw what was wrong now. My old Arab friend, who was with me, said, "This I cannot stand; I have seen many a sad sight, but this beats them all." So he ordered all our young men to arm themselves, and make as bold a front as possible. Spreading themselves out over a large tract of the country, they were ordered to stop all the fugitives they came across. There was likely to be a fight, as these fugitives behaved like madmen. But we knew we were doing what was right, and that there were those at our backs who would help us. We all bent our knees, and prayed to the Great Spirit that He, by the laying on of our hands, would enable us to relieve the poor plague-stricken sufferers.

When these unnatural parents saw that we were not afraid to handle those who were lying sick of the disease, nor to take their little children in our arms, and even kiss the fever-stricken lips, instead of flying selfishly away, they began to quiet down, and to bring those who were stricken with fever to us. We wrought hard amongst them, and relieved them from suffering. Some there were who, being too far gone, died; but there were many others who were strong, and these we were instrumental in restoring to health.

All who were as yet untouched by the plague were bidden go down into the river, and there wash and cleanse their bodies; thereafter to look well to the cleansing of their houses, etc.

During the remaining few days we were there the plague had wholly gone away. We stayed at this village, and I sent out messengers to the old friend I wished to see, and whom I dearly

loved. By doing this we would know what kind of reception to expect, and whether we might still go forward. (In visiting this plague-stricken village we had gone somewhat out of our course.) So I sent one of our young men, and one of the villagers as a guide. In the course of a few days they returned, bearing a long epistle to me from my old companion, inviting me and all who were with me to come, and he would hear all I had to say to him, for in writing to him I had not hid my change of faith. I found, when I read his letter, that he was as far advanced as I was myself. He had sent a great many horsemen to attend and watch over us. I told him in my letter about the ravages of the plague, and in his reply he told me how his heart rejoiced that I had gone that way. He had heard of the plague, and the people of their city were beginning to tremble, afraid lest the plague should reach them; but he had entreated them not to be frightened for its approach. He promised, also, to meet me on the way.

I will leave off for to-night.

Twentieth Sitting.

September 25th, 1878.

Hermes in Doubt—The Meeting—"When we were Boys together"—Arrival in the City—A Beautiful Temple—Heartily Welcomed.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—I will not say much to-night, but go on for a little with my narrative.

At our last meeting I gave you some account of a plague-stricken village, and the results which followed our visit to it; of my sending messengers to the priest whom I had known as a boy: of the reception of my messengers, and of their return with a letter inviting us all to come forward. I resolved to go on in advance of our band, accompanied by two or three of our young men; he had said to the messengers that he would come out to meet me, and I wished as few there as possible. Like many other men of the world, the invitation being so pressing in its character, I began to have my doubts as to its honesty—(the *man* did crop out at times). I knew nothing would happen to me except it were permitted by God, and yet I had my little doubts and fears that all this might be but a device to lead me into a trap.

I believe such were some of the evil whisperings ; for with all our devotion and goodness these will come in. But we went on our way ; and we found that the escort that had been sent by my old friend, the priest, did all they could to help us speedily on in our journey. When I asked questions regarding the position of the friend I was going to see, they would say nothing about it. I went on as one not knowing whither he went—relying a good deal on our own judgment, and having faith in the guidance of our Spirit friends near to us.

Travelling for a day and a half, we arrived within a short distance of our destination, where we halted. By a signal from the escort who attended us, there came out, through the gates of the city, a procession. As it came nearer to us, I observed at its head one borne along, with great pomp and grandeur, by a number of black servants. When he approached nigh to us our escort dismounted, and fell on their knees, burying their heads in the dust, and all around did the same. I did not recognise the personage before whom all bent the knee, but he seemed to know me, for his first words were—“Come to my arms, Hermes, my old friend ! Friend of my youth, do you not remember when we were boys together ?” There was no longer any doubt in my mind. I advanced to him, and we fell on each other’s necks.

After embracing, he looked at me and said,—“Why do I find you in this wandering guise ? Why not live in some city as I have done, and become a priest of the living God ?” I said—“I *am* a priest of the living God, and I believe that I am doing more in his service than if I were a resident priest.”

He said he had no desire to talk much with me where I stood, but would like if I would come up beside him, where he would be able freely to address me.

I declined his invitation, telling him I would rather remain where I was. I said—“I am hardly in fitting attire to sit beside you, for you look like a king.”

“So I am,” he said—“I am both priest and king. See if I have not been faithful to the instruction of our old father Issha. Come with me, Hermes, and see if I have broken any of the rules he laid down to me when a youth.”

So I went forward, walking beside him, but the people seemed to look on me and my young companions as not fit company for

such a high personage. But I thought that I, habited in my old cloak, and with my staff in hand, and the young men of our band, were fit enough company for this friend of mine, notwithstanding all his splendour and gaudy equipage. But he seemed to have the heart of a man, and was evidently not at all vain or proud, for indeed we appeared to be worse off than the beggars at his gate, after our long march over sandy deserts and rough, rocky roads: we were worn-out like.

At length we were introduced into a gorgeous palace, adjacent to as gorgeous a temple. It was the finest building I had ever seen, excepting the Great Temple at Jerusalem. This temple was equal in beauty to the Jewish temple, but not so large. I did not see in it any images of gods and goddesses, but it was otherwise beautifully ornamented. Fire burned on the altars at each corner. My old friend said that in his mode of worship he had adopted a good deal from the Persians. He said some might call it *fire-worship*, but, seeing that I had been some time in Persia, he thought I should know better. As the city was at no great distance from Persia, some had come there, he said, as to a city of refuge, and even those who had offended the government of Persia, found shelter there—their gates being open to all, unless they were stained with blood. All who came were admitted and treated as one of themselves. From this, and other causes, there was a goodly number of Persians in the city. In their worship, he said, he adopted a mode betwixt that of the Egyptian and Persian. The representation of God in symbolic forms had been done away with—the only symbol they had was that of the everlasting fire. The flame was never allowed to go out, and it was a great crime on the part of the priestesses who attended to the fire, to allow it to go out.

He made us welcome to the city, and sent out a guard to guide our band. I told him that, in order to support ourselves, and have wherewith to help the needy, we trafficked as merchants. It required but little for our own support. If he looked on us, he would see clearly that we were not extravagant in the way of costume. Having recognised in me an old friend, he made all my companions welcome to the city, in which we might do any amount of business with such of the inhabitants as chose to deal with us; but we were afraid that our trade would be somewhat

limited, as they had no silver or gold wherewith to buy, and not much of goods to exchange.

The day following that of my arrival the band, accompanied by the guard sent out, arrived at the gates. As the city was not large, the animals were not admitted, but kept in a place—a sort of outside city—well guarded in case of attack. My companions were all well attended to by orders of my friend—his young men carrying our goods to a place set apart for them. We stayed in this city a good while, and got on very well with the inhabitants, who appeared to be a religious kind of community. They believed in the Divine Spirit, and kept the fire ever burning on their altars as a symbol of his presence.

But I must leave you to-night, for there is another who will address you.

I will give you the name of the city afterwards.

Twenty-First Sitting.

October 2nd, 1878.

A "Broad Church"—The Sacred Book—Mode of Worship—Hermes Peruses the Book—Objections—Confessing Jesus—The Great Temple of God—Hermes Addresses the Council—Some of the Band left behind—Barter and "the Circulating Medium."

LAST night, I left off by telling you how we and the inhabitants of the city had become very good friends. They were a sort of religious community, as I said; and they had, what you term, a very broad platform. Egypt, Persia, Arabia, and some of the surrounding nations, had all contributed something to the theology taught in the city. One might think that such a varied system might become a stumbling-block to many. It was quite different. It seemed to answer well—a piece from this and a piece from that—different religious ideas, put into one grand system of worship. I must give my friend credit for this; he had been an apt scholar under the same tutor as myself. He seemed to have laid his brains well a-steep before he was able to harmonise all the doctrines from different sources; for the adherents of these doctrines, Persian, Egyptian, Arabian, etc., had no hesitation in calling each other idolators and blasphemers. Yet, notwithstanding, our friend had collected together a mass of

valuable teachings, beautifully arranged, and harmonising well. With these he had formed a sacred book for the use of the people over whom he ruled as a spiritual and temporal head. I must say I never before had cast my eyes on a book so sacred—so harmonious in all its teachings—so much to my mind; for everything was so consistent with the teachings of Jesus our Prince. Although gathered from the sacred writings of the nations around, you found in it nearly all the doctrines of our Lord and Master. My friend asked me to read this collection of writings and pass my judgment on them, as a guide to the people, to whom the priests read them in the temple service.

In the morning they worshipped the Great Father through the great and glorious orb of day, as he rose behind the eastern hills, to shed forth his golden light on all;—on bended knees they raised their morning prayer, thanking Him—the Creator, for his care over them during the night: after which a portion of these writings was read in the hearing of the people. In the sacred books of the different nations you will find things not in accordance with the word of the Almighty Spirit; yet in all you will find that which may be called his word; but this book had nothing in it but what might be profitably read by man, woman, or child.

I had taken the evening for my perusal of this book—that being the only time it was not in use, and it being the only copy they had: there were, however, many scribes at work on it for the purpose of multiplying copies for the use of the people. I spent a good many nights, depriving myself of my usual rest in reading it over carefully, studying it sentence by sentence. After I had finished my reading, I observed to my friend that there was one thing that should be left out, and another that should be put in. He asked me what these were. I said I had found it stated that, when one was injured or offended by another, a certain amount of punishment, according to the extent of the injury, was to be awarded. To this I objected. "You have it stated," I said, "that he who steals from his brother shall be put to death. How that has crept in amongst so much that is opposed to it I don't know. Life for life, in my opinion, is even too hard; but life for theft is intolerable. He who steals may be driven to commit the crime through the force of hard circumstances, over which

he may have had no control ; and, again, by taking away the life of the thief, you punish more—you deprive those depending on him of their bread-winner, and leave them to starve. If you will be just, be just, but you cannot, if you punish the children for the sins of their father.”

He said, in reply, that he himself was not in favour of such a law ; for, he confessed, that they could hardly look for forgiveness from the Great Father if they acted so hardly towards their fellow-men ; but in that and similar things they had not entire control—they had sat in council and had decided this.

I said—“Cut it out. Try and get this done at once. But there is one thing you have not in this book which ought to be in it : it is this—Love thy neighbour as thyself. Give thy love to the Great Spirit first of all, then to thy brother,—all thou hast—nothing to thyself ; give forth ; sacrifice thine ownself for thy brother-man. Such are the teachings of him I follow as my Master and Prince. I have gone forth to the world to teach these doctrines as he proclaimed them amongst his brethren of Judea. You knew him when a little boy—that same Jesus who was taught by Issha along with us in Egypt—that same Jesus, who has left the earth, now reigns in the glorious Spirit-land ; he is my constant guide, and ever watches over me, pouring his blessings on my head.”

When I spoke in that way he looked earnestly at me, and seemed to wonder. I then gave him some account of my past life. He said that he had lost sight of me for a time, and then he heard that I had been cast out. He thought I had gone far astray when I changed my way of thinking.

“You will find,” I said, “that I have not departed so very far as you imagine from the views of truth imparted to us when we were youths. I have, indeed, thrown away all the dark and visionary ideas I entertained ; and I seek not now for temple or covering for my head. I look upward from the ground I stand on to the star-spangled dome of the heavens ; that is the temple I like to worship in—the temple of the living God—all space—every spot of ground, even the marble pavement on which you and I used to tread, is holy ground, and sacred to the Great and Mighty Spirit. That is my idea now. Wherever I am I can set up my temple, or rear an altar : the open plain, the sheltering

rock, the spreading tree, or under the covering of our tent—all these have afforded us fitting places for worship. As a company of brethren we have devoted ourselves to this mission. We have gone over sandy plains and crossed rocky deserts, and here we are on the banks of the mighty river, which has flown to the sea from age to age. And I find you, my friend, the companion of my youth, settled here, attired in gorgeous robes, like some mighty king—not, however, wielding a rod of iron, but possessing a loving heart: for I perceive that your own heart says—I love all my people alike; the poor are as dear to me as the rich.”

Having thus spoken, he said—“My friend, I stand alone among my people. I have no friends, for I treat them all as brothers and sisters. I ask but little for my support, though I am their ruler. All I desire is their good. And now, my friend, the words you desire to be put in the Book shall be put in, and those you object to be withdrawn.”

He then asked me to go with him to the Council, and address them on the subject. This I did, and in the course of my address I said some hard things to those who had got the objectionable words inserted in the writings. I showed them that the Great Spirit, who was our loving Father, could not love bloodshed; that he did not send men to the earth to slay one another; and that, with harmony and peace on earth, the connection between heaven and earth would never be broken. But it was broken, and now it was their place as Spiritual teachers to have that connection restored. Evils had crept in, and mankind had fallen away from the sense of that which was right and true, with which they had been originally endowed by the Spirit; but the time would come, though ages would roll over before it came, when harmony, peace, and love would prevail. If they did not see it in the body, they would see that blessed time in the Spirit.

In some such terms I addressed the Council. But let me say to you, that I am still looking forward to the Good Time coming on mankind. The time is not far hence when it will be realised on Earth—that which the Great and Loving Father designed will be fulfilled.

But the time drew nigh to start afresh on our journey. We had become very intimate with the inhabitants, and, as a consequence, some of our younger brethren were lost to our band

through marriage. The fair daughters of the City had captivated them, and they got married. We did not regret this step on their part, or, indeed, say anything to them about it. They were still our brothers, and needed no change of views or faith. They sought to occupy the office of priests in connection with the Temple, and they were admitted at once, and ordained to do the work of the Temple, and thus became teachers of the people. They were quite well fitted for such work; for the experiences they had come through were great. They had left none who were depending on them on the shores of the Red Sea, and were happy. We were glad, also, that in leaving some behind us, that we left them to sow the seed in a good soil, which, springing up as a branch, might be grafted into the Great Stem, and bring forth fruit, of a sweet smelling savour, that the atmosphere all around might be scented by it.

This was the only religion that I met with in my travels that I could go in for, heart and soul; and, after getting a little more grafted into it, it was all the grander. As we kept up communication with them afterwards, I had reason to believe that those we left behind were very successful in their work. A great change came over the whole city; what was grafted in was done in such a way as not to excite the prejudices of the people—indeed, the introduction of our views was so gradual that the inhabitants were hardly conscious of any change; yet it came near to the whole teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, my Lord and Master.

I will say no more to-night.

In reply to a question, Hermes said,—They used no gold in that city on the Euphrates. He (the high priest) who ruled wished as little of it as possible. They dealt by barter, and that encouraged trade. It was by industry they lived. He said—“If I allow gold and silver to circulate here, some will become 'cutter than their neighbours—buy with their gold, and refuse to work with their hands.” I think it a wise thing myself. We were often compelled to take gold in exchange for our merchandise, but we would rather have had it in goods. We always endeavoured to get rid of our gold as soon as we could.

Twenty-Second Sitting.*October 9th, 1878.*

Convoed by the Chief Ruler—An Altar of Fire Erected—The Old Arab's Lamentations—A Séance—Appearance of Spirits—They Converse with the Band—The Chief Ruler Astonished—Issba Appears and Speaks to the Ruler—Reminiscences of Youthful Days—Hermes Sees his Parents in Vision—Light thrown on a Dark Subject—The Old Arab Chief's Story of his Life—Hermes Finds a Grandfather.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—Once more we set out on our travels. After spending the last evening in the city with us, my friend (the Ruler and Chief Priest) insisted on going out with us for a few furlongs. The day's journey ended at the setting of the sun, when the great luminary made his descent on the mountains towards the west, which were right before us, though at a great distance. We expected that he (the Ruler) would have left us then ; but no, he said he would stay till next morning. I knew that it would be our last night together, and that afterwards I would no more see him in the body. Every time the day broke and every time the sun set brought me nearer, I knew, to the day when I was to lay down my poor, humble life, and once for all take my flight to the happy land where I had so often been in vision.

That evening, after we had pitched our tents, seen to our animals, and partaken of the evening meal, we once more came together. Some time had elapsed since we had met under the canopy of heaven to offer up the sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving to God our Father. While in the city we had worshipped in a temple, and used altars erected and decorated by the hands of men, now a few stones gathered on the river's bank served our turn, with no fanciful decorations nor inlaid gold work ; there was nothing of that sort ; but we had just enough space, on raising the boulder to the top, to kindle the emblematic fire. Before such an altar we offered up our sacrifice of prayer. For the members of our band had long since given up entirely the idea of animal sacrifice. They looked on sacrifice in a new light, and no longer thought to appease an angry God by sacrifice of blood, for their God was their Father, who was full of love and compassion for His children. We threw ourselves before the altar, and offered up the breathings of

devout souls—men who had devoted their lives and entire service to Him.

Having thus gone through our form of worship, we gathered ourselves into a circle once more, and that old Arab chief, who was as a star fallen amongst us, took his place in the centre.

He who had been so long the leader of armies, and the cause of so much bloodshed, had become a true and faithful minister to us in holy things. When he spoke, his words seemed to pour in oil on our souls, and when he found anyone down-hearted he was sure to cheer him up with his encouraging words and buoyant spirit. He seemed to have changed his earthly nature altogether and taken on the spiritual, and, like myself, drawing nigh to Heaven, looking forward to the better land. And yet, with all his cheerfulness and efforts to cheer others, there was an air of sadness about him. Indeed, I often came upon him and found him in tears; and when I asked him what ailed him, he would answer me thus—"My son, I weep to think that I have such a short time to live upon the earth." I said—"Is it not better, my father, for thee to be taken away quickly from this life, now that thou art so very old, than to stay? There is no joy here. We and our companions are but a band of wanderers, with no place of abode, and knowing not what may befall us to-morrow." "Ah, my son, had I before me a number of years to live, I know what use I would make of them. The hard life of you and your band would not have prevented me from being of some use to my brethren of mankind—to bring to them the knowledge of Jesus my blessed Prince, to drink in his precepts of love, and follow in his footsteps. My time here is too short to undo the ruin and misery I have caused, and this it is that makes me sad."

And so the good old man continued frequently to express his deep regret for his long life of sin and strife. But I must return to my narrative.

I said the old man had taken his place in the centre of our circle; we all sat round. He bent his head to the earth as it were (for that was the attitude the Arabians assumed in their devotions). He sat thus for some time, then, raising his head and eyes to heaven, he said—"Behold, they come!—they come!" We looked up, but all was darkness. Then, as we continued looking, we seemed to be walled in, while on the outer edge of

the circle, there rose up a bright and luminous light of a cone-like shape. Out of that there began to appear to us beings like ourselves, who took their place in our midst, filling up the inner circle. After the lapse of a few minutes, we perceived many of our old friends, who had passed away. They gradually became clearer to us. At length they began to speak to us, and then we became, as it were, one body—hardly knowing the mortal from the immortal. Many of them were like some we had left in Egypt; and we did not know till then that they had left the earth life. With these we conversed regarding earth and its concerns; also, with reference to the affairs in Egypt when they left, and how they left it: thus we received knowledge of what was impossible for us of ourselves to reach, for we were then a very long distance from Egypt. After joining us in singing an anthem, our Spirit friends told us many things regarding the future, and left us in the same way as they had come.

My friend, the Chief Ruler and Priest of the city we had just left, was greatly astonished at all this. He had seen nothing like it before, though at times, he said, he had observed forms walking by the altar while the service was proceeding, but could not make out who or what they were. It had opened to him a new view of heaven. He did not altogether disbelieve when we told him of such things, but he said he could not realise it—he only prayed that he might be privileged to witness something of the kind before he left the earth. Now, he said, having seen and spoken with Spirits who had left the body—and that in the company of others who had seen and spoken to them, he truly believed all that had been told him, and could believe even more.

After this the aged Arab, as he had been our ministering priest that evening, once more addressed us in suitable words. As it had been a good while since our records had been read, I went forward, and read several passages from the manuscript. This was again matter of surprise to the chief ruler, who seemed deeply interested in the subjects of our records, and of what had taken place in Egypt and other places we had visited, wondering why we had kept note of these things. To this I said that we had found it for our advantage to put down in writing a number of incidents that had happened and experiences we had come through, in order that we might learn lessons for future use.

After singing an anthem, our old and venerable friend gave us his blessing, and then we went to our tents.

My friend, the ruler, accompanied me to my tent, which was a large one. Before we cast ourselves on our bed to sleep, we sat down and had some conversation one with another. We had not long sat when my old father *Issha* appeared before us. He came in as one of ourselves would come. But when his old pupil saw him come in he would have run away, but I caught him by the garments, saying—"You were not afraid of our old father when on earth, why be afraid now? Had he appeared to you in a more visionary form, you might have shown fear; but, see, he is just like one of ourselves."

Issha then said—"Nay, nay, my son, run not away from me. I feel to-day as when I was on earth with you; when you and Hermes were youths under my care." He then went on to say that he was glad that he, his old pupil, had gone forth, and had been able to bring together so many individuals of different creeds, and had so instructed them in the truth that they had become a people whose light shone on all around: that he was watched over by those who had long ago gone from the earth, who were ever near to him, ready to influence him in every good work; and that he himself had walked betwixt the altars, and that he loved so to do.

Issha remained a long time with us, and talked with us on many subjects relating to our spiritual welfare, and telling me how I should act after he went back. He said he would be at hand, however, whenever I found myself in a strait or difficulty—ready either to help or give advice. He then alluded to my approaching end—I mean the end of my earthly life—when we should meet, never more to part. Ah! how often did I long for the time; but that was in the hands of a higher and wiser Power. When it did come I was willing to go, but I wished to die in harness.

Issha at length vanished from our sight; but still, though the night was far advanced, we two felt unwilling to sleep away the remaining hours, for we had many things to speak of before we parted one from another. Accordingly we sat down, and, as in the case of other old men who have not met since boyhood, the scenes and incidents of our youth came back to us. We, as it

were, became children again, and, bit by bit, all our early lifetime was lived over again, the joyous and happy scenes of which we could not forget—and that our Prince was one of us, and fellow-pupil, under the same tutor or master! Things unheeded then by us when we were boys now became matter for thought; as old men we saw, on looking back, that many things—features in his character as a boy—showed clearly that he (Jesus) would be great among men. Our conversation was carried on for a long time; but at length, as the morning was about to dawn, we cast ourselves down on the grass outside our tent, to sleep for the few remaining hours before sunrise.

Those few hours of sleep I have cause to remember, for during that sleep I had a vision of something I had often longed to know—that is, who my parents were. It was strange that Issha, who knew something about my mother and my birth, had never enlightened me on the matter. I knew that the circumstances of my birth had been written down in the Temple, but I could never discover the record; and since Issha had gone away into spirit-life, he had never alluded to the subject. I used to wonder who they were, and what had become of them—my father and my mother. In my younger days I had thought that Issha was my father, for in truth I had never known any father but him.

On the night I am speaking of, when my friend, the Chief Priest and I slept on the grass outside my tent, I dreamed I saw a woman; or, rather, I saw in vision a woman. I had seen the same female often before among the assembled spirits, but had not thought of her as in any way connected with me. This time, however, when I saw her, there rose in my heart a feeling I could not repress, and I cried out, "Mother!" At once she came rushing towards me and took me in her arms,—for, in my dream, or vision, I had become as it were a little baby again, unable to lisp or speak, yet with all the understanding of a man. I thought myself nestling in her bosom, when a man approached us. My mother (I must now call her so) sat beneath a tree, with me at her bosom. This man appeared to be tall of stature, and was clad in armour, but it was not the kind of armour worn by the warriors of Egypt. It was more like that of the Syrians. He looked sadly at my mother; and as he looked, I felt he was my father. I saw, too, that my mother was Egyptian. We seemed

to be away from town or city—none but ourselves. The words passed betwixt them—“When is this to end? Are we to be ever thus hunted like beasts of the forest?” Just as the words were uttered my father dropped at my mother’s feet, lifeless. I saw sticking in his breast a long shaft with its feathered end. I knew that he was pierced by an arrow. Thereupon, a number of men rushed on us, and one dragged me from my mother’s arms, while others bore her away screaming. I then saw in my vision a man well up in years. He seized me from him who carried me, saying, “He is mine; I will care for him.” This vision, though it threw some light on a dark subject, did not reveal to me that which I longed to know—what had become of my mother? I knew that the question would ever haunt me by day and night till I got satisfaction, and knew who my father was, and what had become of my mother. I knew, of course, that she was no longer in the body.

When the morning light began to break, the signal was given to our young men to strike our tents, and all to give praise to the Great God that a new day had been given to the earth. The tents were struck. By the time the sun had risen, every knee was bent, and every head was prostrate, in the attitude of worship, while he who had so often ministered to us in our circle, offered up the morning prayer.

We then partook of our morning meal; after which we parted from our friends, the Chief Priest and those who had come out with him. A few presents were given and taken. The gifts I received from him were rich, but riches were nothing to me; still I valued them, for whenever I could I would dispose of them for the good of the poor who fell in our way.

So we went forward on our journey northwards to the Caspian Sea. That day, the first of our journey, I was a little sad as we marched along. This was observed by a few of my brethren, who spoke to me about it. I tried at first to conceal the cause of my sadness, but I could not persist in this; and, at the place of our next halt, a beautiful bank on the river side (where there were some date trees, from which we had provender), I related to them my vision of the previous night. While I was speaking the old Arab Chieftain seemed deeply interested in the words spoken, and when I finished, he at once said to me, “What like

was the man that appeared to you in your vision?" I described him, for I had often seen him in my visions, and the female also, and that they were both with us at our circle on the evening before. The old chief, looking earnestly on me, said, "I am not an Arab. I was driven from my home when I was a young man, and settled with the tribe, in which you found me. I married the chief's daughter, the only issue he had, and by so doing, when he died, I became chief. I was always ready to engage in war—I loved it, and the people loved me all the more for this. I was ever ready to go against Persia, our natural enemy as we called her, and they loved me for that also. I was not at all times successful, as you yourself know. I had a son, my first born. One day after he had grown up to be a lad, I told him of my previous history—where I came from, of my parents, and why I had to fly from my native country. My son, shortly after I had told him this, went away from me to visit my father. I afterwards ascertained that, when he made himself known, my father at once took him to his bosom and made him heir of all he had. Having still the same spirit in him, my father wished his grandson to unite with a certain family by marriage. But he refused, for he had seen a woman in Egypt whom he loved. He went to Egypt and married secretly, where he visited his wife time after time, patiently waiting for the time when, in course of nature, his grandfather would die, for he was an old man. My father, discovering what my son had done, wished to cut him off as he had done me; but I, after taking a wife in a strange nation, had never returned as he had done. The old man, hearing that my son was away on one of his visits to Egypt, sent out several of his warriors to bring him back, so that he might make a public example of him. The persons sent out to capture him, instead of doing so, acted on the instructions of their captain, a man who bore no good will to the boy (he had not then turned his twentieth year), and on finding him, one of the ruffians shot an arrow at him, and he fell. They dragged his wife and child away. The mother pled for liberty to go back with her child to her own land, but the old man condemned her and her son to be carried back to within sight of Egypt, and be cast into the Nile, to be devoured by the animals frequenting it. The mother was thrown into the

Nile, but the scene being close to one of the temples, was witnessed by the priests, one of whom rushed out, and rescued the child from the fate of his mother. That child is here now. Hermes, you are my son—I am your grandfather! Strange that we two, parent and child, should thus be brought together! From the day you spoke to me, on that ill-fated expedition, something told me that I ought to listen to your words."

On saying this we fell on one another's necks, and I thanked the Great and Mighty Spirit that I had met with one at least of my parents. Issha, my old father, stood beside us both that night when we met for prayer. Grandfather and grandson though we were, the time for departure of both of us was fast drawing on. He was nigh 100 years old, and I was about 60.

I must now close for the night.

Twenty=Third Sitting.

October 16th, 1878.

Hermes related to Arabia, Syria, and Egypt—Grandfather and Grandson—On the Euphrates—A Good Mission Field—In Persian Territory—Success—Egyptian Mediums—Some of the Bard settle down as Pastors—March towards the Caspian Sea—A Narrow Escape from Drowning.

(*Controlled by HERMES*).—Good evening, my friends. Last night I told you of the discovery I made of a grandfather in him whom I had named the Old Arab, but he turned out to be a Syrian. We were at no great distance from Syria at this time, and finding that I was but half an Egyptian, I felt a desire to see, if it were possible, the birthplace of my grandfather. I was actually connected with three different countries—my grandfather was a Syrian, my mother was an Egyptian, and my father was born of an Arabian mother. Thus I could claim connection with three different nations,—all of one stock originally. My feelings seemed to get the better of me—the fact of finding a parent! I became, as it were, a child again. O, how I prized that old man! I could almost have worshipped him. He had often bitterly regretted what he had done in his lifetime; but little did he think that his grandson would be brought into the folds of his arms, and be the instrument to redeem him from evil. Now he could

listen to me, with even a deeper interest than before, as I related to him the various incidents of my wanderings. He had lived like a prince up till the time we met ; many a king had not the power he had ; while I, his grandson, without a home, was a wanderer over the earth. But the old man was proud of me. He looked on the things of earth under a new light. I had (he said) as a soldier of a cause despised by the nations of the earth, won victories which could not be achieved by the most famous of the world's warriors. But it was too much to give me that honour ; for though I had fought hard for many years in the cause of Truth, I was under the guidance of those bright ones who knew earth better than those who dwelt on it. They knew, and we knew, that it was for no earthly honours that we fought in this warfare. Our reward was waiting us—our honours would be bestowed by Him who was King of Kings, whose throne was the heavens, and who made earth his footstool.

We continued our journey, following the course of the Euphrates, and in that course we came to a village situated on the banks of the river. Like a number of others, it was in a very low condition, materially and spiritually. Some places nearer to the city we had recently left we found to be greatly influenced through their intercourse with the citizens ; while in other places, as in this case, farther removed from such influences, the spiritual condition of the people was very low—so low, indeed, that in many cases they had no worship of any kind ; they did not even divide their time into weeks, and consequently had no day of rest. It was in places such as this that we preferred to labour in ; for we found the poor ignorant people much more attentive to our teachings than those of a higher condition. Crossing over the river to the opposite side, we were in Persian territory, where the inhabitants were regular in their mode of worship—that is, the Persian system. We encountered not only these “fire-worshippers,” but others who followed after the old Arabian teachings. These had a religion, the others had not ; and we considered it our duty to labour earnestly to win them over to our doctrines and practice—for in a half-civilised state you will find in the people an earnest spirit, a constant yearning for something greater and better than themselves, that they may give it homage.

We began to preach our doctrines about the after state, opening up the veil of the future life to them by bringing them within the circle of influences from the Spirit-world with which we ourselves were favoured ; not only demonstrating the truth through that which they saw with their eyes and heard with their ears, but opening up their understandings to bring that truth to bear on their daily life. We showed them that He whom we served was the Father of us all ; that, though separated by the distinctions of language and race, we were all brethren, children of the same Great Father Spirit who, through our Prince, Jesus of Nazareth, would have all his children brought to love and serve him. They had heard, many of them, of this same Jesus, and of the wonderful works he had done amongst his countrymen. "Surely," said they, "this doctrine must be true, for we have heard so many good reports of this man."

In course of a short time we began to see the fruit of our labours amongst these poor villagers in better lives and growing intelligence of spiritual things. There were many amongst them whom you would call *mediums*, but whom we called seers or prophets—individuals who can be used by spirits—or oracles, as I called them when a priest in Egypt. But there was a great difference betwixt these primitive, simple people, who had not had much intercourse with the world, and the people of civilised nations such as Persia. Here we found the best seers amongst the males. In Egypt the female seer was most esteemed ; indeed, the gift was cultivated in very young females, who were afterwards handed over to the Temple, and had their work allotted to them as servants of certain gods. After a service of several years, these females were admitted to the Holy Place, after which they were never allowed to go outside the gates of the Temple. They became sacred. These holy virgins were kept in a place by themselves, where they received their messages. But when light shone in upon me I saw the evils of the system : these females were deprived of their liberty—made slaves, and in some cases worse. Though many of these females were strictly holy in their conduct, there were some of their utterances great failures at times, and even the truthful messages that came through them were very often smothered up and never came forth to the world. Had they been proclaimed to the people the cause of the priests

would have been ruined, for these messages went right in the teeth of the dark and unholy deeds of the priests. They held unholy intercourse with these priests—that was the reason. I, when I found it out, revolted against all such iniquitous deeds within the sacred precincts of a house erected for the solemn worship of the Great Unseen One.

But I am away from my narrative. When we had got the people of these villages thoroughly converted by our teachings, we found no lack of ministers to leave behind to carry on the good work we had begun. In such cases, our young men began to drop away, here and there, remaining with the people as ministers or teachers. A good report generally followed after us: How they had raised themselves in the world, as soon as they understood things—and saw how nearly they were related to the world above. They felt they were something, and began to raise themselves and to educate their young people with the help of the teachers we had left behind.

I never laid down any particular charge to those who left our band for this purpose. There, I would say, take the people, and cut out your own method in dealing with them. We ordain you to be the minister or servant to those poor people in spiritual things, seeing that you are willing to leave our company and to remain with them. Whatever mode of religious service you adopt, let it be one which will give glory to God and to Jesus of Nazareth. We lay no restriction on you—do as best you can in the condition of things.

We found this method much better than giving them a long system of rules. After we had drawn the people together, we laid down a few simple rules for their guidance; and in due time they grew into a solid body, under laws made by themselves. Such churches generally flourished until they grew too large.

We were now drawing nigh to the Caspian Sea. This was a place that I wished to visit if possible. I had heard of it from Hafed and Issha, and, now that we were so near to it, the old desire was awakened in me. Our first intention had been to cross Syria towards the Dark Sea (Black Sea as you call it), then southwards through Palestine to Egypt—a long journey; but another proposition was made, that if we went to the Caspian Sea, we might visit Tartary, and then the Black Sea, taking Syria on our southward route. Accordingly, we went on towards the Caspian

Sea, but while a good many furlongs from it, we found our progress very much hindered by the numerous branches of the large river that broke off from the main stream at this point. We had to ford a number of these.

At one of the fords we had a very narrow escape from being carried away by the rapid current. The branch being in the neighbourhood of mountains, the melted snow came down so suddenly upon us, that we considered it a miracle that a great part of our caravan was not swept away by the awful rush of waters. We had gone to a shallow part of the stream, where we crossed with ease ; but just as the middle portion of the caravan had gained the one side, and while the last of it was about to enter the water on the other side, we perceived a white wall, as it were coming down the river. Some thought it a mist rising from the stream ; at the same time a noise like the humming of bees fell on our ears. We still pressed on, however, and just as the last of the caravan entered the river the volume of waters came rolling on, appearing like a great white wall. A panic arose among some of our company, but my old grandfather quickly cried out : " Be not afraid ; the waters will come no further at present ; walk on, and all will be safe. If you break into confusion all will be lost." Our young men appeared to regain confidence, and the last of them had scarcely got to the top of the bank when the flood came down tearing up trees on the banks (like some wild beast that had broken its cage), and sweeping on in its desolating track, carrying all before it. We thanked the Great Spirit who, through His ministering angels, had rescued us from danger, recognizing all such deliverances as debts we owed to Him.

We will go no further to-night.

Twenty-Fourth Sitting.

October 23rd, 1878.

Northern Persia—" Striking Oil"—Priestly Contrivance—The Deceivers Denounced by Hermes—False Magi—Hermes and the Persian Tax-Gatherer—Hermes Preaches to the Persians—An Exposure—The Altar of the False Priests destroyed by the People—Interview with the Priests—The Band distribute Clothing to the Naked.

(*Controlled by HERMES*).—Last time we met, I gave you some account of the wonderful deliverance of our company when cross-

ing the river—very nearly equal to the account given of the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea. It was truly Spiritual intervention in both cases, but their case was different from ours. We were fording the waters but knee deep, while the Hebrews walked over on dry land, when they ran off from Egypt.

After crossing that river, our route lay through a mountainous country, gradually rising as we went on. We were now on the Persian side of the river. As we got up amongst the high lands, we found it was not very desirable travelling; we had left the luxuriant vegetation of the river side, and came on stony ground, a great portion of which seemed not even able to yield the lowest vegetation. After crossing those mountains we got on to a district more level, and here we began to find out why the vegetation was so bare. Near the foot of one of the hills, as we passed along, we found that, by sinking a small tube in the ground, a stream of oil rose through the tube, which, when lighted, burned brightly. This was the cause of the barrenness we saw around us. Further on in our journey we observed a course of wooden pipes, which we examined, and found that these were used for the conveyance of this oil. We followed the course of this for some time, when we came upon a grove of stunted trees, in the midst of which there was an altar. To this altar the pipe was led, for the supply of oil for a never-dying flame. Now, as we saw it, it struck us as a very ingenious method of keeping up the flame, and we gave credit to the fraternity of the Magi ministering at the altar. We afterwards found out that the company of Magi was composed of some who had been cast out of the Order, who had settled themselves in this place. While proceeding with the erection of their altar, they had fallen in with some of this mineral oil, and then various springs of it. Being somewhat long-headed, they were not long in turning the discovery to account, by leading the liquid in a channel to the altar for the supply of light. This was all very well; but we were truly indignant when we learned that these priests had led the simple people of the villages around to believe that this ever-burning flame came miraculously from Heaven.

The district being far north from the centre of Persia, the people were simple and ignorant, and apt to be deceived; and I felt it my duty to protest against this bare-faced deception. Ac-

cordingly I spoke and reasoned with some of them, telling them that I was not ignorant of the doctrines of the Magi, with whom I had studied, and gave the name of my tutor. When I mentioned the name *Hafed*, they seemed to know him; one of them, who said that he had been cast out from the community, or circle, which *Hafed* belonged to, tauntingly turned on me, and accused *Hafed* as having turned from the faith of Zoroaster, and become a houseless wanderer. I said, in reply to this taunt, that it was better to be as *Hafed* was than as they were—deceivers of the humble inhabitants around them for the sake of gain. With regard to the fire on their altar, they, first of all, maintained that the burning of the flame was right, and that it came from heaven, supplied by an angel. I said that that was not true, for we had traced the oil to its source. If the rocks and hills in the neighbourhood were the angel, well and good—for from these it came; but one word of my mouth to their deluded votaries would, before many minutes, extinguish their flame. I said that we had not sought them out to expose them in this matter; that travelling along we discovered a portion of their concealed tube on the mountain-side, and traced its course till we came to their altar—and but for this we would have passed on our journey. Now, however, that we had observed their imposition, we were determined to stop it.

We saw that we could make no impression on these men who held themselves up as priests of the living God, and I resolved to try some other method of stopping their iniquitous system in another quarter. It was always a difficult thing to deal with the Magi, who held so tenaciously the doctrines of Zoroaster. We would not have interfered with them at all had these doctrines been sincerely and faithfully taught and carried out in practice; but the people were easily led, and blindfolded in many things by those who professed to teach them.

We shortly afterwards arrived at a large village, the principal trade of which was the collecting of this oil or spirit and conveying it to a large town, where it was used for light and for medicinal purposes. You must bear in mind that the Persians at the time were much further advanced than some other nations around them. This oil was more like spirit; burned in lamps it gave a very bright light, and sent out a perfume not disagreeable. On our arrival at this town we found we could do little in the way of

trading—they had only this oil to sell or barter for other goods. While there I got into conversation with one of the principal men of the town, who looked like a magistrate. I found him more intelligent than some others with whom I conversed. He told me he was not a native of the place, but had been sent there by the Government to look after the taxes in connection with this trade in oil or spirit. We talked on a number of subjects, and I saw he was not far behind in his knowledge of what had taken place many years bygone. When I spoke to him of Hafed, he said he knew him well; for he had studied under him when he (Hafed) was in the Order. He said he had been a teacher. He had often heard of Hafed's career as a warrior. We went on from one thing to another, I giving him various bits of information and incidents in our travels, till I came to speak of the false Magi at the village on the hill side, and their imposition on the people. He said he had had no dealings with them; that he had often applied to Government to use some means to drive them away from the district, but they had been unable to do anything, the people being so wholly entangled by them. He said, the word of the priest, in this instance, was before that of the king. The priests seemed to drain all the substance out of them, not leaving them as much as would procure the necessaries of life. I said, I thought that he, as tax-collector, representing the Government, would have some power to put an end to the system, but he said he had no authority to do so.

In the evening, I tried, if possible, to speak to the people in the Persian tongue. This I did, preaching the doctrines of Zoroaster in their purity; but they would have none of it. I told them that these were the teachings of their great reformer and law-giver, Zoroaster. "Oh, no," said they, "that is not what our Magi teach us." I thought I was like to be beaten at last. I never, in the whole course of my ministry, met with such a flat denial. I took them on another tack, and laid before them the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth—the same doctrines, only in different words. They listened at first, but ultimately set their faces against these also. I gave up. I saw I could make no impression upon the deluded people.

At sunset we went to our own evening worship, and they also went to their usual service. In the morning, as the sun rose, we

were at prayers ; so were they. At mid-day our company held a meeting, and some of the people stood round about, and listened to us, as we spoke in Persian. I spoke in this language plainly, not for the benefit of our own company, but for those around. Our people did not understand clearly what I said, but they knew what I was speaking of, and why I spoke in the Persian language. I there and then thoroughly expounded the doctrines of Zoroaster and Jesus, and thereafter, taking advantage of the information I had got from the tax-collector, I compared these great truths with the teachings they were receiving from the men who pretended to be followers of Zoroaster. I went on, placing the doctrines side by side, contrasting the one with the other, reading also from their own books passages condemnatory of the teachings of their false priests, whose whole teaching consisted in one thing—how to get the means to support their false system.

The individuals who stood around our band, listened with evident astonishment to my address. They seemed to have talked about it, for I was asked by the magistrate of the town to speak in the evening on the same subject. At last I had broken the ice.

In the evening I spoke on the subject, and enlarged more on it than in the forepart of the day. Before I was done it began to dawn on them how much they had been deceived. I saw how the wind was blowing: they would have rushed with one accord and destroyed the whole band of false priests settled on the mountain-side. But I said, "No, that must not be done; you must try to make them better men." One or two of these priests who had been hovering around during my address, evidently taking note of what I said, now came forward, crying out lustily to the people to drive us out; that we were seducers, travelling slave-dealers, who would steal their wives and children! This absurd charge fairly destroyed them altogether. I said, "Look at me. Am I like a slave-dealer—one who would lay hands on your wives and children to steal them away? I know something of Persia, and know the punishment of one who would dare do so in this country. I am the friend of one who has done good service to the land of Persia, though now thrust out from his office as head shepherd of the flock. That man, Hafed, Prince of Persia, and Head of the Order of Magi, now an outcast, is seeking to

draw in wandering sheep into the new fold. We also seek to draw you into the same fold. We are no stealers of human beings, but we deal honestly with all, striving not for the wealth of this world, but trying all we can to render help to those who need help, and giving rather than taking. But above all, we want your minds opened up to the fact that the great truths taught by him whom you claim as your great lawgiver, Zoroaster, are just the same pure doctrines taught by Jesus of Nazareth, and for proclaiming which to his own countrymen, the venerable Hafed has been cast out. These doctrines are—that you should love all men, as you would love yourselves, for God is your Father and all mankind are his children ; therefore, every one should help his neighbour in danger or distress. Believe me not if you find not what I now say in the book which Zoroaster wrote under the inspiration of the Mighty Spirit of the Flame—that flame which has ever burned on every altar reared in truth and sincerity for the worship of the Great Spirit, but which never descended on the altars of those false priests who deceive you for worldly gain.”

The priests, so loud in their denunciations, soon perceived that the people were on our side, and disappeared.

The people came closer to me, seeking for counsel as to what they would do with their false teachers. “They have taught us, and we thought them to be true and honest men.”

I said that if they would listen to the tax-collector of their district, they might have good counsel from one who was able to give it. In reply, they said, they thought him so very hard in the collection of the taxes that they could not trust him in spiritual matters. After some farther conversation with them, I told them at length about the concealed tube for the conveyance of the oil from the spring to the altar. That evening the altar was levelled with the ground.

Next day the priests came to us in great wrath, upbraiding us, first of all, for stirring up the people against them, and causing their downfall. I said : “Here I stand, and declare, that I will ever oppose and denounce all that I see to be false, especially a system of falsehood and imposition that has for its end the robbery of the poor labourer, leaving him scarcely as much as provide meat and clothing for himself and family. Look at these

poor men, with their wives and children, nearly naked, and you living on their hard-earned money, when you should have been working with your own hands for your own support !”

To this they somewhat indignantly replied : “ What ! are we not the priests and ministers of the Living God ? Are we not doing enough when we give them the words of God, and pray for them every day ? ”

“ Your prayers cost you no labour ! Who made *you* priests of the Living God ? ”

“ We were ordained to the office,” said they, in reply.

“ They who ordained you have cast you off,” I said. “ But you require no ordination to be true priests of God. The poorest villager is a priest of the Living God if his heart is in the right place ; every act of his life is service to God. But you ! what have you been doing ? Serving yourselves—not God. So, go, my friends ! Think well of what I have said, and judge if you have been unjustly dealt with. This I am assured of—if ever it be my fortune to meet with any one of you in the future, he will tell me that I was right, and that you were wrong. Doubtless, you have as much gold in your possession as will keep you from poverty, and plenty to spare. Distribute, therefore, to those needy ones, from whom you had it, and come here again to-morrow, and witness one of our methods of serving God. We have not much, but what spiritual advice we give, is given freely to rich and poor alike.”

So, next day being a day of rest, when we ceased from daily labour and business, we agreed to go forth to the people on a service to the destitute. We had in our stock of goods some purple cloth and linen, which we devoted to this object. We accordingly went forth, and soon saw many females and children in rags, almost naked, and distributed our clothing to those who most needed it. We came into conversation with many who had large families, and who, betwixt paying their taxes, and keeping up these false priests, had very little over to themselves. I said to them—“ Better be without religion altogether than have one that will land you in poverty. Look into your own souls, and worship the Great God who has his temple there ; worship the God of Light and Love at the burning altars of your own hearths, and then, my friends, you will be able to feed and

clothe yourselves and your wives and children, like a civilised race, such as you Persians are."

My words seemed to affect them greatly, so much so that they wanted us to stay with them altogether. But we said no, that we felt it to be our duty to continue our mission of seeking to do similar work in other quarters. We had no great desire to drive them from the Persian system of Zoroaster, in its purity, although we studied to set before them that his teachings harmonised with the truths we ourselves proclaimed, and left them something to think over—seeds of truth that would spring up in after days.

Twenty-fifth Sitting.

October 30th, 1878.

Varied success in Persian Towns and Villages—Hermes on Vegetable Life, etc.—Hermes on the Persians—The Caspian Sea—Submerged Cities—Egyptian Necromancy—On the Shores of the Caspian—Churches Planted—The Temples of Nature and of Man.

(*Controlled by HERMES*).—The last time I met with you I spoke of the revolution I had made in the service of the fire-worshippers—not fire-worshippers, but those who had deviated from Zoroastrianism, and openly made a mockery of sacred things for worldly gain. Now, I do think we left behind us as much of the truth as would take root, and spring up. Hafed and his little church, further to the south, were beginning to suffer for the sake of the truth, and getting scattered; and this place might become to them a refuge, where they would be welcomed by those who would sympathise with them. My work, you will see, was not limited to Egypt, Palestine and Arabia. I carried that work even into Persia.

We visited a number of towns and villages in our journey through Persia onwards to the Caspian Sea. We had repeatedly been told much about that inland sea by travellers and others, and now we were nigh to it. I thought we should visit it, and satisfy the craving I had to see its waters before leaving the body; for my early impressions revived, having been told many things regarding this sea in my youth.

At some of the places visited we met with varied success in

our work ; while in others, we were sorely disappointed ; for instead of being received with kindness, we had to make our escape from threatened attack. We were not afraid, however, of what they might do to us, knowing that we had a certain work to do, and that until that was done, they could not hurt us. Still, I must say, that we had our fears now and again ; though conscious that we were protected by our invisible friends we were sometimes afraid of man. We had little to lose, doubtless, but that little if taken from us—for instance, our animals or our goods—would put us a great deal about ; deprived of these, and cast out, to find our way back as best we could, would have been no easy matter. We had no friends to apply to for aid, unless we went back to some of the towns we had visited ; but we wished to go forward.

At this time our band were making great strides in religious knowledge. I got my own mind also opened up more fully to the reception of natural and spiritual truths. I knew more than ever I had experienced before of the greatness, the wisdom and the glory of the Creator as shown in all His works. I had seen many strange things in the strange places we visited, which helped to open up my mind to the consideration of man as a spiritual being. But in studying man and the animals, I especially loved to study the vegetable creation which belonged to my Creator as much as I did. The very grass we trod beneath our feet had life, though not such as we had. But, had the green grass of the fields reasoning powers? I frequently found myself trying to work out the problem what vegetable life was. Had the herb of the field sensation such as I had? I observed that every nerve and vein in the plant supplied it with sap. But where was the reasoning power? I could advance in my enquiry so far. There was a kind of life in the plant, a spirit, derived from Him who created it and man—the same, though different in degree or kind ; still, we were closely allied. It may be termed a dumb order of life, and came upwards and onwards till the animal mixed with it, and thence to man, the greatest of all. In my close studies of the vegetable kingdom, I found, by the wayside, beautiful plants growing wild, in the likeness (symbolically) of Him who called them into being. I found plants there, that when we came near them, you would think from its appearance

that the plant knew, by your very tread, that you were approaching : it began to tremble. When you touched its branches, they fell by its side like the arms of a human being. When I came across such plants I concluded that at least they were possessed of a feeling of some kind. Might not grass also have a similar feeling, though somewhat different ? Again, while we sat by the roadside to rest ourselves, I observed certain other plants that seemed to lay hold of insects—imprisoning them ; and evidently feeding on these animals. Now, if such plants thus feed themselves, they must have another kind of life different from other plants. When afterwards examined we could only find the outside husk of the tiny animal—the internal part was consumed by the plant. How wonderful are thy works on the earth, O Lord ! Thy ways are past finding out, O King of Kings. No man can be compared with thee ; no, not one ! How much, O God of Wisdom, have we to learn and study, that we may understand thee in thy works ! Thou hast not shut up from us such teachings by the wayside, but in thy love thou hast given them to man that he may know thee better, and adore thee, the Great Creator of all. We may complain—Why not send some of the higher ones to instruct us ? Surely they must understand the secrets of Nature better than we ? When we questioned them we found them nearly as ignorant as ourselves in the body. Again, I would reason thus : If the Great Spirit had made all known to man, telling him the outs-and-ins of all he saw around him, how the seed falling into the ground, covered up by the soil, bursts its kernel, at last comes up a shrub, and in due time grows up till it becomes a tree : I thought if I could only know how that was done, I should have attained a high position in knowledge. Yet I thought then, and believe now, that man shall yet find out the workings of God, inasmuch as He has set no bounds to man's mind in the acquisition of knowledge of Nature's operations—nothing is shut up or hidden from him ; if he seek to dive into Nature's secrets, he will find. The Great Creator has thrown a thin veil over them ; He has not opened them up to man's gaze, so that he may have something to work out ; for God never meant that man should be an idle being, but that he should learn for himself. This is a part of the schooling wisely decreed for him while a dweller on earth. Woe be to him who sits idly down

and gazes into space, forgetful of the lessons set before him, doing nothing! When he comes into the Spirit-world, and stands before the Judge, and is asked what he has done with the talents he received, he will be like him whom the Lord Jesus described and denounced as an unprofitable servant, who hid his talent in the earth.

There is one thing we desire, and that is, to be with you when you meet for the edification of one another. Whatever talent you have—however small or insignificant it may be—hide it not, but let it come out, so that your neighbours may benefit thereby. By so doing, your talent will possibly return to you doubled.

But I am running away again from my narrative.

We were now drawing nigh the Caspian Sea. We came across several towns and villages, in some of which we were somewhat successful; in others we found it a hard thing to make any impression. We must, however, give these Persians this credit—they were a much healthier race regarding religious matters than most nations around them. They were honest in their convictions, ready, to the last man, to suffer and die for the doctrines that had been imparted to them. They would have thrown themselves on the burning altar, as a sacrifice, rather than give up their religious liberty. I, for my part, could not not see much wrong with them; still, their teachings were not so simple as those which the Lord, our Prince, gave to mankind. How easy he made the way—so plain, that the simplest could understand. We tried to show them that he laid no heavy burdens on mankind—no hard things to do or say—before they could reach the blessed shores above. We cared not to pull down their altars; let the fire still burn on them; let them still bend before the rising sun in the morning, and do the like at his going down in the evening. If they only did that which was right in the eyes of men, and especially in the sight of God, we asked no more of them. Strict in their devotions to the Great Spirit, exhibiting at all times a loving heart, loving the truth, and honest in all their dealings with their fellow-men (we could not then read the hearts of men as we can now do) what more could we demand?

We sought also to enlighten them respecting the Spirit-world; for, in general, they were ignorant on this point. All they could tell you was just that which had been handed down to them by

their forefathers. They had heard of the wonderful intervention of the Spirit-host at the battle, led on by the youthful Hafed, and many more occasions similar: how such angels led their kings when they became conquerors of the world; but they could not tell of any such wonderful things occurring in their own times. Within our own circle I knew of greater things than they could speak of.

At last we came in sight of the great sea, or lake, an immense body of water, *salt*, like the sea, surrounded by land, with no outlet, so far as I know.

I have spoken of a flood. I was told this sea was the remains of that flood which had overwhelmed a portion of the world. I had been told that there were cities buried beneath its waters, and I was curious to find out the truth of that which I had heard. On reaching a certain village, I made inquiry as to the place where these ruins might be seen, and I was taken off by fishermen to the spot. Whether it had been a city or not, I could not say. The sea was calm—so much so that I could discern in the depths below what seemed to be ruins of buildings—of what city, and when it was overwhelmed, I do not know. It must have been when some great disturbance took place—when the great mountains bordering the sea were upheaved.

We who were brought up in the Egyptian temples understood that many of these things were brought about by natural causes. That was one great reason of the success of the Egyptian priests; that was how they managed to keep their thumb on the people. It was not by holy lives and love of the Great Spirit, but by magical art that they wrought on the minds of the people. Every young priest was initiated into these secrets, but they were not allowed to go outside the walls of the temple. If a priest was known to divulge any of these secrets, he would not live to see another sunrise. In this way, every phenomenon in nature that took place was turned by the priests to their own account.

From this point we went on, pursuing our route along the shores of the Caspian Sea, touching at various villages, where we were more successful in our labours amongst the simple fishermen than in many other places we had visited. We had now made a very long journey since our starting from Egypt, having travelled very nearly round the small end of what you call Asia, and now we

were on a line with the Euxine or Black Sea. The Caspian being of great length, it was some months before we reached the point from which to cross over a mountain range, separating us from the Black Sea.

As we journeyed we wrought hard, and were very successful in our mission. To this day our mark is left in that quarter. We were the first missionaries to carry the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth to the people of that strange land. I have found out since, that after us some of the Apostles came and founded a church. (I will afterwards give you the names of the places where we planted churches.) Not far on in our travels on the shores of the Caspian, we stayed till we saw the foundations of a building laid, intended as a place of worship for those who had been the fruits of our labour : a temple, if you like to call it. These individuals had still the idea that it was necessary to have a roof to cover them while engaged in worshipping the Great Spirit. This idea was very prevalent, and in many cases we could not get the idea removed, and that the Great Creator could be worshipped at all times and in every place—under the great canopy of the heavens as well as in the gorgeous temple erected by the hands of man.

With all the aid of art and science brought to bear on the erection of such temples, beautiful as they are for the eye to look upon, they are not to be compared with God's great temple, the roof of which is the star-spangled sky of a quiet evening, and the floor nature's grassy carpet. What more grand—what more solemn ! Such a scene brings man, the worshipper, nearer and nearer to the great Spirit-land. When night comes on, it is then the soul of man is most tranquil, and most spiritual, for sleep is close to him, and the spirit is more ready for its temporary flight. In darkness, when man bends humbly in the dust before the Mighty Spirit, the Father of us all, with nothing but the starry heavens above him, it is then that the heavenly guardian can touch him, whispering in his inner ear soothing words to his soul, and he rises from his knees a better man than when he went down on them ; he will then find himself at peace with every man—at peace with the whole material world—at peace with heaven. It is otherwise with him who seeks to worship in the grand and beautifully adorned temple erected by man's device, with all the paraphernalia of gaudy worship—its priests, with their flowing robes and golden

coronets, who, swaying their frankincense to and fro, hold up their heads before the great flaming light, and make their vain show—that is all. There is nothing in it to awaken true worship in man. If there is frivolity in his heart, his eyes wander, he looks on his neighbours, and wonders how he has got this, that, and other things, and forgets what he is there for—forgets the higher object—Him whom he came to worship. And yet you will find honest worship even in such a place. But give me the whole world for my temple, with nothing to hold back my humble breathings—to hinder their rising upward to Him who is the hearer of prayer—our Father.

I will go no further to-night.

Twenty-sixth Sitting.

November 6th, 1878.

Origin of the Caspian Sea—The Lost Tribes—Success of the Mission—Invitation to Minister—Recompense Refused—"My Old Cloak"—Invited to a Banquet—Precedence—Taking Advantage of the Feast to Proclaim the Truth—A Model Town.

LAST evening I was with you, I had carried you as far as the Caspian Sea. As you are aware, I was a student of Nature, and desired to study the nature of that sea. I found that the water was denser than any which I had seen before, except that of the Dead Sea. But the Caspian was much larger, stretching to a great length in my day, and covering a tract of country that had, at some far-back age, been inhabited; for, as I have told you, there might be seen, on a calm day, remains of cities beneath its waters. I cannot tell, yet I can imagine, by looking back over the stream of time—many thousand years ago—when those waters were first collected on that spot. From this our forefathers had the story of a great flood of waters which covered the face of the earth. Although there were some mountainous parts, the greater part of the country could soon be flooded by a very little submerging taking place; and I can believe that this inland sea had been formed by a portion of the waters left by that flood, for this reason, among others—there were fishes in the Caspian, such as could not get there, unless carried on by some inlet from the ocean—fish which were found

in the Arabian and Indian Oceans. But, in the absence of an inlet, how did they get into the Caspian Sea? They must either have been conveyed over land, or brought by a flood—an upheaval of the ocean. The latter must be the true solution of the difficulty; for, were fish carried from the ocean and placed in these waters, they would not live. Though the waters were salt, there was a great deal of oil in them. The ground, for miles around the sea, is of that nature that produces this condition of the waters. After a severe storm, the oil can be gathered in large quantities from the surface. How, then, account for the presence of these fish in the Caspian Sea? Well, at the subsidence of the flood, when the water remaining would be equal to the water of the ocean for some time, the fish would gradually take to it as it became denser. That is my argument. We found the sturgeon, a large fish that frequents the Indian and Arabian Seas, in the waters of the Caspian—hundreds of miles inland, and having no outlets—nothing but rivers. I believe, however, that the waters are mainly kept down by evaporation. I have seen the Caspian from the mountain-side, on a calm, peaceful day, with not a ruffle on its surface; and again I have looked on it, when, in storm and rage, it dashed its mighty waves against the rocky shores. This was well ordered, for, but for those angry tempests by the heat of the burning sun, the sea would have got into such a state of corruption that it would have produced pestilence over all the surrounding country.

We were still in Persian territory, though wearing fast out of it, and amongst a mixed race of Persians, Arabians, Jews, and other nations. Their theology was also a mixture—Zoroastrian, Arabian, and Jewish. When we spoke of Jesus of Nazareth, some of these Jews took to our ministrations readily; being far away from their own country, they had not heard of what had been going on for a long time. While there, I heard of some of those who belonged to the Ten Lost Tribes. I believe a great many of them were spread over that part of the world at the time. We found that, when we spoke of matters connected with the Hebrew nation, they were quite familiar with the subject—as much so as ourselves. They seemed to know all about Egypt also. I had many a hard discussion with them about the Egyptians, whom they called hard task-masters.

We travelled about three or four hundred miles, according to your measurement, along the shores of that sea. The journey took us a good many months ; for we had to tarry at a number of small villages as we went along. At these we traded and taught, while I at the same time began to teach the young men of our company something regarding nature. This was something new to them, as well as to myself. I had travelled and seen so many things that it did not strike me so much as it did them. Thus we employed our evenings—for it was difficult for us to travel at night on account of the wild animals which infested the country. We were always on the outlook for them, especially at night.

We did the greatest amount of work in this quarter, greater than we had done all the rest of our journey ; and we were very successful also, far beyond what we had anticipated when we started, and we felt thankful for any small thing that might be laid to our account. But of all the success we had, that which attended our labours while journeying from the Caspian to the Black Sea was the greatest. I believe the results of our work remain till this day in that quarter.

We found the people ready and willing to accept what we imparted to them, ready to throw over their old theological notions, and set about at once to form churches.

They were a most industrious people. Those near the shores were either traders or fishers ; inland, they were tillers of the ground and artificers. These last were clever, not only in the making of instruments of war, but in the production of agricultural implements, waggons, chariots, etc.

We spent a good deal of time among them, and they seemed to look on us as those they had known for years. They had been looking forward to our visit, for a good report had gone before us.

There was one place just at the foot of the mountains, a pretty large town, doing an inland business between the two seas, which we made a rallying point, and at which we put up for some months. Some of the more influential men had sent forward messengers to us not to pass them by, but to come and rest ourselves and our animals with them. They had never seen us, and we might have been the reverse of all that had been reported to them ; but they had confidence in their brethren's report of us.

So we complied with their earnest request. We found them willing to hear us, and also to trade with us. They offered to give us free lodgings. On certain occasions in our experience such an offer would have been very acceptable. In our present position we required no such aid, but were willing and able to pay for anything we received. We thanked them for their hospitality in opening the gates of their town to us, treating us as honest men, and that to receive what we had to tell them would repay us fully for our trouble.

I have known many cases of poor men putting themselves much about to help me, and I felt sorry often to take a share of what was offered from one who was really pinching himself to give us help. The goods we had received wherewith to trade, and thereby afford us sustenance in our mission, generally supplied all our wants ; and now these had multiplied, giving us plenty, and something to give away to those who were in want.

I was often urged to give up my old cloak for a finer one, but I invariably refused. I felt comfortable beneath it. Indeed, I felt a sort of pride in wearing it. On being pressed to throw it aside by my brethren, I would say—"No ; I cannot part with my good old cloak while it holds together. We have trudged many a mile, passed through many strange places, and seen many a sight together. It is the only covering this poor old house shall have when put under the soil. Besides, I do believe there is virtue in it. It holds well together, notwithstanding its age. Time, doubtless, will reduce it to rags, but it seems bound together in some way that appears to resist time. I have got thus far on life's journey with my old friend, and we shall not now part company." But, you must remember, I was carefully clad under the old cloak.

At this time we were invited to a banquet at the house of the chief magistrate of the town. My grandfather was rather gorgeously dressed, being an Arab prince, and seeming to have still a pride in so doing. The old man was anxious that I should take off my old cloak on this occasion, and put on a very fine one which he offered to me. I took it up, and said that it looked well, and might adorn a better figure than mine. My own cloak suited me better. We were long acquainted, and knew each other, therefore I would be content with what I had. He who

cared not that I should sit at his right hand with my old cloak, could put me at his left—I would not take it amiss. In that quarter of the country, if you were invited to dine at a rich man's house, and he were to put you to the left hand, it was considered an unfriendly sign—throwing a slur on you. Better for you not to be there. But that would not put *me* about. I was willing to sit anywhere, as someone must sit at the left.

It so happened that I was put at the left, and my old grandfather on the right. The head-man turned to me and said—“Friend and brother, you must not take it amiss that I have put you on my left hand. It is always my custom to give preference on such occasions to the aged, rather than youth. I have therefore placed your grandfather on my right.”

“I am not offended,” I said, “at this which you have done. If not at your right hand, I am at the right hand of my next neighbour. I will just think, for the time, that I am the guest of my friend to the left of me. Some one must take this seat, and I assure you that I am proud of the honour, and give up cheerfully the seat to my venerable grandfather.”

On similar occasions, when on my travels, I had seen some gaudy shows introduced to please the guests while they ate and drank, but at this banquet there was nothing of that. The fare was plain and substantial, fitted to support man physically—all was fresh and good—nothing merely to please the eye, nor even music to please the ear. We ate and drank sparingly. We passed some hours, talking freely across the table to one another of our travels and mission work. I am convinced that we did more for the truth at that feast than in many a hard-fought battle for the right of speech. Each man of our band took his neighbour and talked to him, and, by asking and answering questions, the truth on many points of doctrine was brought more fully out. The truth appeared to be received, and they knew not that they had received it, so gentle and easy was the way in which it was put before them.

A number of priests belonging to the town were guests at this banquet, and expressed themselves pleased that we had come amongst them. They said that they had been waiting for some one to come and open up the great truths preached by Jesus of Nazareth, of which some of them had heard by mere rumour,

while others, who had heard more definitely, had said nothing ; so that, now that we had come and declared these truths, their hearts were glad. I myself was an eye-witness to the readiness with which they accepted them, as the grandest they had ever listened to.

When we spoke of the Spirit-world and its glories, they were more than astonished. Some seemed to think that their experiences had not been all a dream. They began to talk of visions they had had ; that these, when described to others, had been called imaginary—the result of a disordered brain, and they went no farther.

Before this time I refer to, shortly after we entered the town, our young men of the band (having become adepts at preaching—for our caravan had become a great school, as I said before) went forth into different places to proclaim the good news about Jesus. There was no opposition, and many of the people readily accepted the doctrines proclaimed, and even their priests listened attentively to the words of truth. Indeed, as I afterwards learned at this banquet, they saw that here was something fresh and reasonable—that however good their old way of thinking was, the new way was much better. They had become more and more interested, when they saw how we conducted ourselves—not seeking selfishly to get support from the people, but supplying our bodily wants by our trading transactions.

Altogether, the people of this town were model men and women. I never met in with a more religious community. They acted as near as possible to the practice of the followers of Jesus, and that without knowing him, except by rumour.

Twenty-seventh Sitting.

November 13th, 1878.

The Use of the Crystal—City Life Enjoyed—Flesh Diet versus Fish Diet—Not always Depending on Spirit Guidance—A Bit of an Old Address—Crystal Cutting—Homeward—Hermes an Evangelist, not a Priest—Farewell—Among the Hills—Reflections—The Apostles not met with—Camel-riding.

(*Controlled by HERMES*).—At our last sitting I gave you some account of our mission at a city between the Caspian and the

Black Sea. I resume my story. The people were, as I have said, of a highly religious character. I found out, also, that they gave a good deal of attention to matters pertaining to divination—having their seers and their crystals. This was something I was well acquainted with, being brought up in the theology of Egypt. Crystal-seeing was part of the training we received in youth, so that, as priests, we might be able to look into the crystal, and see what was to take place. From this, too, we had oracular information by means of the priestesses. The crystal was also used in other nations; but neither in Egypt nor any other country I had visited, was it so much used as in the city I am speaking of. I was rather pleased to find that they were so far advanced in their knowledge and use of it, for it showed a certain degree of attainment in spiritual knowledge. There were some far in advance of others who tried to read from the pure drop of dew what was about to take place in regard both to individuals and the welfare of their own city. By this means, I ascertained, they knew of our coming months before we arrived, and understood our mission, and were prepared to receive us. In all our travels we had never got such a reception—all trying to heap kindnesses on us. But we made it a practice, for the better carrying on of our mission, to receive gifts from no one; for we found the poorest, who had received from us what they valued more than gold, ready to hurt themselves to make some return to us. On the contrary, we generally, by means of trading, were in a position both to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Rich and poor alike, however, were ready to receive our teachings—the great truths we carried with us—that merchandise, the free gift of which never grew less, that would never be lost in earth or in heaven—that which rust could not corrupt, nor thieves steal away. They seemed to receive it with greediness, like men who had been fasting for many days.

We stayed there for about two months, having obtained a long rest, and enjoyed ourselves in every way. Though we were strictly religious, we entered freely into the enjoyments of social life, but always avoiding those of a depraving nature. Indeed, we could not have done otherwise with the young men of our band, who could not keep down their youthful spirits. We could not have kept them in our company otherwise. As it was, we lost

some of them here ; they saw that the daughters of men were fair, and took wives ; they became settlers in the city. Thus we, in our travels, dropped seeds that were found, in the future, to have sprung up to mighty trees. In your day, branches are spreading forth in the same quarter of the world.

This district was rather mountainous ; and in the higher lands the people were shepherds. They came down once a-week for supplies of the necessaries of life ; and in our ministrations they received the same attention from us as we gave to the dwellers in the city. In return, they would have us to accept of the young of their flocks. We had not, in the course of our travels, eaten much animal food, having chiefly used vegetable diet. We did enjoy this supply, to such an extent, however, that some of us had to suffer for it. We all agreed, after this, to have no more animal food. But we had no lack of fish brought from the Black and Caspian Seas, and so we lived a good deal on fish, as being the best food for those in our position. The fish diet not only kept the spiritual vision clear, but it supplied that to the man which is required in all animals—that which stimulates and keeps the brain in thorough working order.

Though under the guardianship of those of the higher and better land, night and day, we did not in every case depend on them. We were left to our own judgment. If we had trusted to them we might have been helped, but that would have constituted us mere machines. Every man likes to take some credit to himself for work done, and not depend entirely on others. And yet, in very many cases, we must be obliged to others. When man on earth stands up and says—"I am obliged to no man—I am independent," he is foolish. We are dependent, not only on the higher, but also on those of the lower world. Every one hangs upon another. There is no getting away from this great law. It is the same with the lower animals. You find one animal living on another for support. Take all creation as well. Would the mighty Designer and Creator of your world have intended it otherwise? Everything in your world carries a little world within it. How great is the mystery of that Divine Spirit ! When thinking of it, I have often found my thoughts in a wandering condition. I have lifted the leaf from the flowers, and thereon I found a whole nation of living creatures—a world in

itself! So with the animal. Each carries a world with him—another order of existence—and yet all belong to this small globe of yours. How beautiful it is to see the thousands, and tens of thousands, of living entities, which move about over all creation, each doing its part in building up, or in pulling down! What order brought from chaos, and all by the ministering angels of the Great and Mighty Spirit—those living entities, which are his workmen! True, men may plant their feet on the ground, and, by doing so, crush out the life of 10,000 creatures, but that life is not lost. We have the same law existing with us in the Spirit-world as with you on the earth. But these creatures came from the same source as we ourselves. No life, no spirit, that ever existed on the face of any planet in the universe, is lost. All live again in a new life, shall live throughout eternity. Your earth is but a reflection of things in the Spirit-world—what *we* call the reality. You must pass away from earth, and live here eternally. (I find this is one, or a part of one, of the addresses I gave in that city.) I went on illustrating the subject, and thought I had done well; but I afterwards found that some of those citizens could teach me more in regard to the subject of my address.

As I have said, they were great adepts in divination by means of the crystal, which they cut into various shapes—the minister, or priest, using them in his breastplate.

The higher class of people in this city, as in some other of the cities we visited, were very richly attired. Even the poorest were not what you would call poorly clad. The majority appeared to belong to the ordinary class, in their way of living. Crystal, a great deal of which was found in the mountains around, was used in certain trades. One of these trades was confined to the cutting of crystals, solely for the use of the priests. It was the finest I had ever seen, and we took a quantity away with us as part of our merchandise. There was a priest there who had a glass made from this crystal, which made small objects look large. By means of this he made some wonderful discoveries. Much as I reckoned on my own knowledge, I thought that these were truly wonderful discoveries. It was used also for bringing distant objects within view of the human eye. They were certainly a highly advanced people. Where they came from originally I could not tell at that time, though I know a little of it now. I will give you afterwards

some account of the quarter they came from, and how they founded their city.

After staying for two months, we essayed to go on our journey; and, as some of the citizens were going to the coast of the Black Sea, we set out along with them—seeking our way to Egypt. It was my *homeward* journey;—yes, my *homeward* journey. We had travelled a long, long distance; but it is a long journey that has no end; and this was one that had an end to one of our band—I was that one.

When leaving that city, I felt a desire to remain and spend the rest of my days there, had it not been that I knew I was not to die in a city. Had I remained, he, the governor, would have constituted me one of his priests. But supposing I had stayed, I would not have taken the name of priest, but that of evangelist. I could accept of no such title from men; I had one from a Higher Power: my Prince, Jesus of Nazareth, had sent me forth to do his work. He was my Master. It was to him I looked up. And I knew my reward after I left the earth.

I bade them farewell for the last time. I might see them again, but it would be from a different point of view—from the top of the mountains I would see how they flourished. The young men, who stood behind, came forth with their new-made brides, and after singing an anthem, bade us farewell.

It was about autumn when we left, and we were anxious to get to the sea-shore before winter set in. The roads were rough, and we could not do as good a day's travelling as we would have done in a level country. It was a mountainous district—up hill and through narrow passes. It was something grand and delightful to travel in that quarter when the sun was rising or setting—how he lightened up all with his golden rays, or, when going down, changed the colour to purple, and all the colours displayed in that great bow that spans the heavens. How pleasant to pass through amongst those silent hills,—silent but for the cry of cattle and the bleating of sheep, or that of the goat as he bounded from peak to peak—the whistle of the shepherd as he watched his flock, or the sound of the waterfall as it leapt from crag to crag.

In the evening, when the sun had gone out of sight, we fell on our knees and lifted up our hearts in silent prayer and adoration

to the Great and Almighty Spirit, in whose image we are created. It brought back to my mind the days I had spent with Jesus my Prince in his wanderings in the land of Judea, and to that earlier time when, as children, we wandered about on the banks of the Nile. As the sun goes down on the western horizon, and then disappears, so would we take our departure for the better land—where we are now ; where the sun does not set—where there is no shadow, but always light, where man is not brought to grief or sorrow, but lifted up in joy and praise to the Great Creator. There he goes forth with a cheerful heart and bounding step ; when he sets his face to the work before him, he is sure to win—sure to be the victor. It is unlike the life on Earth. There the chances are against the weaker. Here, being strong in virtue, mighty in valour, the strongest in evil melts before him like snow ;—the evil one must go off to the place fitted for him, to wander in the mazes of the dark caverns. But the time will come when the frost which has bound up his heart must melt, and he will rise upward and onward to take his place once more among men—no longer a wanderer in a desolate place, where his soul had become a desert. It hath shut itself out from the sweet influences of nature and the Divine Spirit. It is barren, like the Great Desert of Sahara—nothing but sandy wastes as far as eye can reach. But, when that spirit comes to look upward—to rise towards the light, how eagerly he springs up into the beautiful fields, where birds of glorious plumage sing their songs of praise, and the waters of the rivers flow merrily along in a harmony of sweet sounds. Thus will it be with all mankind. Every one will be raised from that low estate : Hades, or Hell, will be swept away from the universe of the Great Father ; and then shall the intelligences of all planets sing together in one loud sweet hosanna to the King of Kings—to the Creator of all. Then shall we enjoy the peace promised to us—not the peace of idleness. We shall still be busy as bees, gathering knowledge from every flower. Over all creation, each one will follow the bent of his mind in his acquisition of knowledge, and bring what he gathers into the Great Store-house. And this will go on and on, beyond all that man can conceive. Let him think of a time when, in the far future, he shall have attained all knowledge—it will be but beginning.

(*Question.*)—How is it that you did not fall in with any of the Apostles in your travels?

They had not reached that part of the country. They went on their mission more in the direction of Greece, Rome, and Capadocia.

How did you get on with your camels in the rocky places you have described?

The camels did well on the rocky roads. Being merchants, we could not do well without them; and then we were used to them. I have ridden the horse too. We had also long-eared horses, or large asses; but the camel and dromedary were our chief beasts of burden. When taken prisoners by the Arabs, I was set on a bare-back camel. There was not much between my seat and his back; and in this way I suffered as great punishment as they could inflict on me.

Twenty-Eighth Sitting.

November 20th, 1878.

For the Black Sea—A Tyrannical Chief—Hermes Pleads for Peace—Spirit Aid promised to the Oppressed—The Old Arab Warrior—Hermes and his Grandfather—At the Front—The Enemy Appears—Hermes a Non-Combatant—The Battle Described—After the Battle—The Old Arab Wounded—Poisoned Spears—Hermes and the Captive Tyrant—A Spirit Appears — “No-Eena” — The Spirit Recognised — Judgment on the Captive—Unknown Tongues.

As I told you at our last night's sitting, we set forth on our journey towards the Black Sea, passing through a range of mountains. In that quarter the people were further advanced, and held higher religious ideas than any we had come amongst. As we drew near to the coast, we found ourselves placed in somewhat strange circumstances. The chief, or ruler, of the people whose territory we were passing through, was preparing to do battle with another chief. It was the old, sad story of Might against Right. On making inquiry into the cause of strife, we found that one chief was powerful, and had made

great conquests over his neighbour chiefs, subjecting them as tributaries ; but in endeavouring to act in the same way with him into whose territory we had come, his claims were repudiated by the chief, who was upright in his dealings with his fellow-men, but one who would not submit to injustice or tyranny. He was not unlike the ruler we had left shortly before. He dealt honestly with all, and his subjects were well cared for. The other chief was quite the reverse—a tyrant. When he conquered a neighbouring chief, he made it a point always, if the unfortunate chief had daughters, to secure some of them for himself. This was a source of discontent among the conquered, and a rebellion might have taken place at any time. The chief into whose country we had entered was determined to resist, and so we found him preparing for war.

I tried to reason with him—advising him to endure rather than risk the lives of many of his people, and be subdued finally by the tyrant. No, he said, he would bear it no longer ; he would not allow his people to be carried into bondage by this overbearing chief. He had been placed over his people by the Great Father, to care for them, and he would die for them rather than submit.

I thought it a great pity that such a noble and upright man, and the people over whom he ruled, should thus suffer injustice at the hands of a selfish tyrant, and wondered if such would not be prevented by the aid of the Spirit-world, for, indeed, the people had shown great kindness to us since we had come amongst them. When we did make inquiry of our spirit friends, we were told to have no fear, as he was well protected ; and that even though the tyrant chief were to bring all the powers he had to bear upon this good ruler, the invasion would be repelled.

I was vexed, however, notwithstanding this communication of our Spirit-Guides, to observe the old war spirit come back to my grandfather. He seemed like an old war-horse who sniffs the air at the sound of the trumpet. He had cast away his armour, never to put it on again, and his shield for the wallet that hung by his side. In the morning, after consulting our spirit friends, he had gone and sought an audience of the chief, to whom he had imparted what advice he could, for he knew well all the tactics of war—even to those of ambush and snares, by which to cause dis-

order in the ranks of the enemy. If men will fight, it is better to do so openly, not in secret.

When he came back from his interview with the chief, my grandfather was clad completely in armour, but all covered by a cloak, which was white as snow, while its hood was thrown over the helmet, or iron cap ; he rode on a war steed as white as his cloak. I said, "Grandfather, is this the course you are once more to follow : to hurl your fellowmen into the Spirit-world before their time—before the sand runs through the glass—all unprepared—unfit to mingle with the blest, and in such a condition that they must take their place in the dark regions of Hades?"

"Be not afraid, my son," he said ; "I will not go into this battle. I may wear a sword by my side, but it will remain in its sheath. I will not draw it. But I may be able to give directions to the men. Perhaps my word will be as good as my sword."

"Yes," I said, "I do not doubt that it is so ; and in this case much more effective. Your voice becomes a powerful sword, and a thousand men are slain—deprived of the gift of life."

"Well, well, my son, I will not argue this with you ; but I will not see a poor brother trampled under foot of a tyrant ; and if words such as yours fail to send this tyrant and his host back, we will give them something that will do so, never more to come again."

I saw that I could do nothing to avert the coming conflict. The old man, like all others who had been accustomed to war, was governed by the old spirit that had led him aforetime, as a chief of wild Arabs, to take delight in battle. He not only went himself, but took away with him about twenty of our picked young men. They seemed to be possessed by the same spirit as himself. Whether they were influenced by our unseen guides, or under the power of their old warlike habit, I could not tell. I was myself ignorant of the use of the sword, or of any weapon of war. My tongue was my sword. At times it fell short of winning the victory ; but, at any rate, I could always retire from my conflicts with this impression—I had no stain on my soul.

About three days afterwards, we arrived at the encampment of the Chief. He would not permit us to go forward. I and a few others would not have hesitated to have gone through the tyrant's army, so sure were we that we would be protected ; but the Chief

was so earnest in his persuasions to keep us from venturing, that we thought it better to yield to him, the more especially, as if the opposing forces did come to cross arms, there would be wounded and dying men before the day closed requiring our help and consolation. We would be there to act the part of priests, and give what consolation we could whether to friends or enemies. But I had no enemies—I felt that all men were friends alike to me, whatever race or colour, all were my brethren; I could grasp the one hand in friendship, though the other might be uplifted to smite me on the cheek.

My poor old grandfather, with the young men, went forth. We had no arms with us, excepting those which we had been in the habit of using when we sought for provisions by hunting. My grandfather and his young followers were, therefore, supplied with arms and armour by the Chief. He made the Chief promise, however, that he would not use the young men as warriors, but allow him to employ them in carrying his messages, for he had obtained the command of a division of the army.

At length the hostile forces of the tyrant made their appearance. I suppose he had the idea that the very sight of his great army would crush the spirit of those who confronted him, that they would fall on their bended knees and ask for mercy. They did indeed bend their knees and ask for mercy, but it was not from man, but from the Great Spirit, the Father of all men. I was, I must confess, somewhat proud when I saw this display of submission to Him by whose Almighty hand both they and their enemies were upheld. And yet, is it not strange that men should thus act? Imagining that their Creator would hold them guiltless in the breaking of His law!

I retired from the field, and sought the shelter of our own camp, feeling that I was in danger. In this I displayed great lack of faith in those who had never failed us in our greatest need. How inconsistently we do act at times when we see danger approaching!

The hostile chief imagined, as I have said, that the sight of his great army would take the spirit out of his opponents. But it was the reverse. The host rose from their knees, and made ready for the attack, while the various couriers were observed moving about from place to place, bearing messages from the

leaders and chiefs. I watched closely my grandfather and his young men. He wore a coat, to distinguish him from the rest. The horsemen of the enemy rode furiously up the hill, on which our friends had planted themselves, and made a dash at them, but they were driven quickly back, while a body of horsemen cut them off completely from the body of the main army. I looked eagerly at the conflict in the distance. What havoc! Then came the clash of arms. The voice and din of battle, mingled with the shrieks and groanings of the wounded and dying, crushed and mangled under the hoofs of the horses, presented a picture I can hardly describe.

I had listened as Hafed described such a scene, but never realised the truth in all its horrors till now that my own eyes and ears bore witness to it. I had seen skirmishes when attacked by pirates, but they were as nothing to that which I now gazed on. It was sad to see men, who had never seen each other before, who entertained no enmity one towards another, rushing, like wild beasts on their prey, and plunging their swords into the breasts of their fellow-men—sending them into the Spirit-world before their time—perhaps to wander through the dark cavernous depths of Hades for—ah, how long! Had these men lived in peace, and spent their lives for the real good of themselves and their neighbours, great would have been their advantage on becoming denizens of the world of spirits.

The battle was not yet over after that first onset. The confusion was great for a while, but at length I observed our friends come out on the other side, but with thinner ranks; and then they made such a wheel, as only those mountain horsemen can do, and back again they rushed on the already half-beaten foe. The horses seemed to be as infatuated as the men who rode them. Again I saw them emerge on the other side, after their work of death. And now the host of footmen on both sides took part in the conflict, and the battle became general. I strained my eyes looking on the dreadful picture. Ah, well for those (I thought) who now lie dead, and dying, that they had asked Heaven's mercy a short time before, when they come to stand before the seat of judgment.

The battle continued to rage for a short time, when it became evident that our friends had the advantage. Although I was

opposed to strife, I confess I felt a sort of gladness of heart that the tyrant's power was being destroyed. I had been keeping my eye on the steed my grandfather bestrode. The animal seemed, by his prancing, itching for battle—ill to be held in. But, at length, the promise was broken, the war spirit apparently took possession of the old warrior; for, rallying his young men about him, with the cry, "For God and Victory!" they rode furiously, like madmen, into the thickest of the fight. For a few minutes they seemed to me like a flock of sheep among wolves, but soon the enemy were seen flying in all directions. I could see my grandfather's plume floating in the breeze, though somewhat tarnished, as he came nearer to the place where I stood gazing. Our friends would have followed hard on their flying enemies, but the chief sounded the recall. The battle was won.

On meeting with the chief in his tent in the evening, I asked him how his warriors behaved. "Far better than those of our foe," he said. "Some of those who fought against me to-day are really my friends, but they were forced to it. I have always had a suspicion and fear that this overbearing chief would some day trouble me, and I took good care to have my men thoroughly trained for the coming strife. Now his troops are scattered, and he himself a prisoner." He then ordered the prisoner to be brought before him. This was done. He was not chained, but walked in, followed by my grandfather, tottering with excitement, sword in hand, the same as if he had been the regular captain of a host. Coming up to the chief, he said—"I deliver up to you your enemy as your prisoner."

I observed that when the old man spoke, he seemed to do it under great excitement, and could not hold his tongue even before the captive chief. Had I stood in his place I would not have boasted of victory, and the downfall of enemies. So I thought. I observed that he constantly kept one hand pressed to his side, and I asked if there was anything wrong with him.

"Oh, nothing, my son," said he, "but you know the old cannot stand the excitement of battle as youth or manhood can."

"But," I said, "you have broken your promise."

"I have done so, and I have paid the penalty. I am, my son, a little nearer the Spirit-world; and there will I meet with your father and mother."

After the captive chief had been led away to a place of security, my grandfather removed his hand from his side, when I found that it had covered a wound from a spear-thrust. It appeared like a mere scratch, but it was ultimately his death wound ; for the spear had been poisoned at the point.

This we found out through one of the captive leaders, who freely accused the chief of ordering his spearmen to dip the points of their spears in poison before the battle. This was against the laws of even barbarian tribes or nations. On hearing this statement, the chief would have condemned his captive to death at once ; but my grandfather and I pleaded for his life. I said that I would perhaps be able to make him a better man, were his life spared. The chief consented to our entreaty, and we left the tent.

That same night I obtained admission to the tent in which the prisoner was confined.

He said, "You are not one of this nation, nor is the old chief who took me prisoner."

"No," I replied, "we are on a journey."

"But for that old man I would have swept my foes from the face of the earth."

"Nay," I said, "you would not. There were more than men against you."

He snapt his fingers—"More than men! What?"

"There are more worlds than this, and the dwellers in these worlds have more power over our destiny than you seem to be aware of."

He told me to hold my tongue, and appeared indisposed to listen to me. But I began to reason with him in such a way as to touch his feelings—telling him of the intervention of those who had been long dead on behalf of friends left on earth. He said he wished he could believe that. At that moment I observed that what seemed to be a female form had entered the tent. I there-upon bowed my head. He gazed at me, apparently thinking I was mad, or something wrong with me.

He was evidently a man of acute intellect, and had his natural talents been turned in a better direction—had he laboured for the welfare of others, instead of self, he might have been a bright star in the world. But his star had set.

"Whom did you bow to?" I said I had bowed to a lady.

He looked first at me, and then beyond me towards the entrance, and said he saw no one but the guard.

"She stands beside you now," I said.

"Nonsense, nonsense!" and pointed to the entrance of the tent, as much as to say, "Go!" I persevered, however, and said that she wished to speak to him. "She calls you her son."

"Son! son! My mother is dead and gone years ago. How can she be my mother? It is some strange fancy of yours—Go!" he scornfully exclaimed.

"Do they call you *No-Eena*?"

On saying this, he looked first at me, and then in the direction I was looking.

"Who told you that? What do you know about my name?" (His name was not known. He went under another at this time—the name of "Styge.")

"The lady," I said, who stands beside us gave me the name. It appears you neither see her nor hear her voice. I am merely her mouth-piece as regards these things."

He then seemed to unbend—"What like is she?" he inquired.

"The lady," I replied, "is above the medium height, sharp of figure, has long black hair hanging in ringlets from the back of her head, and bound with a golden band; her robes are white, a golden girdle encircles her waist, and she is adorned with costly bracelets, sparkling with diamonds; she also wears sandals. By her appearance I should say she is a priestess. On saying this, she buries her face in her hands, and hides it from me—'Styge'—now she tells me she bore you in shame."

He bent his head, and appeared to ponder. "Is that true?" I asked.

"Every word you have said is true. My mother was a priestess. My father was head-priest of the temple in which she served. When pregnancy was discovered, according to the law, she would have been put to death, but my father got her taken away secretly, so that the rulers could not lay their hands on her. He never divulged the fact that he was the father of the child; but he paid her periodical visits in a mountainous district where she lived. When a lad, I was trained to the use of arms by a woodman, who was well qualified to instruct me. For some service rendered to one of the hill chiefs, I acquired his favour, and, in due time,

I was taken into the regular service of the chief. From that time, I fought my way up till I became a king—I beg pardon, I am a king no longer. If this woman is my mother, why has she come back? Is it to taunt me in my sore trouble? Can she not help me in my distress? I have raised a monument on her grave that will last for ages.”

To this I replied : “When your body goes to the earth, it will never come back again. You laid her body there, but she herself—her spirit—went to the world of spirits—that world I spoke to you of. That world has gone against you, because you brought a strong army against an unoffending chief, who desired peace, and nothing more than his own allotted share. But you, with your greedy, grasping disposition, would not let him alone, but strove to do unto him what you had done to other chiefs. That is the cause of your defeat and capture.”

“No more have I done,” he said, “than others have done before me. Though it may be that I have not the same claims as others have to be called chiefs, yet my father was a chief before he was a priest; and, though a priest, he acted honourably towards my mother, at least as far as he dared do.”

“Dared do! Why dared do? Had he been an honourable man he would have made her his wife. Why should he have remained in a temple, and neglected his duty towards your mother? Why did he not come out and labour, and make her comfortable, and bring you up an honest man, and not leave you to become a robber?”

“He was getting old,” he said, “and the temple was a better place for him to live in.”

“Yes,” I said, “to live off poor toilers was easier if not better. I know, for I have been a priest in the service of a temple, but now I prefer to be as I am, a poor outcast and wanderer. He whom I now serve is the Prince of Heaven and Earth.” I then took my leave of him for the night.

On the day following the captive chief was brought forward to receive judgment. The chief was astonished when my grandfather and I appealed for mercy to the prisoner, while each and all of our young men offered to give themselves up for this man. After a good deal of discussion among the minor chieftains and captains, his chains were struck off.

He stood for some moments staring at me, seemingly bewildered, not knowing where he was; and then recovering, he said, addressing me—"Now that I am free from bonds, I give you my hand. You are greater than he who sits there, for you have conquered one who has a spirit that could have conquered thousands." Then he cordially shook my grandfather's hand, acknowledging him as the one who had gained the battle. Then, going up to the chief, he said—"Will you accept my hand as that of a friend henceforth?" On saying this, according to custom, they fell on each other's necks, and each kissed the cheek of the other. All the other prisoners were thereupon freed. Messengers were sent to the other chiefs inviting them to a banquet. But before the banquet they went out to the battle-field and buried the dead.

This must suffice for this evening.

(*Question.*)—The language used by these tribes must have been strange to you. Will you explain how you came to speak with such as the captive?

When called to speak on these occasions in a strange tongue, I rose to speak, and knew what I wanted to say, but the words I uttered were to my mind most ridiculous; still, they were understood by those to whom they were addressed.

Twenty-Ninth Sitting.

November 27th, 1878.

The Tyrant Twice Conquered—His Confession—The Old Arab's Breach of Promise—Spirit Visitants—The Old Man Exonerated—Oh, for Peace!—Visit to the City—Total Abstinence—Jesus Inquired After.

LAST night we met I tried to give, as near as I could remember, the circumstances in connection with the battle that took place while we sojourned with the tribe or nation that was attacked.

Though sorry that my grandfather had broken his word in taking part in the conflict, I could not help admiring his courage. If he had not done as he did our friends would have lost the battle. He seemed like one possessed of more than human courage. He was here, there, and everywhere during the battle;

while our young men who followed him were seen like so many flying spirits conveying hither and thither his orders. That chief who had so ruthlessly set out with a mighty host of warriors to make war on an unoffending neighbour, had been conquered on the battlefield ; and, greater still, he was conquered, spiritually, as a prisoner in the tent.

Towards the latter end of the banquet, to which all the chiefs of both armies had been invited, the chief who had been defeated stood up and addressed those who, only a few hours before, had been deadly enemies. He said he believed now that there was something higher than man ; that his ambitious designs had been overruled for good—for liberty ; but that the liberty and good effected had been dearly bought. Now that his spiritual chains had been struck off, he felt himself free from earthly cares, and desired to live at peace with his neighbours and with all men. He wished those chiefs who had been subjected to him to rule their people uprightly, as henceforth *he* meant to do so in the case of his own people. He deeply regretted gathering together such a mighty army from all the tribes ; and he knew that there was many a widow and orphan crying bitterly against him for taking from them their bread-winners, who now lay cold on the battlefield. That cry had gone up to the Throne of Heaven. God had been merciful to him ; his blinded eyes had been opened to see the foolishness and wickedness he had been guilty of ; and now, as he could not bring back their dead, he would do all that was possible for him to do to make up for the loss of their husbands and fathers.

That same evening he was allowed to retire with all his army ; nothing was taken from them. As he left he shook hands with that old man, who, since the fierce demon of war had gone out of him, appeared like some venerable priest who had but come from the steps of the altar. He stood in the door of the tent, and, lifting up his eyes to Heaven, besought the Great Spirit to pour down His blessing on this man, so that he might be strengthened to do all the good he purposed to do on behalf of those he had injured ; that he might become like a little child, and that he might for ever remain so. We all bade him farewell, as we knew that we would never see him in the body again.

That night, after retiring to our tents, I began to speak to my

grandfather concerning that which had cost me no small trouble—the breach of his promise. He said—“Reflect no more on what I have done. I did it for the best. I saw clearly that our friends, from their unacquaintance with war, were sure to be defeated by the foe that came against them. I knew that, though an old man, I was still able to show them how to drive back the enemy. I believe it was all meant to be so, my son—that this was the way I was to go from this world—and now I am beginning to walk towards the Gate of death, and will shortly enter that world that you have so often spoken of. There will I meet with your father, and your mother, and your grandmother. O, such a meeting! And when you, too, my son, quit the body, I will bring them together, that we may welcome you to the bosom of the family—a son who has been so long away from them. Such a welcome home will you get as warrior never got. Your wars have been greater and more glorious than those of the battle-field. You conquer by love, making the rebellious cry for mercy to the King of Kings. In me, you vanquished one who never bent the knee to man—no, not even to Him who is the upholder of all—He, who, by His breath, destroyed my fleet, and sent my followers into the land of spirits. And but for you, my son, meeting me in my maddened condition as I ran wildly to the mountains, I would have cursed God as freely as I would have cursed man—looking on Him as my enemy. But thanks be to the Great and Mighty One, our Father, who careth for, and who guideth His erring children—though I could do but little in the short time I could be on earth—He mercifully opened my eyes in my old age, and made me an instrument in His hands, to save a people who are walking in His ways.”

I said in reply that I did not see things always in the same light as he had seen them. I had been a man of peace all the days of my life. If I had been the means of bending the stubborn-hearted to their knees, it was done out of pure love to Him who had sent me out into the world to carry on the great work He came to accomplish. I knew that the time of my departure was drawing nigh. But better that he should leave the world before me. I would know that he had gone to meet with our blessed kindred in the home above. My very soul went out in deep and earnest desire to meet with that father and that dear mother whom I had

never seen in the body. And yet I felt that I could cheerfully give a thousand years of my life, were it possible, to the work of my Prince on the earth.

That night was spent in happiness, and yet there was sadness too. We continued conversing, the one with the other, of things pertaining to the other world, till the darkness that surrounded us gradually changed, and the place in which we sat became in some measure lighter. We then found that our tent was not occupied by us alone, but that we were surrounded by a great assembly—not of the earth, though once they had trod its surface. I perceived good old Issha, and others who were well known to me, and some who were better known to my grandfather. He said, "There is your father and your mother!" I would have ran and clasped them to my bosom, but they were visionary to me, though Issha I saw so plainly. At length Issha addressed himself to me. He said—"Blame not your grandfather for what he has done. There were those who urged him on to it, though it was hard against my will to allow such a thing. For I think he who makes an oath on earth should keep it. Breaking it, he commits sin. But there were some amongst us who thought justice ought to be done—that those who sought to live peaceably on the earth should not be left to suffer from violence. They saw the result of the battle—that both losers and gainers would be benefited by it if your grandfather were influenced to take part in it. Therefore blame him not."

I said that I had truly forgiven him, and that, as he had asked forgiveness of the Great Father of Spirits, I had no right to meddle between God and him, nor with those commissioned to guide him. The wound which he had received, we were told, would never close up, but the spirit would soon take its flight from the old house in which it had lived.

That night neither of us closed an eye. After the vision had passed away, we sat for some time in silence, and then sang an anthem in the old Arab style. How soothing is it even to one's own ears, when in harmony, to lift up the voice in praise and gratitude! The angel host signified their approval by joining with us in our song.

As the sun rose on the eastern hills, we awoke—not from sleep, but from the trance we had been in for some time. Notwith-

standing the fatigue of the previous days, we did not feel weary. Sleep had gone, and something else given to refresh the body. My grandfather found that his wound gave him no pain, though still open. We went out, and met with the chief of the tribe. After prayer and a repast, we observed signs of a speedy breaking up of the camp. I said to the chief that we would do well to go on our journey, as I felt there was no use in returning with them to the city. We found that they were able to instruct themselves, knowing as much as we did as regards acting honestly and uprightly towards each other—indeed, they might well have taught us lessons in certain things. The chief said—“Ah, how much do I owe to you and others! You have been the means of making my enemy to become my friend. Though strangers to you, you took up our cause, and fought for us. Your names will never be forgotten while our tribe exists as a nation. I wish, before we part, to bestow some gifts on the young men of your company that fought so well for me and mine.” After some further conversation, he persuaded us to return with him to the city.

As we journeyed along, the chief remarked to me—“If war would but cease from one end of the earth to the other, and men would live in peace, what a happy world would it be! I look on war (though I love it not) as a necessity—as something we cannot do without. But the day will yet come when that orb that now shines in the heavens will shine down on a world in which wars will have ceased for ever, and all nations shall live in peace, like one happy family: all in harmony—man with man, tribe with tribe, and nation with nation—no longer discord, no cruel war.”

I said I believed that that time would come when peace and harmony would prevail, as it had done in long ages past.

At last we reached the town. It was nothing to boast of—not so grand as the one we had last left, though everything was comfortable. We were met by many women and children, who came out to welcome their fathers and brothers. Some held down their heads and wept, as they were told by the comrades of their slain husbands, and fathers, and brothers. Yet they all bore up wonderfully under their sad loss, for they knew they had gained their liberty. And then it was a law that every child born after the death of the husband became the child of the tribe, who educated and brought it up—thus not only relieving the widow, but bringing

up the child in such a way that, when it arrived at manhood or womanhood, he or she would become a benefit to the people, rather than a burden or disgrace.

There was one thing which I will mention before leaving this tribe—they used no intoxicating beverages. We had some wines with us which we had received from others. On the day following our visit to the town, the chief bestowed some rich presents on the young men of our company who had assisted them in the fight. I thought it unfair to take all this and give nothing in return ; so we made presents of some fine linen to the women who had lost their husbands. I also offered the chief some of our wines as a present, but he at once said, “No ; we as a race use no other liquor than that which runs in the valley below. We use also the juice of fruits just as it is squeezed from the fruit, but it does not steal away the senses.” “That accounts,” I said, “for the fine appearance of your men. The die from which you are cut as a tribe has not been defaced. All sharp and fine in countenance—truly manly—God-like. I can see that you are in the true likeness and form of God. This wine, which was gifted to us, we ourselves used not. We cared not to reject that which was kindly presented to us, lest those who bestowed it should think we wanted to have no dealings with them ; and, also, that at some future time it might be useful. You must therefore forgive me for thus offering it to you.”

In reply to this he said : “There is no wrong to forgive, my friend. You did not know whether we used it or not. You have said we bear the likeness of God ; we always pride ourselves in living up to that which is right and just—to walk up to that which the Great Spirit requires of us. We have heard from Judea of one—a great and holy teacher—who had done many wonderful and mighty works in the land, but whom they had slain. Do you who have been travelling far, know anything concerning this Master?”

I said : “I was with him both in his youth and manhood.” On saying this he embraced me and kissed me on the cheek. From the conversation which ensued, I discovered that though old, I could learn a good deal from our friends. They knew a great deal more than I had given them credit for. A number of caravans were coming and going through their land, and amongst

others there were Hebrew merchants. They had various sacred books amongst them, which they had got from these Hebrews.

I leave you there to-night.

Chirtieth Sitting.

December 4th, 1878.

The Band's Weapons of War—Honey of Trebizond—Some things not known by Spirit Guardians—A Lesson to be Remembered—Trebizond—Brisk Trade—The Brethren in Trebizond—Description of their Meeting-House and Services—The Holy Spirit—A Happy Time—The Lord's Supper—Spirit Friends at the Supper—A Spirit Message—Hermes's Father in Spirit-form.

AT our last meeting I gave you some account of what took place after the battle, in which some of our band had taken a part on behalf of those who had been so friendly to us. They had treated us as honourable guests in their city. Our company was getting fewer in number, for some of our young men, as I have already mentioned, were dropping off now and again. But there was still a goodly number left, who were able to hold their own had it been necessary: but we were men of peace—our weapons were not of bronze or steel, but the words of our mouths; these cut keener, and, reaching to the heart of hearts, we became, generally, the conquerors.

We were nearing the Black Sea. There is a very ancient city on the borders of that sea—Trebizond. This place we saw as we came down towards it. It was not very large. It had been visited both by Greeks and Romans. We found the people somewhat far advanced—more enlightened than those we had come across for some time. They had a large commercial traffic with Greece and Rome, and other places, by sea.

While crossing the hills overlooking the city some of our young men, falling in with some deposits of honey, ate very freely of it. The effect on them was strange; they seemed like drunken men, as those who had lost their senses, and some of them looked like dead men. We were afraid they had been poisoned, and would die. It occurred to me that I had heard something of this from Hafed. Speaking to me as regards sin, he likened it to the honey of Trebizond, which was fair and sweet, but he who ate of it was sure to die. And, again, I remembered another allusion to

this honey : "Woe be to him who eats of the honey of Trebizond, for it is poison." This was no idle saying of his. He knew something of it. Many had suffered from the eating of it. The insect which produced this poisonous honey resembled the wild bee of other places.

We had in our travels eaten often of wild honey ; and, when we found it plentiful, we took what we required to use as part of our daily food. We found it wholesome and nourishing, stimulating, and giving strength and vigour to our young men—imparting something like new life to them. Latterly we had run short of honey. This caused our young men to run to it ; but it was truly wonderful that some of them did not die. This shows how careful men should be not to meddle with that of which they have no knowledge. Had I had all my wits about me I might have warned them of its evil nature. Why did not our spirit friends, who had all along guarded us so well, give us a hint regarding this danger ? I thought I would question them on the subject, and when I did so I found they were more ignorant than we ourselves. There was one amongst them, however, who said he knew something about it. I asked him his reason for not warning us. He said he was not within our sphere when the thing occurred, otherwise, he would have found means to prevent it. "But," he said, "it is a good lesson for you to learn—one you are not likely to forget." We asked him how it was that this bee should produce honey of so poisonous a nature. He explained that in this part of the country there were certain plants and flowers of a poisonous nature, and to these the bees flocked. There was no harm done to the bees, but the honey produced was poisonous to man or beast. This accounted for the great quantities to be seen on every side ; for the inhabitants, knowing that it was dangerous to life, let it alone.

When we entered Trebizond, we found in it a good market, and a number of merchants with whom to trade. We had a large quantity of ivory with us, and as it was a heavy article to carry, we were anxious to get quit of it. We soon found a demand for it, and our hands were full of work. The people appeared to be intelligent. We found there many from all parts of the East : Arabians, Hebrews, and Egyptians ; also merchants from Rome, Greece, Tyre, and surrounding districts.

We had gone out to our fellow-men as the heralds and servants of our Lord and Prince, but in this place we found that there had been some before us. There was a small church established in the city, to which we were welcome visitors. During all the time we stayed in the place we daily met with the small company, for they assembled every day in their little house of worship. At these meetings we sat down with them and entered into conversation. I spoke to them at some length about him whom we all professed to love, and was able to tell them many things concerning him that they had never heard of from those who had visited them. The small church which had been gathered together had very little opposition. This was owing in some measure to the mixed character of the population ; and also to the fact that there were some of the magistrates amongst them, and others who were wealthy. Then, the priests belonging to the temples seemed quite content so long as they got their coffers well filled from the general community of the various peoples that composed the population, for these did not seem to care as to what temple they worshipped in—they paid homage to their own gods in their own way in the temples of a strange god ; and these priests were satisfied so long as they had their offerings. But what was worse than this inconsistency, we observed that they encouraged many things offensive to the virtuous mind.

The little congregation of brethren had erected a beautiful house for their meetings—not of brick, but of the purest marble. It was not large, but sufficiently large to hold them all and a hundred or two more. Being a wealthy community, as I have said, they had fitted up the inside in a style which may be described as handsome, making it appear like a temple. There were no figures, however, to be seen ; they would have nothing that might lead the stranger or visitor to conclude that they had anything to do with the idolatry around them. The ornaments common to all public buildings, such as flowers and leaves, they had used. There was an altar (they had not given up that) but instead of fires and sacrifices, they placed at one end of it some beautiful flowers ; while on it lay some Epistles open, ready to be read and commented on by the officiating minister for the time being.

They chose from amongst their number one who was able and

willing to speak, and it was his duty to read from the Epistles, and afterwards comment on the portion read. The service of worship consisted of a short but pointed prayer; reading the Epistle; then an anthem was sung in beautiful harmony, so much so that it carried our souls and hearts upwards from earth to the heaven of heavens. After this the minister took up the Epistle again, and commented on the part which he had read, sentence by sentence; after which, another prayer. Then he inquired, if any of the assembled brethren had received the Holy Spirit. All were quiet and silent, till one was observed to rise up in their midst, clasp his hands together, and raise his eyes towards the ceiling of the building. He then spoke to them. Had the Prince himself been there he could have spoken in no other way. I could imagine it was really Jesus himself speaking in their midst. I found that this was their regular mode of worship.

There were some among them, I learned, who had received the fulness of the Holy Spirit—that good Spirit, the ambassador of Jesus our Prince. I believe he came there with his message that he might deliver it to this little church as Jesus himself would deliver it.

During our stay in this city I passed some of the happiest hours of my life. My old grandfather seemed to have taken up his abode in this little temple. We could hardly get him away. Indeed, but for hunger at times we would have failed to move him. He would say—“My son, leave me here. I desire to die at the foot of this altar, for I believe it to be the very gate of heaven.”

“My father,” I said, “it matters not where we are—whether under the roof of a sacred house or under the most sacred of all roofs—the canopy of heaven. The gate of the heaven of heavens is as nigh thee in the one place as the other. When death comes with his bright and glittering wings and silver trumpet, to herald us into the better and brighter land, where is the partition, gate, or wall that would stand betwixt us and that future home of ours? Sleep comes over our brain, our eyelids become fixed, our nerves get rigid, the magnetic currents that passed through us are stayed in their course. The sleep is so composed that they may do what they will with the body. You wake up, but you wake in another land. You are clothed anew. You have left your old clothes behind. Look at the caterpillar. He puts off the old

skin and comes forth a butterfly, flying from flower to flower. So is it with us, dear grandfather ; our bodies become so aerial, we spread forth our arms as if they were wings towards that happy home of ours, where we have so many dear friends waiting, and we long to take our flight. But you know you must yet see the land of your birth before you leave the earth."

The night before we left, the brethren of the little church invited us to a love feast, or Lord's Supper. To some of our company this was something new ; it was the first time they had an opportunity of taking part in the solemn services. There was no boisterous language or mirth displayed ; but neither was there to be seen long and solemn faces. The sweet language of harmony prevailed over all—brother and sister alike striving who could help their neighbours most. All were equal at the sacred table. At one end of the three long tables there stood a number of vacant chairs. What these were meant for we knew not, but evidently not for the purpose of elevating any brother above another. The congregation sat on each side of the tables, on which were placed the richest fruits of the land, amongst which were grapes fresh from the vine. Persons who had been chosen for the duty pressed the juice from the cluster into the cups, and handed these to each one of the assembly. One of the brethren prayed. An anthem was then sung, after which every one of the church bent down their heads on their hand ; on seeing this we followed their example. Standing thus for a few minutes we heard the tinkle, as it were, of a tiny bell sounding. We raised our heads, and lo ! the vacant chairs were occupied—not by any of the assembled congregation, but by a company far, far higher. Their robes had the light of the sun in them—so pure, so beautiful. It was dazzling to our eyes to look on. Their faces shone with a brightness so great we could not look on them so long as to enable us to distinguish their features. But the light which surrounded them gradually died down to suit our vision, and then I saw my old foster-father Issha, and two others we had seen before, and even some whom I did not know to have left the earth ; two of these I recognised as my companions when sent by the Prince on the mission to Egypt. I had not seen these fellow-disciples for many years, but I at once recognised them, and called out their names. But they held up their hands,

and wished quietness—when he who had so often stood with outstretched hands to the people, thanked the Great Spirit, and poured forth his soul in prayer that He, the loving Father, might send his holy ones to protect the little band that met there to worship Him. Then he spoke in such a way, that if there had been a single sinner with an unclean heart present, he would have sunk to the ground—aye, the beating of his heart would have ceased for ever on earth. He showed the brethren what they must suffer for the name of Jesus. Though now enjoying a measure of peace and prosperity, times of persecution would yet arise, but they must continue to have confidence in the protecting arm of their Lord and Master.

I may here say that the little church in Trebizond did suffer, but not so much as the brethren in another country. When they began to increase in numbers, the priests got alarmed, for they found the silver and gold getting scarcer, and they began to cry out against them.

Thus we spent our last night at this city of Trebizond, and a happy night it was. We bade the brethren a long farewell. I knew I would never meet them in the earth-body again. The morning was breaking. Each one who had a household was there from the youngest to the oldest: they were not particular as to the time they broke up, for many of them were wealthy, and did not think of rising to go till the sun began to rise high in the heavens. We were permitted to pass out of the city by the guards.

On coming to our encampment, we found that those we left in charge had been busy all night, striking the tents and making ready for a start on our journey. This was strange, for we, the leaders, had never said that we were to remove in the morning. I therefore inquired why they had done so, when one of them said, "Did you not send a message to us?" I said, "No." "Well, certain messengers came to us from you, who told us that we were to strike the tents." I began to think that some one had been playing a trick on us. We had no intention to have started so soon after our night's meeting; for, indeed, we required rest. Just as I was thinking who it could be who had done this, I happened to turn round, and an individual at my left said—"It was I." "Who told you to do so?" "Your friend and guardian." "Who is he?" I inquired. "He whom you saw to-night, and whom you

recognised as your foster-father." "But," I rejoined, "is there any reason why we should go just now?" "There are reasons for everything we do. If we did not think it right for you and yours to remove from this place, we would not have given such a message."

I must confess that I had not great faith in the person who spoke to me. I thought for a little, but I could not remember to have seen him before. I put a question to him, and he looked me right in the eyes. He could stand my eyes better than I could stand his. Still I doubted him. The form he assumed was that of a menial servant, but gradually I observed the form change, till it became like that of a warrior, or chief, newly come off a hunting expedition. My old grandfather was standing to the right of me, apparently as much in wonderment as I was myself. I said to him, "Grandfather, here is he who says he gave orders to our young men to strike the tents." "My son, I have been wondering who it was you were addressing, for I see no one here." Another of our company also said that he saw no one. I was perplexed, for we generally saw what was seen by any of the others. But just then my old grandfather gave a loud cry, rushed past me, and embraced the form, which he now saw, and whom he had recognised as my own father. But he passed from our sight.

We will stop here to-night.

Thirty-first Sitting.

December 11th, 1878.

On the Shores of the Black Sea—Flourishing Cities—Encampment near the Sea—The old Arab's Wound Unhealed—Resignation—Hermes Meditates—The Good Time Coming—Spirits Incite to Meditation—Preaching in the Villages—A Queer Old Philosopher—The Earth an Animal—The Sage Visits the Camp—Arabian Hospitality—Discussion on Another World—The Old Philosopher gets Proof—"I am going Mad!"—The Sage Convinced—His Story.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—At our last sitting I related to you those things which had occurred the night before leaving Trebizond. We set out with our faces homeward, but we had a great distance yet to travel before we could reach Egypt. The district of country over which we journeyed we could hardly call un-

civilised, for it had come long under the influence of Grecian and Roman inroads and intercourse. Many of the Grecians had settled on the borders of the sea, where we found a number of flourishing cities—though these were not very large. We found that the name of Jesus of Nazareth had reached the shores of the Black Sea. This was to be expected, for the Jews at that time had a good amount of commerce with these cities. In travelling along, we thought the coast rather rough, and even dangerous, when outside of any city in the open country. But we were never molested—never stopped on our journey.

Two or three days' journey from Trebizond, we settled on a high-rising ground, a beautiful spot, near the sea. We never liked to travel too far in one stage, lest it should over-work our beasts. We ourselves also became fatigued, for some of us were old—we were not all young men.

My grandfather was labouring under a grievous sore, which was very quietly letting go the life essence from the animal body—gradually and slowly day by day untying the strings which bind body and soul together. He felt he was nearing home. All he would say, when asked how he was getting on, was, "I feel well. I seem to be getting younger day by day. At one time I felt old age creeping on me, but now I seem once more beginning to ascend the hill of youth." When we regretted that we could find nothing to heal the wound, he said—"It is now useless. I have spent my life as a leader of wild Arabs. But this I know, that, having broken my solemn vow, the penalty must be borne."

I said that I believed in keeping a vow as much as any man, but when attempting to palliate the transgression in his circumstances, he interrupted me, saying, "If a man give his word, and he breaks it, can you look on him in the same light as you did before? And if I have sealed a solemn vow—made to the great God of Heaven—do you think He would let me go lightly off if I break that vow? No. Though my punishment is mild—and now, indeed, the punishment is becoming lighter, and I will soon get over to the kingdom above. Ah, He is not like men. If I made a vow to you, and broke it, you might not forgive me, but I know He will forgive me. Now I am suffering justly. All I desire is to reach my native place, there to die, as my father died, to be buried beside my kinsmen; for, I think

my spirit would sooner find them all out, were I to die there, rather than in a strange land."

This seemed strange to me. I could not see what difference there could be in leaving the body in one place more than another. I tried to persuade him against this idea ; but he maintained that he would sooner find out his friends in the Spirit-world if his body was laid beside the bones of his forefathers. I said no more but this—" May the Great and Good One grant you your desire ! I also wish to see the place where the bodies of my forefathers lie, and the home you left, and the home my own father left."

As I have said, we pitched our tents on a rising ground overlooking the sea ; and I had my tent so situated that I could look over the blue waters ; and oft I looked on them when neither moon nor star appeared, and yet to me they were illumined as when the moon brightly shone on them. It was a beautiful scene, as lying there of a night, I meditated on the works of the great Creator. And there, too, my thoughts turned back on my past history—on the teachings of Jesus, my Master, and his servants of the Spirit-world. Looking at the scene before me, and on those which had come before me in my travels, I wondered why men were discontented with their lot. Truly this earth was a paradise, did man choose to make it so. But no ; man had run in the face of Him who had designed the earth as a happy dwelling place for him, but misery prevailed. I often wished I could begin my life over again. I thought I saw a hundred ways I could have been of more use to the world than I had been. Yet I was but as a drop in the waters of the sea which lay before me, even as that sea was but as a drop in the mighty oceans of the world. But, then, all things great and small have their uses. The wicked man is even made useful in some degree ; for in descending the scale of wickedness, he showed the good man how to avoid the snares he had fallen into. Do not misunderstand me : I do not mean to say that the Great Spirit designed the wicked man as a beacon to the godly man. But as things do happen, it does this much for the godly man.

I had been taught at that time of a grand and good time coming in earth's history, but could not tell when it would come. But now I have some idea of that Golden Age soon to come on

your world. But as the Great Creator purified the earth by many convulsions before man was placed on it, pure and immaculate ; even so, having become wicked, there must be convulsions—not in nature, but among mankind—to upheave society until evil be uprooted. These changes will come ; they must come, and that with purifying power. And then shall dawn that glorious day so long promised. The earth a heaven in its youth will be a heaven in its old age. Man shall reign supreme as a God in nature, and his age will be lengthened as a dweller on the earth. Pestilence shall pass away, because the land will be purified, and the atmosphere become pure and bright. All the earth shall be lovely—yea, even like unto a lovely vale, and man shall rejoice and be happy in a good old age. There will in that good time be no more dividing of families by death ; for then they shall grow up to manhood and womanhood. Then also will those who have passed away be able to return and visit the dwellers in the body. Oh, indeed, that will be a blessed time for mankind !

But I find I am forgetting myself. While we remained in that place it seemed that the past had set me in this way of thinking—not exactly thinking. When man goes into these states of meditation, the unseen ones get in and help him on with it. Well would it be for all were they to look upward to the Spirit-world for help. You know not how far you are guided by us. We may be at fault at times ; yet it is seldom. We can see a little farther than you can with our eyes. The eyes of your body can, at farthest, penetrate to the horizon, and that dimly. Ours can go beyond that wall and perceive things far away in the distance. There is no one who has not some spirit hovering over him or her ; and in the silent watches of the night, when the eyes are not inclined to close, and sleep comes not on the active brain, it would be well were such an one to think more of us, so that his thought and sympathy might draw us closer to him, for he might, when difficulties surround him, be guided aright, and have his ways opened up ; or, when he is looking forward to something—such as going away on a voyage to a distant land—we might forewarn him of coming danger. There are those who hover nigh that have great command over the spirits of you mortals. Again, if the individual would but open up himself to the Divine Spirit, leaving all to Him, there are those nigh who are

ready to help him. Now, I in my earth life (at the time I am speaking of) threw myself more on the Spirit-world than I had ever done, though I had been guided by my spirit friends to a certain extent for very many years. But now, I felt like my old grandfather, that my time of departure from earth was drawing nigh, and that doubtless had some weight with me in giving myself more unreservedly up to the guidance of the spirits. I threw myself into their hands that they might do with me as they pleased. I would be guided entirely by them ; for I knew they would do just what was right.

In this place we were not idle. There were a great many small villages round about ; and we made journeys hither and thither, preaching and teaching the truths committed to us by the Master. They were not altogether ignorant, for they had heard something of our doctrines from others. They had amongst them some who professed to be philosophers, who had settled there ; Grecians, who vaunted much of their learning, and liked nothing better than to get into a warm discussion. Yet these men had this charity—they showed no spirit of persecution, or intolerance, to those who differed from them. I am not so sure that we would have witnessed the same spirit in Greece, Rome or Jerusalem.

One of our opponents was a very old man, who made himself noted amongst the people by arguing with us, that there was no Spirit-world : that there was nothing but what could be perceived by our bodily senses ; that there was no force in the world but what moved itself ; that the earth was an animal ; and that we were but the little insects moving on the great animal's back ! Of course I tried to meet him on his own ground—asking him to point out the head and tail of his huge animal, but he only expressed his wonder that I should talk in so light a way of this great doctrine. I could make nothing of him. On this occasion we were surrounded by a number of the villagers who appeared to have no sympathy with his idea ; they thought he had the worst side of the argument. But, really, had the existence of the Spirit-world been a mere speculation on my part, I might have been led to adopt his ideas ; for, according to some, his notion was far from being unreasonable. Had I not known for certain that what I upheld was right and that he was wrong, I might

have given into his way of thinking. I often found where there had been a great deal of discussion, some seed had been left behind; but in this case we left each other holding the same opinion as we had held before we began our war of words.

On the following day, however, shortly after our morning service, we observed the old philosopher coming towards the camp, riding on an ass. (This old man had all the appearance of a sage—venerable in aspect, his beard reaching even to his thighs, and his white hair hanging in beautiful curls over his shoulders; and was, altogether, one whom you might well reverence.) Some of our young men, seeing him riding up to us, cried out—"Oh, here is the old philosopher coming; he looks as if in a storm!" He seemed to be much agitated—appearing as if addressing himself to his ass, and then to the open air. I went quietly towards him, and, laying my hand on the bridle, said, "Good morning," and made my obeisance very humbly. He looked down on me, and raised his hand with the whip, and I thought he was about to use it, and that it was better to get out of the way. But I was wrong. He only said he had heard that we were going to leave, and he was anxious to have another discussion with me. I told him I would willingly talk with him; and that, if he would dismount, some of our young men would look after his beast. "It may be," I said, "that before we part you will find that this earth is not some great animal, and that there is something beyond the present life."

"We'll see," he said, "but I do not believe it."

I tried to be as meek as possible, not wanting to press the truth too fast on him, and thought that something might yet happen to open his eyes.

After he had gone into the tent some meat was set before the old man. At first he refused to partake of it; but when it was explained to him that all who came to us were not looked on as friends until they had eaten at our table, he complied. We had been so long travelling through Arabia that we had adopted some of their customs, and this one among the rest. Indeed, we could hardly avoid doing so, for the most of our company were Arabians, and their visitors were accustomed to such treatment.

When he had eaten he began to tell us how the villagers, who had previously held him in great estimation as a philosopher, had

laughed at him. They were, he said, very ungrateful, considering the long time he had laboured among them, trying to get them to adopt his view of things. I remarked that his views had evidently made no deep impression on them, or they would not have been so easily turned away from them.

"It was all right with the people until you came with your Spirit-life," he said. "No doubt there is a desire in man that he should live after this; but we have no proof of an after-life. The priests have taught the people so, and erected large houses, and kept them up at great cost. But the whole affair has been got up by these priests for their own ends. They profess to have the keys of heaven, as they call it; and so the people, believing all this, have to pay the fellows well, lest they should be shut out. You are not an Arabian; you belong to Egypt. Perhaps when you get to the gate of heaven you may be turned back, and sent somewhere else. Do you believe that?"

I said, "No; I once believed it, but now I know better. It is a good thing for my argument that mankind (as he had said) desired something beyond the present life. There evidently is some reason why the desire should be so generally expressed. I admit the force of the arguments you have brought to bear on me, and your masterly way of using them, and had I not known better I might have given in to you. If this earth is an animal, I must say there are a great many loose bits rolling all over its back. Then look at those huge mountains—those granite rocks! What can you make of these?"

"You have seen," said he, "persons with warts on them—a very small growth. Well, these great mountains are but as warts on the great animal—the earth."

"But," I rejoined, "that which grows on beast or man, if removed, frequently springs up afresh; but will those old rocks, if removed from their place, spring up again into new life? Nay, they get always smaller and smaller. And then look down to the great sea stretched out before us, and point out an animal with such a thing on its back."

"Were you," said he, "acquainted with the animal creation, you would not fail to see, in a smaller way, globes of water lying on the surface of various animals."

I began to think it impossible to make any impression on him

as to the absurdity of this idea. He was not the originator of it, for I had heard something of the same kind brought forward before. At last I said, "I am not so old as you are, my friend, yet I am also old; but, notwithstanding, I desire to reverence one who is older than myself, and I am sorry you and I differ so much. I see things in a different light. When I look over this earth, I see a grand creation. Man and the living creatures on it are not pests crawling on its surface; but mankind is here for a great purpose—to beautify, adorn, and keep the earth in proper condition. He is the lord of all creation. But he has fallen short of his high estate. He looks only to himself and his own sensual gratification, forgetful that there is another world into which he must enter."

"Oh," he cried, "this is the old story of those priests! I cannot bear with this folly, and I don't want to hear anything about it."

"Just listen to me. I know for a truth that there is another world; and I am as certain as you sit there that there are beings who once trod the earth who often come back!"

Stopping me, he said, "Where is your proof for this?"

"Before you leave you may have the proof of this yourself."

I said so because I knew there were spirits present. He was just going to bring down on me some great argument, when he started to his feet. I was amazed at his appearance. He stood aghast; his eyes looked as if ready to start from their sockets. I asked him what was the matter.

"Oh," said he, with forced calmness, "it must be some jugglery."

"Jugglery! Why, I see nothing. There are four persons here, and you are one of the four; I am another, my grandfather a third, and the fourth is my Arabian friend."

"Well," said he, "I must either be going mad, or I am dreaming."

"You are not mad, for I hear you speaking and using your senses; and if you are dreaming, then we are all of us dreaming."

"There—there!" he exclaimed, "I see my father, my mother, my wife, and my son!"

"Where?—how?" I knew not that he had had a wife and son. He looked earnestly towards the vacant space before him. At

length he held down his head, and, placing his hands over his face, he cried out, "No, no, no! Let me out of this. I am going mad!"

"No, my friend, you are not going mad." (We did not see the spirits; neither did we hear them; but from the words he used we saw that he was answering someone who was upbraiding him for something he had done.) He would have rushed out of the tent, and perhaps would have gone over the adjacent cliff, but for our intervention.

After calming down, I at length said—"Friends of the Spirit-world, make yourselves plainer—make yourselves known to us, and perhaps we may be able to assist you."

Here he eagerly called out—"What do you see?"

"I see nothing; only, I know they can appear."

"They! Who are *they*?"

I said—"I have friends here. You did not know them, did you?"

"Who do you mean?" He seemed to check himself, as if he did not want to tell us.

Here my grandfather made an exclamation, and we all looked in the same direction, and saw four strangers I had never seen before.

"What do you see?" cried the old man.

"An old man, something like you, only older; an old lady of the Grecian mould, tall, and must have been good-looking in her youth; a young lady of 23 or 25 summers, Grecian too, from her dress—she did not belong to this place; and I see a little boy in her hand." The moment I said this the old philosopher shrunk back. I then heard a voice, when he cried—"Do you hear anything?"

"Yes; I heard her say to you that she forgives you for the usage you gave her and her son, when you drove them forth from your house. Is that true?"

It was true, for he himself heard the voice; but my statement convinced him that it was no illusion.

"Now," he said, "if they will but touch me I will believe."

He put out his hand, and the Spirit came and touched his hand, and said she forgave him, and wished he would turn away from his wicked life. They had always been near him, although he had ill-used her and driven out her and her son to wander about and die of starvation.

Great was the effect on our old philosopher. His arguments were gone, and he sat down and gave us his history. He said he had been a wealthy merchant in Greece. He had speculated a good deal, and also gambled, by which he lost most of his wealth. Having travelled to this quarter in the course of his business, he resolved to take up his abode here, and at length came along with his wife and child. He had not been long resident when he found that his wife carried on a secret correspondence with someone in Greece. This alarmed him, for he was afraid certain parties should know of his whereabouts, and take him back to Greece. At the time he was so exasperated that he would have raised his hand and taken away her life ; but, on second thoughts, he resolved to leave her and her son. He accordingly left her in the city where they had lived for a short time, and he had gone to another part of the country. She had followed him, and wandered about seeking for him in vain, till starvation became the fate of both mother and child. This he afterwards learned from certain rumours of the finding of the bodies of a woman and child, and that in her correspondence she had been writing to her brother for means to assist them. He ultimately settled down in this village, after retiring from business (for he had again entered into trade, and acquired sufficient means to keep him), and took to the study of philosophy, and this was the fruit of it.

He came next day to be educated. He would not deign to call it anything else than a philosophy—the philosophy of a future existence. On this occasion, however, we made a great impression on the old philosopher.

Thirty-second Sitting.

December 18th, 1878.

Overland Route—Old Battle-fields—Hermes' Grandfather longs to reach Syria—Crossing Asia Minor—Greeks, Jews, and Romans—Worship of Diana—Hermes Denounces the Ill-Deeds of the Priests—Spirit Guardianship—The "Common People" Aroused—Jewish Sympathy—A Camp-Meeting—Formation of a Church—Attempted Assassination of Hermes—Story of a Young Priest—The Assassin Converted—A Bold Confession of Jesus—Elders and Deacons Chosen—The Young Priest Ordained as Pastor—Subsequent History of the Church.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—Last time we met, we were near to a village on the shores of the Black Sea, not far from Trebizond.

We had purposed to travel along the sea-coast till we came round to Syria. But, seeing the anxiety of my old grandfather to reach Syria, we resolved to travel right across the country, and thereby very greatly shorten the distance from his native place. The route selected by us would bring us into quarters celebrated as ancient battle-fields, where Persians, Greeks, and Romans had met and fought out their quarrels. It was over this quarter that Xerxes led his great host to their destruction—a defeat from which Persia never recovered.

My grandfather, as I have said, was anxious to reach Syria. His wound was troubling him, and he longed for the great change; but I was convinced he would not pass away till he saw his native place. Accordingly, he hurried us on towards Syria. It was a feeling common to all Eastern people to express a wish to be buried where the bones of their forefathers lay. Of course, this can only be said of the man of peace; the warrior must lay his account to be buried where he falls. Mankind generally have this love for their birth-place. Many will travel long distances in order that they may reach the place where first they saw the light of day—where they began to lisp their first words as they leant against their mother's knee—where they had received kisses from the rough, bearded lips of their fathers. This, this is the place, after the weary and rough battle of life, where the tired and worn-out man desires to lay his bones; and this was what my grandfather so much longed for.

The distance from the place we were in to the borders of the Great Sea, or Mediterranean, was but short compared with the coast-line, away round by the Hellespont. Still, it was a good many days' journey. It was no desolate track, but well peopled, with many cities and villages; so that we had not only opportunities of carrying on the good work, but time to do a little in the way of merchandise. On our journey we stayed at several places, which were peopled by a very mixed population, composed of Greeks, Jews, and Romans, and some others, of all classes. The prevailing worship was that of the Greeks, and the object of worship was the goddess Diana. A great deal of wealth was paid over to the priests of the various temples of the goddess. Her image was very richly adorned. Better far had these, her ignorant worshippers, been wise enough to give their wealth to the relief of

the poor, who were really crushed down beneath their poverty in order that these priests should live in idleness. The people were held down for the sake of keeping up the wicked system.

Those priests of Diana, connected with the temples in the cities we called at, were, I think, the very worst we had ever met in with. I knew a great many different forms of worship, and various modes of priestly offerings. But they cared for nothing but how to get their coffers filled. They were not concerned as to the modes or forms of giving, so that they got hold of the gifts. Riotous and licentious living was all that came of it. If a nobleman, who was free with his gold, and gave them a goodly sum for their coffers, he could get any liberty he wished—it mattered not what beautiful woman he lusted after, or what wickedness or sin—he was sure, with the aid of these infamous priests, to be gratified. That which was originally set up to represent the mother of their Trinity—a pure marble statue—by the ancient Greeks, had now become the symbol of the vilest deeds.

Such has been the way with all religious systems. Whenever they fall from their original simplicity and purity, their spirituality, and seek after necromancy to uphold their corrupt system, they are ready to be cut down—to be destroyed from within. It was the same with the Egyptians. But in their case there was still something from the true spiritual source to be found. They sought not after black art. For they still had messages from the Spirit-world, through the priestesses, and these were generally virtuous. And they were carefully tended. A priestess, if found guilty of having intercourse with man, was put to death. This was how the Egyptian theology, with all its rottenness, received many startling revelations from the Spirit-world.

In the country we were passing through, Diana was held up as a pure and good deity to the ignorant people; but that which was done in connection with her worship could not bear the light of day, and, therefore, efforts were made by the priests to hood-wink those whom they pretended to teach. So, wherever we discovered the evil system at work, we did battle against it.

While sojourning in one of the larger towns, about 100 furlongs from the coast, I took up my stand one morning before the doors of the temple. It was a great festival day, and the people were

gathering to celebrate it. It was not long before I had a goodly number of hearers, whom I addressed. I boldly denounced the fearful deeds which were done under the cloak of their religion ; and showed them that true religion could find no place in the midst of such corruption. The priests came out and prayed to Diana that I might be struck dead for my blasphemy. But, unmoved, I went on with my address, knowing well that I was surrounded by guardians that would not allow a hair of my head to be touched. I observed a number of the nobles amongst the the assembly ; they had evidently felt the force of my denunciations against their wicked deeds ; for they attempted to draw their swords, but could not—either their swords stuck to their sheaths, or their arms were powerless to draw them. I noticed that each one of those gathered around, who would have done me harm, had a guardian spirit beside him. Great was their astonishment to find themselves in such a helpless state ; compelled, as it were, to listen to an exposure of their deeds of darkness in the hearing of the common people. I continued my address, and alluded to the occasion of their assembling—the festival, at which they had to pay their tithes, the only gainers by which were the priests. I told them they were but keeping up the priests in a state greater than they kept up the king on the throne ; that these priests did nothing for what they got—nay, more, they kept the people in ignorance and slavery. The oracles that they nailed on the temple door, which they said came from the goddess herself, were all black lies ; there was no truth in them—they had entirely gone away from the source of all Spiritual truth, and what they gave to the people as truths were but fabrications to further their own selfish ends.

The effect on the minds of the common people appeared to be great—so much so that but for my influence over them they would have proceeded to the destruction of the temple. There was a large population of several thousands, and of course the poorer class formed the majority ; but these are the bone and sinew of every community—the movers in every great reform work, religious or social. I cared not for the nobles with all their wealth ; what we desired was human hearts. Accordingly, after getting the tumult subdued, quieting the people, and showing them that truth could never be furthered by the destruction

of material buildings, I invited them to come out of the city to our camp, and we would give them further instruction. On this the priests told the people we were seducers (and so we were, in one sense)—that we were laying a trap for them, so that we might rob them! Alas, poor folks! these priests had left them little to be robbed of.

I had given great offence to the priests and their supporters; but, on the other hand, I got a great many of the Jews on my side. They were looked up to in these cities, for they were generally of the wealthy class of merchants. They were greatly against the worship of Diana. The religious system of the Jews was free from such things as I had been denouncing, and pure and spiritual; though they did not believe in Jesus as the promised Messiah, they gave us their support. The attendance at the temple fell off, and the people came out to us. I preached to the assemblage, and my old grandfather also addressed them. Indeed, it was, as you might term it, "a camp meeting." The people seemed deeply interested, and were asked to come back again. Instead of robbing them, we gave to the really poor ones linen clothing to cover them; and thus, by these gifts, the lie of the priests was thrown back in their face. We gave them not only spiritual food, but clothing to cover their bodies.

We began to get a name, and our proceedings got published abroad. In that town we saw a church gathered together of some hundred individuals before we left, who were able to hold their own against all opposition.

Here I will relate an incident that occurred at this time which led to great and good results long after we had left the city.

One night, a short time before we left the city, I was roused from sleep by one of our guards making a signal at my tent door. (I may here state that we had our guards at night, but merely for the purpose of making people think that we looked well after our camp; for we depended more on our unseen guards for protection.) The guard said there was one who wished to see me, but that he appeared to be disguised, and wore a mask. I said I was not in the habit of conversing with any one who covered his face. I liked always to look every one straight in the face, and thought there must be something wrong in any one who hid his face. I asked the guard to tarry a little, and I would consult with my

friends (spirits). I did consult, and was told to admit the visitor ; that I was not to be afraid. So I told the guard to admit him. The moment he entered he said, addressing me—"From what you just now said as regards the mask" (he had heard what I said to the guard), "I will not wear a mask before you, and I will look you straight in the face. I came here for another purpose—it was to assassinate you." He said he had been hired by the priests to do it ; they had told him that they had a message direct from the goddess that she wanted me removed. He made a clean breast of it. He told me he had been employed as a servant in the temple in the way of polishing censors, cleaning the sacrifice knobs, dusting, etc. ; was afterwards promoted to be one of the watchers of the goddess, for it was necessary that there should be men who should stand guard lest any of the fine jewellery and golden ornaments should be stolen from the image. After serving in this way for some time, he was initiated as a priest, and took his part in the sacrifices at the altar. Then it was that these young priests got into other secrets, one of which was—how to help themselves.

He was a good-looking young man—one who might be a credit to mankind if properly trained, but quite the reverse if under evil training. He was one of those who are possessed of a large intellect, well-balanced brain, capable of being acted on by the Spirit-world—men who, if properly trained or directed, make their mark in the world, but just as liable to be so acted on as to go the wrong way—all depending on the influences brought to bear on them. Having mixed so much with all classes of men of various races, I had become an apt reader of character in the face, or features, of the individual, always looking straight in the eyes when I spoke. This acquirement assisted me greatly on the present occasion—everything seemed to come before me—I believe, however, by the help of the Spirit-world—while this young man told me his story. He said: "When I heard your words addressed to the guard something seemed to strike me that your words were those of an honest man, and that you were not the man that the priests described to me ; you appeared to read my character and my errand before you saw me."

I said : "The man who hides his face behind a mask never comes to do that which is good. We work openly and fearlessly.

I wore no mask when from the Temple steps I condemned your worship—I did it boldly, openly, before priests and people in the light of day.”

“Who gave you that boldness?” he asked.

“I received it from above—from God, through His messengers, who are ever hovering round us, and who are able and willing to help those who seek to do well, and would walk uprightly. But he who would seek to murder by stealth, in the dark, with the dagger under his cloak, they are ever-ready to expose to the intended victim.”

“A dagger! Who told you I had a dagger?”

“There it is,” I said; “take it out.”

“Well,” said he, I do confess that such is the case. I brought a dagger with me, to do what I thought it my duty to do, not of my own will, but in obedience to the instructions of the priests.”

“You could not have done the deed though you had been willing. Even with the dagger at my naked breast, you could not have driven it home; my guardians of the world of spirits are here to protect me, and all who put trust in them.”

While we were thus conversing my old grandfather walked up, and asked what was wrong. “Oh,” I said, “there’s nothing very much wrong. Here is one come to be taught a lesson which they cannot teach him in that grand temple in the city. My old father was inveterate in his dislike of the priests. The young man appeared to be deeply interested in what I had said to him. He had confessed all, and he felt he was in our hands. He took off his disguise, and showed his priestly garb. He evidently was not one who cut his clothes to suit his religion—but a true man.

“My young friend,” I said, “I also was brought up as a priest; but not in such a loose way as you have been bred in yonder temple. Here is my hand. I forgive you. Go tell your superiors that you were detected; that there are guardians ever hovering over us who never close an eye, who know the very thoughts of those who would seek to harm us.”

The young priest departed. But he soon came back, saying—“I would rather be a servant in this company than dwell longer in these temples of sin.”

“But, in throwing up your connection with the temple, you are

forfeiting an easy life—that of a priest in that great and gorgeous building.”

“It matters not,” he quickly said,—“I came here on a bloody and evil errand, and found what I believe to be the true religion practised. My eyes are now opening to see the true from the false. I have been thinking over all that you brought before me. I came here under the impression that I was but doing what I ought to do, when at the bidding of the goddess I would have assassinated you. Now my eyes are open to the dreadful evils of the system which would try to uphold itself by secret murder. Let me, I pray you, remain with you.”

Seeing the earnest, honest manner of this young man, and that he was also what might be called clever—an intellectual man—I said, “Here we have been able to form a church; and you must be known to them as one who has gone out and in before them in your temple service. Why not remain with them? You might in course of a short time become their pastor. We will see about this. Meanwhile, tarry with me till morning.” So we sat down, and conversed, I trying to impart to him the doctrines we held, opening up the Persian, Hebrew, Egyptian, and Grecian Scriptures. Our conversation was continued till the rising of the sun. Here was a precious soul—worth, in one sense, ten other men—and I felt bound to bestow on him all the labour I was able to give, so that I might bring into use the God-given gift within him: for, indeed, he was one who, once open to Spirit power, would become a mighty agent in their hands for good.

While we sat he opened up all his past history. From infancy he had been virtuous and pious, and when a youth by his own and his parents' wish was placed under the priests. But now he saw that, instead of learning to continue his life of virtue, these priests had been gradually leading him by their false teaching to become like themselves. As he sat at my feet drinking in every word I uttered, he would burst out, now and again, in expressions of thankfulness that he had been led to renounce the unholy and corrupt system under which he had been too long trained. His questions to me went deep into the inner nature of things, and my answers to these appeared to give him satisfaction.

He afterwards went to the temple, and told them all what had transpired, boldly denouncing their worship, and declaring that he

could no longer keep up his connection with them. They would have seized him, and cast him into the dungeons beneath the Temple, for they had such places for parties whom they wished to get rid of. Boldly he defied them, but the priests appeared as if palsied—unable to move, but raging mad, foaming at the mouth, and cursing in such a way that, as he said, he wondered why the earth did not open up and swallow them. They cried to the guards to seize him ; but these men also stood like so many stocks or stones, while he walked quietly through their midst, and, bidding them good-bye, passed out of the temple. On arriving at the camp he narrated all that had taken place, and expressed his wonder at the inability of the priests to arrest him ; and not knowing how to account for it, he asked me to explain to him how it could be that these men, mad with rage, should be utterly unable to hurt him. I sat down with him, and explained to him the nature of the interference which had been made on his behalf—that it was just what had been often done before by those unseen ones who guarded us from evil. In our sitting on this occasion I gave him many illustrations of the power exerted by our guardians both in seen and unseen dangers.

Next morning he went out with me to attend a meeting with the people who had come together as a church for the purpose of choosing elders to rule over them. The church was formed with the help of some of the Hebrews, who had been secret followers of the Nazarene, in their own land, but now professed openly their faith. Having chosen some of their number to be elders, the people chose thereafter deacons—women to look after the females, and men to look after the males. When all this had been arranged, I rose and said : “You must now have one amongst you who is fitted to become your pastor—one who has the power of the Spirit in him ; and such an one stands here beside me. I give him to you for the work of pastor. Receive him. May he do his duty to you ! I may not learn in this world how he succeeds in the good work ; but this I know, that besides all that he knows of the theological systems of the Greeks and Romans, he has now got the true theology—a knowledge of Jesus and his doctrines. Listen to what he says to you when you come together.” I thereafter told them how he had come amongst us, and turning to him, I said : “See well to it that you be a faithful

and devoted servant to (not a master over) this people—a servant of the Great God, our Father.” This was the first pastor I had ever ordained.

The night before we left I heard this young man address the people. He spoke with such power that you might have heard the smallest insect fly past, the people sat so quiet and so deeply interested while listening to his words. He seemed as if entranced—he became fixed on the subject of his address. As I afterwards learned he was unconscious of his surroundings while addressing us. There were things he spoke of that were quite new to myself. That sermon endeared him to the hearts of all those who listened to him.

In all the churches formed in those days in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, they went hand in hand; they were all alike, brothers and sisters. Their faith seemed to bind them one to another in an indissoluble bond, which nothing would break—a sympathy linking them all into one compact mass. It was a beautiful sight to look on. It did one great good to attend their gatherings. Even some of those who opposed them seemed as if inspired to look on them as brothers and sisters, and the Great Spirit as their Father-God.

I knew this, but I knew it from Spirit-life: these brethren built a very fine temple of their own, and he whom I set over them went in and out among them till he was a very old man. He succeeded in gathering together a number of small communities in various places outside the city; and every day in the week was devoted by him to the good work of ministering to them. Ah, how unlike this to the conduct of his old companions, the priests of Diana! So kind was he to the widows and orphans of the city, and so willing to afford consolation to the dying, that the very enemies of the cause looked up to him and acknowledged his goodness; he walked in and out amongst even those who would have taken his life, but who dared not, so much was he esteemed by the citizens generally. The gold came into them from directions they knew not of, and well they knew that much of that which came in this way had formerly been devoted to the support of Diana. By this means the good pastor was enabled to found a number of schools for the education of poor children. Many a fatherless child had cause in after life to revere him; and

many a poor widow implored blessings on his head, who had kept her and her little ones from starvation. Had I done nothing else this case would have repaid me for all I had endured in my missionary life. That good pastor is still working with us, hand in hand, at work in the dark caverns of Hades. He has not visited the earth yet; indeed, he has ample work in Hades; he is so cut out for that work that he beats many of us, even *Hafed* himself.

But at length we had to part from the brethren; and it was hard to leave them. We were so drawn to one another that we could have remained altogether; but we had a duty to perform. Before leaving, we held a meeting in the open-air, remaining all night in prayer and fasting. We were told by those who surrounded us, that we had registered our names in the "Book of Memory," and these would never be forgotten.

Just as the morning sun was breaking, we bade farewell to those who were so dear to us—for many of them had to go to their ordinary occupations in the workshops, fields, and vineyards—and so we started on our journey towards Syria, which was now no great distance from us, and which we were anxious to reach as soon as we possibly could.

Thirty-third Sitting.

December 25th, 1878.

Cyprus—The Early Churches—On the Shores of the Mediterranean—The Old Arab nearing Home—His Advice to the Band—"Land of my Birth!"—Looking Back—Meet with "Brethren"—Heritable Property—How Hermes Disposed of it—An Anxious Inquirer—Believing in Jesus—Reformation—Hermes Provides for the Poor—The Old Chief Preaches in the Temple—A Night of Wonders—Death and Ascension of the Old Chief.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—I was expecting to get far on with my narrative to-night, but I see I will be unable to do so. Last night I spoke a good deal of the first church in which we had ordained elders and deacons, and how we had set out on our journey towards Syria, by way of the Great Sea. In crossing the eastern portion of Syria we came near to the island called Cyprus. I would have liked to have visited the island, as there was at

the time a community settled there—the result of the labours of Paul, and other apostles and evangelists. The towns, or cities, on the shores of the Great Sea at which we touched, were well advanced in the faith ; and many of the brethren whom we saw gave us a hearty welcome. They were all ready to hear something of Jesus, our Prince, or to hear anyone who was new to them setting forth the new doctrine. There had been a good deal of opposition experienced in these places. There is always such, especially if, as in this case, the doctrine preached is against the interests of the priests and others employed in connection with them, such as the silver-smiths, who did a great trade in ornaments for the temples, as also in jewellery for gods, goddesses, etc.

The brethren had not yet received the name of *Christians*, being only called followers of the Nazarene. We were a very plain people in general, and whether it was from the nature of the doctrines imbibed, I know not, but the wealthy who joined us threw off their gaudy apparel and put on something simple. I think they tried to follow, in this matter, the Prince himself.

We journeyed for some time, touching at various places, not losing much time, but hurrying on towards Syria ; and at length we entered on it. I did not make my entrance without some sad reflections. I knew that he whom I had found to be my grandfather was, now that we had reached it, about to leave me. This would be a second bereavement, which I would have to suffer, of one who truly loved me. I said nothing, but thought much, that I, too, in a short time would follow him. He was generally loved by all the company, and they were all more or less grief-stricken. Hitherto, there had always been a good deal of playfulness and mirth displayed by our young men, which we never thought of restraining. What was this disposition given for? Certainly it had its uses. Both mind and body are the better for a moderate share of mirth. Wherever you see a person possessed of a lively, mirthful disposition, you will generally find that person in good bodily health. When a man is sad and downcast, there is something wrong physically ; the channels through which the majestic blood flows are stopped in some way, and the body suffers. We had always, therefore, been pleased when we saw them indulging in a little mirth. But now, as I have said, all were sorrowful alike. I made some attempt to cheer their spirits up, but failed.

Indeed, the only one amongst our company in possession of glad-some spirits was my venerable grandfather. He laughed with joy as he beheld his beloved land. Stretching forth his hands, he joyfully exclaimed—"Land of my birth! Land of my fathers, I see thee once more. I come to thee, dear land, in my old age, to lay my weary body down."

The first day we crossed the boundary line, we pitched our camp for the night, and, after the usual services, we retired to our rest. Nothing particular occurred that night. Next morning found every one going about his duty in such a way that we appeared moving like a piece of machinery—every one was doing his portion of the work, but not a word was spoken. At our morning service, we all joined in an anthem. My grandfather took the lead on that occasion. Having prayed to the Most High, he delivered an address, chiefly to the young men. He told them of the various dangers that beset the season of youth, and how, amidst such dangers, they ought to be guarded in their steps. They might think him an old man, and that they had a long life before them, but his long life appeared to him now as but a very short span; and had he to live his life over again, it would be a very different life indeed from that which he had led. He told us how happy he was in meeting with us; and that he claimed us all as brothers—even the youngest of the company, for they were all very dear to his soul. Through the long ages of eternity he had to live they would never be forgotten by him. If they fell away from the faith, and sank to Hades, there would he seek them out, and attempt to draw them from its darkened caverns; for he never would be happy in the heaven he was going to if he found but one of them absent from his presence. He went on a good while in this strain, and their spirits began to revive—some beginning to doubt if his death would take place or not. But there were those who knew that what he was saying was not from the man, but from the spirit. After speaking for about two hours, he again prayed, and we sang another anthem.

After our morning meal, we at once struck our tents, and continued on the march till we reached the birthplace of my grandfather—and a beautiful spot it was for one to end his days in. I did not wonder, when I looked on the lovely scene, that my

grandfather had so longed to come to it. Hill and dale, lake and river, with the Great Sea in the near-distance, all combined to render it one of the most lovely spots on Earth's surface. The sun was setting when we arrived, and one could imagine the scene well fitted to portray the gate way through which the spirit gains an entrance to the glorious world beyond.

At the close of the day, when the sun had sunk, and we had pitched our camp, we settled down to rest for the night. There were but three who continued to sit—my grandfather, myself, and Abba, the chief of our Arab brethren. My grandfather sat for a long time without uttering a word, gazing into vacancy, for he could not look on the starry heavens, we being covered by the tent. At last I said,—“Why do you stare so earnestly at the roof of the tent?” He replied,—“I am just now thinking over that glorious scene which we set our eyes on to-night. How often, in my youth, have I gazed on these hills, as the sun sunk behind their tops! How often have I gazed on the spot on which we now are encamped! This ground I am now on I call my own. Those who now inhabit it would drive me from it as a stranger. But they cannot. Before many suns rise and set my bones will be laid in the sepulchre of our fathers.” I thought it a pity to disturb him in his meditations. His mind was wandering back over the loved scenes of his youth. He had sorrowful reflections also. He had even that night cause to remember the punishment that was laid on him. He saw life begin fair and promising; but in his lifetime he had done great evil, and had been the means of sending many an unprepared spirit into the other world before its time. Had such been allowed to live its allotted time, it might have been in a better condition in the place it had gone to. He had, he said, been thinking seriously on one thing—the meeting with those who would gnash their teeth at him in their despair.

I said, “Grandfather, do not let these things trouble you.” He said, “I have indeed repented deeply all the evil I have done; but what is repentance? I should have repented long ago. Can we go into that land, escaping the punishment we merit for the deeds we have done?” I tried to draw him from such thoughts; but no, he would not leave off touching on them. I wanted to examine his wound; but, though suffering much from it, he would allow no one to touch it.

That night, being sorrowful, our sleep was broken. Next day we rose early, and after having attended to our usual duties, we went forth to view the country round about. There was a village close by. We went into it, and found some brethren there, and joined with them that day in their services.

My grandfather went to the house he was born in, but a stranger now occupied it. He asked leave to enter, which was granted. On getting within, he asked permission to enter a certain room, and on entering he said it was there he first saw the light of day. The owner, a dignified-looking person, looked at him, and then, after some little explanation, he understood who he was. He said, "Do you come to claim your own?" If so, I am ready to give it up. The house was given to my father by the Government; but they had no right to dispose of your property, and therefore I have no right to hold it." To this my grandfather replied, "No, no; it is of no use to me. But this is my grandson; it may be he would like to possess it." I said I had as little use for it; and, turning to the man, I said, "Keep it for yourself and for your children; there is only one condition I would lay down, and that is, that you give so much to the poor every year."

There were no written documents on this occasion—only word of mouth; but in Syria, at that time, that was as sure as if it had been graven on iron, silver, or gold, and, like the laws of the Persians, unalterable.

This man was not one of the followers of the Nazarene, but rather opposed them a good deal. In course of conversation, I told him we were followers of Jesus of Nazareth. He looked somewhat strangely at us, as if surprised. Then I began and gave him some account of our travels and experiences, telling him that I had been with him (Jesus) in Judea. On which he observed that he had spoken with others who had also been with the Nazarene. I then told him much about Jesus and his doctrines.

After a good deal of conversation, in which for a while he opposed us much, he began to listen to what I said with deeper interest, appearing less inclined to dispute with me, and at last acknowledged that he saw now that there was something more in these views than he had ever seen before. But when I asked him

to meet with the brethren, he said that it would never do to mix himself up with these poor people. It was chiefly of the poor in that place that the brotherhood was composed.

Before leaving this personage, my grandfather spoke of his tomb—the tomb of his forefathers. “I would like,” he said, “my dust to mix with theirs.” He said he was welcome to that whenever it was required; and the keys of the tomb would be given up to us. And so we left him.

We were not long gone back to our encampment when we saw approaching a chariot with two horses, driven by servants. This was the person we had been conversing with. He said that he could not get what we had told him out of his mind—the more he pondered, the more restless he had become, and he resolved at once to see us again, so that he might get more light on the subject, and that for this purpose he would remain with us over night.

This was a proposal we gladly accepted; for we knew, from the position he occupied, if he was brought over to our side, he would be a great help to the poor brethren, while others would then be induced to follow his example who were, to a certain extent, afraid openly to declare themselves the disciples of the Nazarene.

We sat down, and opened up the Hebrew Scriptures to him, but found that he was acquainted with them to some extent (Judea and Syria joining each other, there was a good deal of intercourse kept up.) We showed him, by reference to the seers and prophets of the Hebrews, that they had prophesied of the advent of Jesus, and had written concerning his life and work. We pointed also to the sacred books of Syria, which also recorded the same things. He was a learned man, and well acquainted with the writings of the seers; he had also visited Greece, and taken part in discussions on various subjects while there. He appeared deeply interested in the subject of our conversation; and at last he said—“I see it. This Jesus is the One so long promised. But I looked for him to come as a great ruler or king of Judea. Now I see that his kingdom is not of the earth, but of heaven; that he is King of the land beyond this earth—King of the Kings of the earth.”

Day after day he came to us, and we discussed many points of doctrine. Some of these were knotty; but on every occasion of

sitting with us he expressed his satisfaction. At last he openly professed his adherence to the doctrines of Jesus, and acknowledged himself a follower of the Nazarene.

There was only one small temple in the village, where the inhabitants worshipped. Their mode of worship could not exactly be called idolatry, though not far from it in certain of its features. A statue of Apollo had at one time been set up, but it was broken down from age. Their worship was a sort of mixture between the Jewish and the old doctrines of the Syrians. Our new convert went direct to the priests who officiated in the little temple, and told them about his change; that he believed they were all wrong, and that the followers of the Nazarene held the true doctrines. These priests, were illiterate, and, though exercising a sacred calling, had little belief of a future life; and, when he spoke to them of the Spirit-world, he found that he would require to teach them concerning it. But the result was that the temple was cleared out of all that appertained to the old service, and converted into a true temple for the worship of the living God. These priests were also converted to the faith, and afterwards became preachers of the Gospel of Jesus. The few brethren, who had been struggling for a long time to maintain the faith, and held their meetings in a hut, had now this temple in which to worship, and it was not long ere all the people of the village professed to be of one faith. I made the church promise to pay over to the poor a tenth of all their collections every year; and this was faithfully done by those who ruled over the church, which made the village a happy place indeed; for they who were poor, or unable to labour, were not unprovided for, but supported in comfort till death came to their relief.

I think we had not been above a week there when that which had brought us thither appeared to have been forgotten by us, so much and deeply interested were we in our missionary work. The temple was at length opened for the worship of God, and about a week afterwards my grandfather went and preached to the people. In the course of his address, he told the assemblage who he was. Some of the very aged people remembered him well—they had known him when they were all children together. He told them what he had come there for—to lay his bones on the soil on which he was born.

The address was one to be remembered, in which he opened up to them the beautiful doctrines of Jesus, and after pressing them upon the attention of his hearers, he solemnly bade them all farewell. Those who were known to him he embraced, telling them that now having had the true worship brought to them they should strictly follow it till the time came to lay off the mortal garments and take on those of the Spirit-life. He said he would welcome them to the land of the Spirit, whither he would soon go before them. And so he and they parted for a time.

That night the nobleman, the person who had taken so prominent a part in this movement, came to our camp. My grandfather thought that he would not see another sunrise in the mortal body; this feeling on his part produced its effect on us all at our evening service—an air of solemnity, in which everyone appeared to be thinking over his past history and occupied with his own thoughts. The old man stood up and spoke to us as strong and hale-like as on the day we first met him. Night was wearing into morning, as we sat in the large tent that we occasionally used for worship. We sat in a circle, while the old man occupied the centre. He stood up and spoke to us. Just as the light of the coming day was about to break on us, the tent got filled by a luminous body, such as we had aforetime seen. One after another came into view—inhabitants of the Spirit-world. A crowd of human faces looked down on us, and on the aged man standing in our midst. He seemed to change: his garments and his skin became as it were transformed, and his whole person was surrounded by a clear light, electric like. Then we saw him gradually sink down, with his hands clasped, and a smile on his face. We heard the words—"Farewell, my brethren, I will see you again in the land of the Spirit," and quietly he passed away. Two bright ones stood by his side (one of these in female form), and appeared as if they were lifting a babe from its cradle. They held him up! And here we saw the old man in spirit form—and there we beheld the mortal body at our feet. The bright ones bore him up till once in the midst of their company. Gradually he rose up to a standing posture, right above the spot where the cast-off body lay; while a sweet smile came over his face as he looked around on us. Then, as we eagerly gazed, the bright company ascended in one grand column, amid a burst of

melodious music, ravishing to our ears,—that glorious band ascended on high, and left behind all that was mortal of my dear old grandfather.

Here I had again to look on the marble clay of one I loved. But, this time, with what difference in my feelings! There was no bitter, despairing cry—no cursing in my mind. I only wished that my end might be like his end.

Thirty-Fourth Sitting.

January 15th, 1879.

Reflections on the Death of the Old Chief—Funeral Rites—"Dust to Dust"—Joppa—The Plague—Hermes and Band busy among the Stricken—Hermes Struck down by Fever—His Dying Words—On the Borders of Egypt—The Last Night—The Shadow of Darkness—Daybreak—Hermes Describes his Departure from Earth, and His Reception in the Better Land.

(*Controlled by HERMES.*)—Last night we met I gave you an account of the departure of my aged grandfather. He had reached Syria, the land of his birth; and was there gathered to his fathers. Thus far he had got his wish, and had now joined those he had loved in youth in that land where there is no more parting. They had assembled ready to receive the spirit after it had struggled into liberty. He had now laid aside the old house which had contained a noble soul, though many of the precious years allotted to it on earth had been mis-spent.

Alas, how often is this the case in multitudes of individuals! He had been created for better things, but he had gone after the things of the world—following the demon of war. But, happily, he was stopped, though late, in his course, and won over to the other side. He had fought valiantly for the truth, and against evil, and, so far, had made up for the wrongs he had inflicted in his life-time on his fellow-men. Thus had he averted, in some measure, the fate which awaits the workers of iniquity—that misery, which often lasts for ages, might have been his had he gone into Spirit-life in the state in which we found him amongst his adopted people.

The funeral rites were very carefully attended to, as the old man had been very particular in his directions how his body was

to be laid. I said, at the time he was giving these directions, that so far as I was concerned, the casting off and disposal of my old clothing did not cost me a thought. He said—"Why not? Has this old body not done me good service? Had I been reckless and thrown it away, I would not have been in the same condition I am in now. With all my faults and failings, I always looked after this earthly part. But, whatever may be said on the matter, I know my body will mingle with the dust from whence it came, and I should like that it should mix with that of my kindred—from them it came, let it return to them. My spiritual part shall go to Him from whom it came." Accordingly, we followed the instructions we had received from him—nothing was omitted.

The people of the place were very much drawn to us during our stay with them, and they expressed a desire that we should remain with them altogether. But I said that could not be; we must go on. I knew that I would never reach the land of Egypt, yet I wished eagerly to go on. I had more to do before I left the earth, and thought to go on to Palestine, having a desire to visit Jerusalem and see how the brethren were getting on there. But there was always something coming in the way to prevent that visit.

We went on towards Joppa, from which place we might travel to Egypt by land. I was beginning to think I might yet reach Egypt, for I felt as strong and healthy as ever I had been in all my lifetime. My bodily health seemed to me to increase along with my spiritual faith.

On arriving at Joppa, we found that a plague had broken out, and therefore we tried to do what we could to attend to the poor round about the city. There were many shepherds, agricultural labourers, and slaves struck down by the disease, and many of them died. We were very busy going about amongst the poor sufferers, rendering them material help and giving what consolation we could. Though these poor people contributed by their toil to the wealth of their masters, these seemed to care more for their beasts than for their slaves, who were as good men as they were themselves, and many of them far better.

During our wanderings among the poor folks, the seeds of the disease were sown in more than one of our frames. We were as susceptible to disease as others; but, according to our way of

living, hardly so ready to catch infection as many of the towns-folks. This made us the more bold to go in and out amongst the stricken ones. But we came from a different climate, and the change made us open to attack by the disease. Those of us who were strong in constitution or purer in blood might escape, but the weaker must succumb. I began to think that this was probably the way I would be taken from the earth ; but this idea just made me all the bolder, and I worked the harder, so that, wherever help was required, I was ready to render it. But one morning I awoke with the light, after a very restless night. I was fevered, and I felt my brain as if it had been on fire. I at once knew that I was in the first stage of the disease that was raging around us. I told the brethren, and they tried to cheer me ; but I knew that this attack would be the finishing of my earth-life. When I had told them this, they wished to leave the place, but I entreated them to remain. I was only one, and they were many ; and through their acquaintance with the healing herbs of the field they might still be useful to many a poor sufferer. As for me, I had no desire to go, for I knew that, according to that which had been foretold, I would never be able to reach the land of Egypt. "I see now clearly, my brethren, that this is how I am to finish my course. We have had many wanderings up and down, and many hardships to face, yet withal, we have been always very happy, for we all have looked forward to that better time when we shall meet each other in the land beyond, and recount all the things that have happened to us in our great mission. I have done my part of the glorious work ; but there is still much work before you to do. Go forth to it. Never mind me—my work is finished ! Turn not away from the good work—some of you are but beginning. Preach peace and good-will to all men, and brotherly love, till each man look on his fellow man as a brother."

The fever raged for two or three days, during which state I cannot say I was conscious, though I knew that my Spirit-friends were hovering near me. But I came back again to consciousness, and I felt myself better. On waking up I found that they had struck their camp, and were about to take me with them. I prayed them to remain, but I had to give in for once. I was like a child in their hands—weak and enfeebled by fever. They were

anxious that I should recover. It was then I found out how very dear I was to them all. It is at such seasons that we realise the position we occupy among our fellow-men. Six of our young men bore me along. After travelling for two days, we came close on the land of Egypt—just on its borders. I could see it in the distance.

That night, after pitching their tents and laying me down, for I could neither stand nor sit up, I called them all around me. I said that they had done all they could to take me away from the plague-stricken city, where many a soul was being removed to the world beyond; but this night I would have to leave them. During the day, while I slept, I told them that I had been with my Spirit-friends, and that they had told me that this night I would be with them.

After speaking to my beloved brethren for a length of time far beyond the strength I had, I again fell into a slumber (so I was told). During that time I was once more with my friends of the Spirit-world. I saw them all together. I thought I had left the body, and was even pitying those I had left on earth. But I was told that I must go back again to my body; so I awoke again from my slumber. The brethren standing around me asked of me what I had been dreaming about. I said, "Of nothing;" but in a short time it flashed on my brain that I had been dreaming, and then I remembered my dream. I told them all that I had seen, and that I considered it but a foretaste of that which would follow when I parted from my frail body.

I felt myself growing gradually weaker. The sun was setting at the time. Just as he went down into darkness, I felt as though light was departing from me—gradually it grew darker, and then suddenly all was darkness. I heard voices around me, but I could not answer them. Then I heard a sad wailing sound—and that I knew as the voices of my Arab brethren, who had passed through so much with me, bewailing my decease. Gradually I perceived that they all bent down their faces to the earth, surrounding my body. Here lay in the centre what was once known as me. I looked down on the bent figures, and would have spoken if I could; but I had not the power—not knowing the way.

Gradually I began to see those I had loved in my youth, and also my grandfather. My mother was the first to clasp me to her

bosom. I had never witnessed such a joyful meeting as I experienced that evening. And yet something drew me towards earth : I felt anxious about my Arab brethren that I had left behind. I had been hitherto a leader to them ; but I knew there was one amongst them who would be able to keep them together—to take my place. Still I felt for these men, and my first effort was to plead with those around me in the Spirit-world to help me still to lead them on. You have now got the last of me on earth, and the first of my life in the Spirit-world.

ANAH AND ZITHA:

Two Persian Evangelists.

ANAH AND ZITHA:

Two Persian Evangelists.

First Sitting.

December 8th, 1880.

The Church in Persia—Persecution—Church Scattered—The Two Brethren Sent Out—Anah's Vision—Watch and Pray—Arabia—Meeting with Hermes—Arabian Communities.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—To-night, as I promised, I carry you back to a scene I described before*—to that night, in Persia, when our little flock was scattered—when we were driven out from our humble meeting-house, in which we had met with the heavenly beings, and within the walls of which we had experienced so much delightful intercourse. Driven out, to find shelter in the wilds and forests of Persia, we could, with our great Master, say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but we have not where to lay our heads." But yet, the whole earth was before us; we could go where we liked. We would not desert the work we had begun. But how could we leave the little flock—those true and earnest souls, and their little ones? I determined to remain with them to the last—more especially as I knew that my time on the earth was drawing to a close. My two friends, Anah and Zitha, who had so nobly taken part with me in the work, surrendering all the privileges enjoyed by the Magi of Persia, had become as ardent followers of the Prince as ever I had been. Who so fit to go forth to the world as these, my brethren, to testify to the truth of the sayings and doings of Jesus, our Master, which I had imparted to them, and which they understood in all their fulness? We of Persia were not to be behind Judea in

* See *Hafed, Prince of Persia*, page 212.

sending out missionaries to the world! What if Persia put forth all her power to crush us by persecution? Let them do so; but we will carry the truths they reject to other lands. Our seers and prophets foretold a great persecution against the followers of Jesus in every land; and, in sending my two friends to visit the churches I had planted, they might have an opportunity of confirming them in the faith, and encouraging them in the heat of persecution. "Go forth, then," I said, "and in the name of Jesus, our Prince—Prince of Heaven and of Earth—lay your lives down, if need be, for his sake."

It was in the forest that the last meeting took place with my two brethren—a night or two before the rude hands of the Romans were laid on those who were left—and these were but few. My two friends pled hard with me to allow them to stay, and share whatever fate befel us. I said—"No, my brethren, this may not be. I am determined to remain. It hath been arranged by the Spirit-world that you go out, while I remain with these, my poor brothers and sisters, who look up to me as their pastor. If I am torn from them, perhaps another will be raised up as their leader. But, if destined to perish with them, the sacrifice will become even like to that of our Prince on Calvary. Out of our death there will arise new life, giving a great spring to the cause of Truth in Persia."

After praying for a blessing on the two, I said, like the Master, when he sent out his disciples, "Go forth; carry nothing with you, for ye shall be supplied on your journey with whatever is needful. Go ye further than his disciples, even to the ends of the earth. Those Romans who are now making Persia lick the dust, have gone to far-distant countries—they are but preparing a way for you. They have persecuted the followers of Jesus—Christians, as they call them—but they are only helping on the great cause they ignorantly seek to put down."

The two brethren then went round the little band—not more than twenty-six in all—falling on each one's neck, and pressed on them a fervent kiss—the last kiss that would be given on earth. There was no cheek dry—even the sun-burnt toilers of the field wept at the parting—for the two were as a whole army that were going from us. But it was the will of the Spirit-world, and that was enough. They went away, and each one of our little band

fell on their knees, and prayed that they might succeed in their mission.

Now, as I have no wish to give you their story from my point of view, I will let Anah speak to you, first through me, and then through the medium. He says :—

That night was a night of sorrow to us all when we went out from the presence of the venerable Hafed and his followers—out into the unsheltering wilderness ; and yet it was, in some measure, with joy, for we knew that in going out as we had been desired by Hafed, we were on the Master's work. We had tried to persuade him to allow us to remain a little longer with him ; for we felt that, day by day, he was failing in strength, and old age was creeping on him. But nothing we could say had any effect on him. He was determined to send me out to look after the churches he had planted. I certainly was not much younger, but then I was more able to stand fatigue, for when he was wandering hither and thither over the earth, I was quietly attending to my duties in connection with the Magi. I felt, as if it were whispered in my ear, that troubles were coming on, and that we ought to remain. But no, Hafed was firm ; and, after engaging in worship, in which all had supplicated a blessing on us, Zitha and I went out on our mission, sad, as I have said, and yet glad that we were chosen to carry on the good work in other spheres.

After sunset, we prepared to lay down under the shelter of the green trees. At our devotions we heard the roaring and growlings of wild beasts, but our trust was in God whom we worshipped ; and we fell asleep. While we slept, I dreamt—whether a dream or vision, I cannot say—but I felt as one awake. My past life came all up before me from boyhood onwards. I saw myself frustrated in love, and my soul burning with hatred and wrath against my rival. I saw my own dastardly attempts at the assassination of Hafed : I saw the trial before the King of Persia : my condemnation, and that of my household, to death—Hafed's intercession for me his implacable enemy—I saw myself given over to him as a slave, when he at once set me free, and forever bound me to him by the cords of love. I saw myself and my bosom friend fighting as warriors against our country's foe, and afterwards joining the Magi. All this and much more passed as it were before me in review. Then there seemed to come up

before me the forms of friends that had long ago departed from the body, and these foreshowed what would happen to the Church in Persia—how our brethren whom we had just left would be persecuted and hunted to death like wild beasts of the forest. I was shown the necessity there was for our mission : that we were to go forth on a mission of peace and good-will to men,—even to our enemies we were to show love—to pray for them, but never to curse or injure them. When we felt our anger rising, we were to crush it. (This was all needed, for though a brother of the Magi, and a minister of the new faith, I was but a man, and I felt it hard to curb my feelings when I saw poor prisoners of war driven away into slavery by rough soldiers ; at such times I could have lifted the sword on behalf of oppressed men—but I had foresworn its use, and now it was the sword of the Spirit I was called upon to use.) All this passed before me in vision.

I awoke, and found my companion fast asleep, while the bright stars twinkled down on two lonely creatures. All was silent, and I prayed for strength to do all that had been set before me in vision ; and that the great and holy messengers of heaven might be our guides, for well I knew my frailty, and that there were those who stood behind ever ready to mislead men from the paths of righteousness and truth.

I had been well instructed on the subject of Spirit-influence—of evil ones ready to take possession, and the necessity of watchfulness and prayer to escape from the evil. That was a condition I was often in—pride of self ; false pride. It is good for all men to study self, to watch and pray to be directed in the right path ; if they do not, they will be most surely led astray. Though an ancient, I think I am quite able to advise you on this subject of Spirit-influence. I will yet speak on this, for I view it now from a Spiritual point of view ; but I must now leave you.

(HAFED *resumed*).—There has been some difficulty in addressing you—for our friend had to do it through the medium—but it will be easier next time.

Being in the neighbourhood of Bushire, and nigh to the sea, I was afraid they would be pointed out and hands laid on them ; but it so happened they passed on unobserved by some of our greatest enemies, and also some good friends—the eyes of the Magi seeming to be blinded, or else the two brethren had been

transfigured, so that they were not known. On reaching the port, they found a ship ready to sail for the other side of the Gulf. Paying the captain, they went on board, and, in a short time, were landed on the opposite shore. There they met with Hermes, who had encamped nigh to where they landed. He had seen them coming (as he has already told you in his narrative). He had been thinking of visiting me at the time. Had he come to me amid all the dangers that were closing around us, it would have been one happy moment. I knew the love he had for the Master (and still has), and when I thought how both of us had been brought for a time under the same tutor, and become so dear to each other, I would have been happy had he managed to come. He might have come without danger, claiming to be of a different nation. But, indeed, he was under better protection than man or nation could give. He was under the protection of the Spirit-world, and, like myself, drawing on towards his end.

You have a short account from Hermes of his meeting with the two brethren. They resolved to go back on the same route which had been taken by Hermes and his Arab band. As they went on, they heard good accounts of the labours of Hermes. They found some of the little churches, or communities, he had founded on his mission, going on steadfastly, adding to their numbers, and, bit by bit, throwing off their old superstitions. The people were coming out of their old religious notions, which were quite foreign to the simple but sublime truths taught by Jesus. No doubt many of them felt it hard to do so, seeing they had, in their half-barbarous state, been enveloped in darkness.

It is the same thing at the present day : men still find it very hard to throw off their old notions of the Spirit-world and of those who inhabit it. They need more light on the subject. Be it your duty to let more light shine.

My two brothers saw that many of these Arabian communities were fast getting quit of their old ideas, and beginning to be in deep earnest about the world to come; but they were sorry to see that among some of these there were men who went so far as to forget the world in which they were still dwellers. This was not as Jesus taught. So long as men are in the body they are bound to supply bodily wants by the labour of their hands. But the men I am referring to would sit idly and look for Heaven's

earthly blessings to come down to them. My two friends entertained very different ideas on this point. They, being educated as Magi, showed such men their duty to themselves and their families first of all, and then how to do their duty to their fellow-men and to the world at large. They showed them that the Great Spirit had placed mankind on the earth, not to sit with folded arms, but to obey his laws—to plant the seed in due season, and expect the harvest which would spring from earth's generous womb. They set before them the great truth that the Heavenly Father was equally gracious to all his children in these earthly gifts—believe what they might, if they sowed they would reap. This was His never-changing law, applicable to the rebel sons of men and also to those who never varied from the paths of truth and virtue. The same sun gave forth light and heat on the one as on the other—the same blessing descended equally on all. From this they argued that man should be ever active in the duties resting on him ; and in all his dealings to learn the great lesson that the Great Spirit set before him—to deal kindly with those who might not think as he thought, to treat even enemies lovingly. They spoke to them of the example of Jesus, and how the brethren in Persia, even in the midst of persecution, had followed in the blessed Master's steps. . . . They dwelt in perfect safety from molestation ; yet the day would come when they too would suffer ; but at this time they dwelt in peace, and in the enjoyment of their theological views. My two friends opened up to them the things they knew of Zoroastrian theology. Hermes had imparted to them Egyptian lore, and placing these and the doctrines of Jesus together, they were led to see the harmony that existed—that the great truths in the three systems ran in one groove. When they looked back at their old ideas they began to educate themselves. They had, as wild Arabs, only what their fathers had taught them, and had been sunk low in vice, casting aside all that made men great and noble. And what a change had come over them ! They were now honest men and traders, and saw it to be advantageous to have education, so that they might not only be able to deal justly with those who traded with them, but to be able also to see that they were not unjustly dealt with, as they had been in former times when they came to dispose of their plunder.

I wish to begin in Egypt and go over my old route, visiting Jerusalem, Greece, Rome, and other places, and along the borders of the Adriatic Sea, thence to Spain and Gaul. I will not go farther to-night. [Benediction.]

Second Sitting.

December 15th, 1880.

The Old Arab Chief—Teachings of Jesus embrace all Truths—The Great Tent—Spirit Music—The Old Chief Speaks—Spirits Address the Assembled Audience—A Prediction.

(*Controlled by HAFED*).—On parting from Hermes and his company, my two friends had been advised by him to call, on their way to the Red Sea, on that chief whose daughter he had rescued, and from whom he had received so much kindness. Accordingly, travelling under a burning sun for some time, they traversed a portion of the mountainous district, and at length arrived at his camp. The old chief sat at the door of his tent. He had seen them at some distance coming towards him, and, thinking it was some of Hermes's band returning, he went forth to meet them, but on coming up he saw that they were strangers. My two friends, though themselves well up in years, saluted him as a father, for they saw that he was a very old man, and his long, flowing white hair added to his venerable appearance.

After reading the letter of introduction from Hermes, he fell on their necks and kissed them. "The fame of those you come from has travelled before you," he said. "Some merchants passed this way, and told us of your work in Persia; how you had set up a house in which you worshipped a strange God—not the God of Persia, and that you had neither altars nor priests. But we soon came to understand what these merchants were referring to, from the instruction we had received from Hermes." He said that after Hermes and his companions had left him he had pondered much over what had been told him by Hermes concerning God and the Spirit-world; and that great good had been the result, as it had brought about a reconciliation with those who were once his enemies. Now they were living peaceful lives, and worshipped and served the God that Hermes and his

company had set forth—the same God he had aforetime worshipped, but in a different way. He thought it better for him and his people to follow as closely to this way as possible. The letters sent by Hermes to him were read every day to his assembled people in the camp.

The two brethren whom I had sent out on this mission, were well versed in all the laws of Persia, and also of Arabia. Both had been warriors, and had fought against the Arabs at the time of the inroads I have already spoken of. Being of the Magi, they were educated in all the learning of Persia, and could speak to the people. Accordingly, when the chief and his people were thus assembled, my two friends got up and spoke to them. They first of all quoted from the sacred records of Arabia the great truths to be found therein; afterwards referred to the same truths to be found in the teachings of Zoroaster; then to the Egyptian records, and, last of all, to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, from which they showed how all the chief doctrines of the ancients were harmonised. They then went on to speak of the Master—of his holy life—his wonderful works, his pure and simple doctrines, of the cruel death endured by him, and his resurrection and ascension.

The old man listened with rapt attention to the words of my two friends, and declared that now the teachings of the Master had been opened up in a way so simple—so plain, that even a child, who had hardly learned to lisp its words, might easily understand.

That night he asked them to their great council tent, where he met with merchants or traders journeying towards the sea, to buy and sell from the merchants along the coast. The venerable chief asked my two friends if they had the same power of communicating with the angels of heaven as Hermes had: could they bring the spirits of departed good men and women to join with them for a time? "Yes," they said; "we have those who attend and guide us, and if we meet to-night they will, we doubt not, be present with us."

The old man was glad when he was thus assured. The assembly took place in the large tent. Anah and Zitha stood in the centre. The old men of the tribe formed the inmost circle, while the aged females sat behind, forming the second circle, and

so on, circle after circle, according to age, till it came to the outermost—the circle of children old enough to attend.

There was no difficulty in making this arrangement ; for when they arrived at any of their regular camping grounds, a portion of the ground was laid out for the various tents, while for the great tent, in which they held their meetings, the allotted ground was hollowed out, rising from the centre by small circular terraces ; and frequently they had no such preparation to make when the camping ground happened to be one which they had used before. The whole space thus terraced was then covered by the tent. On these raised platforms they seated themselves, not like the Egyptians or Persians, but with their legs crossed. By this means all had a sight of what was going on in the centre. The priest of the tribe always kept in the centre. All their council meetings were thus held.

My two friends went into the centre, and, standing there, they lifted up their eyes and hands to heaven, and prayed that a blessing might be showered down that evening on themselves and on those to whom they had been sent. After prayer, they bent their heads in the dust and waited. Shortly, music was heard at a distance, but seemed gradually to come rolling on nearer and nearer—louder and still louder and more distinct was the sound, until it seemed to settle right above the tent. At first those within the tent appeared to be afraid. They could not understand where such music could come from : they had never listened to such sweet harmonies in their life. Musical instruments in those days, in that part of the country, were very rude, and it was not surprising that they showed signs of fear. Many of them, indeed, rose, and would have fled ; but my friends beckoned to them to keep quiet. The music seemed to soften down, and to fill the centre of the area in which my two friends stood. Darkness then spread over all ; and then our friends began to look around them, and they saw that every face became illumined, and seemed to throw out a light of its own. As their eyes became accustomed to it, they saw that the light was a reflection thrown on the faces of the people, not from them, but from individuals who stood by them—absorbed by them and then thrown off. These individuals were visitors from the Spirit-world—the departed friends of those who had assembled there. The forms were faint, but gradually

they took shape, and filled up the centre area. The old chief seemed to be drawn from his position into the centre, right between my two friends, and spoke to his people in a way he had never done before. The people stood wondering at his words. It was all so different from the nature of the addresses that he had been accustomed to make in the same place ; these had not been regarding the goodness of the God of heaven, but how best to overcome his enemies. Now the chief was praying for a blessing on his enemies, and on all who were the enemies of their fellow-men. He then exhorted the assembled tribe to live at peace with all men, to do all they could to put down enmity between man and man, between nation and nation ; and implored them to show love to their fellow-men on every occasion, and by so doing they would at last reap a blessed reward. He continued for a long time to speak in this manner to his people.

When the chief ended his address, the Spirit-visitors assumed forms more plain, and which could be easily perceived. One of these spoke to them, saying—"Be ye kind to those who have come amongst you. They are outcasts from their own land because of the truth. They go forth to the world, with love in their hearts, to give what they themselves have received to those with whom they meet, and they will thus become a blessing to all who listen to them."

One after another of these visitors spoke to the astonished people around, till they began to think they were not Spirits, but men like themselves, come in amongst them in some mysterious way. But the Spirits, perceiving their thoughts, said—"We are of the same tribe as yourselves. Years on years have passed away ; suns and moons have long pursued their course, since we were the leaders of this once mighty tribe. We come back to you. We have been watching your proceedings, step by step, till the present time. We know of this change which has come upon you. Stand fast by the truths which have been uttered in your hearing. But we must warn you that the day is coming when there shall arise one from amongst you—one who will upheave and turn over all the simple and loving truths you have now received."

That was a night to be remembered by the people of this tribe, and much good was the result of the Spirit manifestations that took place. [Benediction.]

Third Sitting.

February 9th, 1881.

For the Red Sea—The Wild Arabs—Arrival—A Church—Its Creed—Love for Hermes—A Temple Proposed to be Built—A Useful Monument—Elders of the Church—African Savages—Unknown Language—A Mission to the Savage Tribe—Feasting—Invitation to Preach—Belief in Evil Spirits.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two friends stayed for a short season with the old Arab Chief, and it was a pleasant season to them and profitable to the people of the tribe. They enjoyed much of true spiritual communion, while the people listened with open ears to the words of truth, and to the opening up of the mysteries of the world of spirits.

At length, after spending a night in spirit communion, or, as it may be called, Divine service, they once more started on their journey, making for the Red Sea. The whole tribe accompanied them for a short distance from the camp, bidding them farewell, and wishing them success in their mission. On leaving those who had dealt so kindly with them—treated them, indeed, as members of their own tribe—they went forth on their way rejoicing, and thanking the Great Spirit that one had gone before them who had prepared the way for them.

In the days I am speaking of, it was dangerous to travel in Arabia, because of the predatory habits of a number of the tribes scattered here and there, from the shores of the Persian Gulf to those of the Red Sea, who would have attacked without hesitation even harmless travellers, such as my brethren. But they felt they were under the special care and guidance of the Spirit-world; and if robbers fell on them by the way, what could they take from them? They went forth as Apostles of Jesus, our Prince, without scrip or purse, depending on his promised presence to help them when in trouble.

When, passing through life, one flings himself wholly on the protection of God's angels, how wonderfully is he guided and watched over! They went forth, not knowing whither they were going; but, as the Spirit led them, on they would go over the face of the earth. They purposed meanwhile to make for Egypt, knowing that a church was established there, and thence journey to Palestine and meet with the brethren in Jerusalem.

Their journey was long. At length they reached the village at the entrance to the Red Sea, where Hermes had founded a church. The little band had grown into a large body, and almost the whole people of the village had become followers of the Nazarene. They had, to some extent, adopted the old Arabian truths, or doctrines, combining with these the teachings of Jesus which Hermes had laid before them—worshipping God in accordance with that which they had received from my friend. They still, however, held fast some of the laws recorded in the old Scriptures of the Arabians.

My friends told them of their interview with Hermes and his band after they had crossed from Persia to Arabia; and the people were happy to hear tidings of him whom they called master, who had been the means of leading them out of the darkness of idolatrous superstition into the new light which shone from the doctrines of Jesus the Prince; so much did they esteem Hermes that they looked on him in the light of a God or demi-God, and in a manner partly worshipped him. Seeing this, Anah and Zitha thought it their duty to warn the people against this tendency to idolatry. They were not, they said, to look up to one man more than to another; they were to love and esteem highly every good and wise teacher; but that all the worship they gave was to be given to the Father in Heaven—the Great Spirit—the Father of Spirits; that even Jesus the Prince who came down from heaven from that Father, to teach mankind—to bring together all the doctrines of the Great Teachers and Messengers who had come before him, and make them one great whole—even he, who was above them all, did not look for worship from his brother man, but taught the people that when they worshipped, they were to worship the Father, who was his Father and their Father. They showed them that Jesus looked on all mankind as his brothers and sisters, children of the same Father; all he asked of them was, that they were to love all, whether enemies or friends—love them as brothers; for in so doing they would be able to overcome the greatest enemy.

My two brethren remained in this place for a season, going in and out amongst the people, and the fruits of their labours became manifest in the growth of the church. The people had, up till the time I am speaking of, been worshipping in the open

air, but as all seasons would not suit for this purpose, it was proposed to erect a great temple or meeting-house. My two friends, like myself, came from the Magi, and had no great idea of worshipping in a house. The universe was the Temple of God, and the star-spangled heavens the roof of that temple. All we looked for was something to shade us, such as trees, or the recesses of the forest. But at the close of my earth-life, we worshipped under a humble roof. We sought not to deck out our meeting-house with grand and costly ornaments; for we knew well that those from the world of spirits would meet with us there as well as in some vast and gorgeous temple. If the labour of thousands were required to erect such a structure as was proposed it would not be according to the will of the Great Spirit.

Anah and Zitha therefore set themselves to advise the people against going to great expense in that which they proposed; that a vast plain building, with a simple covering to protect them from the broiling sun, or the rain when it fell, was all that was needed. But, no! they would have something grander. "How would God," they said, "come down to receive worship in such a place!"

"He came down to you in his angelic ministers when you stood in the market-place—where some came to cheat, rob and steal; and why should you think that these holy messengers will not visit you now as they did before?"

It was of little use urging them farther on the point. A number of them, they said, were rich men, who had thrown in much gold for the purpose of raising a house in which to worship the Divine Being, and they felt that they could not well draw back.

Our two friends before they left saw the first stones of the foundation laid of one of the grandest structures ever raised in Arabia. Being a place frequented at the time by merchants from all parts of the East, it had become a great emporium for costly merchandise such as rich silks from Persia and India; ivory from Arabia, and gold from Ethiopia. From this place goods were sent hither and thither to many distant countries. Thus it was that the people were enabled to build such a temple—they not only gave of their own substance, but they had large gifts from those rich strangers, who thought it expedient to contribute to such an erection in a place that was fast growing into

mercantile importance. Such men would have contributed as readily to uphold an idol temple. This temple was built for the worship of the true God, but in course of time it was turned to a very different purpose—even the worshipping-place for the propagation of a false system.

Before leaving for Egypt my two brethren were taken across the sea to the African coast, where they were shown a monument which had been erected over the body of the Egyptian who had been slain by the sea-robbers on the other side as narrated by Hermes, while he and his party were travelling along that coast. These robbers belonged to the place I have been speaking of ; and now they looked on this monument not only as a memorial of the murdered man, but as a finger-post pointing to the time when Hermes brought light to bear upon them and their dark deeds of plunder and rapine. It might be said truly that the death of this individual brought true life to the people of this Arabian town. He was sacrificed, and by that the redemption of his murderers was brought about, and all this may be ascribed to the forbearance of Hermes and his company at the time of the murder, which led afterwards, when he came back amongst them, to an acknowledgment on the part of these sea-robbers that they had been following evil courses, and their willingness to be directed in the ways of righteousness.

Previous to this visit to the monument, my two friends had appointed elders, or head-men, of the church that had been formed. There was no one in particular who regularly preached to them ; but any one amongst them, on whom the spirit lighted, would rise up and speak. I believe some very powerful addresses were made, which told greatly on the foreigners who came to their assemblies, giving them something to carry back to their own homes. These elders formed part of the company who had gone along with them to the monument. So, on arriving at the spot where the body of the poor man had been buried, they surrounded the pillar. It was a beautiful piece of Arabian architecture. My two brethren and the elders stood in the centre beside the pillar. Lifting up their hands in the attitude of prayer, the whole company, as was their custom, bent their knees to the ground, and laid their heads in the dust. While one of my friends gave utterance to prayer, each one of the company repeated, sentence

by sentence, that which was spoken. An anthem was then sung, and, while the band of brethren were still absorbed in their devotions, and the bright sun of heaven shining down on them, my two friends, who were standing erect, leading the devotions, became aware that they were not the only occupants of that desert spot. Quickly there had assembled round about them a host of wild-looking men, evidently as wild as the hills from which they had descended, or as the beasts that roamed about them. Doubtless they had come for plunder. They, as was afterwards ascertained, had often gathered round that beautiful pillar in wonder and awe ; for nothing of that character had ever met their eyes, living as they did in caves, or burrowing like animals in the earth. But there they stood, and from their looks they appeared to wonder at the attitude of the brethren gathered round the pillar—my two friends standing while the Arabians knelt on the ground. The two brethren looked steadily at these wild, ferocious looking men. The Arabs, who were still bending in the dust, were unaware of their presence, they had come so silently on the scene. Seeing the likelihood of being attacked, my friends prayed that the Spirit-world would protect them from those evil-looking men. But wild though they were, my friends felt that they were men—brothers of the great family of God ; that though in a low and degraded condition they were spirits—the offspring of the same Father, and would as well as themselves become inhabitants of the Spirit-world. Though they had come down from the hills to rob or murder them, they would, with the help of the servants of the Most High, try and do them good. Such was the substance of their unspoken prayers ; and, while thus engaged, they saw that each one of that wild host lifted up his right arm, in which was held a dart ; their eyes seemed fixed on the individuals of the band they meant to strike ; but there they stood, their darts poised in the air—stood like so many monuments, when all at once there came a sound, like thunder, rolling overhead. Those who were on their knees rose, and, turning round, faced their opponents ; and as the eyes of the brethren fell on the wild men, they were seen to drop on their knees, as if imploring mercy—a strange attitude for such men to take, who in all probability had never known what such a thing as mercy was.

My two friends at once began to speak—one on each side

of the pillar—addressing the half-circle before them. But their friends, the Arabians, stared at them, not knowing what they said. They spoke with great earnestness, and though their friends understood not what they said, those wild men appeared to do so. They began to leap with joy, and to dance. The more my friends spoke, the more these men cried, and danced, and poised their weapons. All at once they fell to the earth with a wild cry, as if in despair.

At length the Arabian brethren asked my two friends what they were saying. They said they knew not what the sounds they uttered meant, but the sounds seemed to be understood by those men who had been preparing to attack them. What caused them to cry out they could not tell.

One of the Arabians then said,—“There stands between you two a stranger. At first I could not see him distinctly ; but now he stands with folded arms, with black skin. It is he whose remains are buried beneath. At first I thought he was one of the same wild race, and now he seems to say that he had descended from the same race.”

The wild men, as was afterwards learned, had seen him, and thought he was the Great Spirit—that Being of whom my two brethren were speaking to them, and seeing the spirit in black form, they imagined that the Great Spirit was black. I believe this spirit spoke to the brethren and to the Arabians around, telling them who he was, and why he came ; that though his bones lay mouldering beneath the monument, they were not to think he hovered around these. He had come to the people he belonged to. He had prayed in the Spirit-world for help to redeem his people, and bring them out of their condition of savagery, and raise them to something greater and better. He began to speak to them about the church in Egypt, and what was going on there ; and then he spoke to his own people—telling them that he was descended from a prince whom they looked on as a great leader in battle and the chase ; and after he had spoken to them, they rose up from their kneeling position. They seemed anxious, however, by the signs which they made, that my two brethren should again speak to them, when they began to speak to them as at first, and continued for a short time.

These wild men now asked my two friends to stay with them ;

and they at once said that they would abide with them for a time. On the Arabian brethren being told the arrangement come to, they became alarmed for the safety of my two friends, characterising the tribe as treacherous, and that at any time they might turn upon them and slay them—unless protected by their friends of the Spirit-world. They said their common practice was to waylay the unwary traveller, and to attack vessels that touched their shores; and that, in short, they could not keep their hands from robbery and murder.

My friends seemed to be encouraged to stay with these wild men by influences from the Spirit-world. All they wanted was a tent to shelter them, as they could not live in the holes of the earth. They desired the Arabians to come back for them in a few days, and if they did not find them, they could then give them up for lost. The Arab brethren shed tears, for they imagined that our two friends had really lost their senses. They were not sure whether the savage men understood them or not; but at length they sadly launched their galley, and left for the other shore.

By this time the tent was pitched close to the monument, and my two brethren from thence saw their new friends coming down from the hills in all directions, some carrying provisions in the shape of animal food and fruits; while those who were already there they observed busily digging a hole in the earth, in which, when completed, they kindled a fire. By this they understood that they were to have a great feast. My two friends at length sought solitude in the tent while these preparations were going on. When they came out, they found an assemblage of men, women, and children, about 250 altogether. Many other fires had been kindled, on which the flesh of animals was roasting. They were then invited to eat with them, and they did eat, and drank of the pure water from an adjoining spring.

These wild men, however, were still anxious for spiritual food, and again they asked the two friends to speak to them. This they at once did; and while they were thus engaged they began gradually to understand what they were controlled to say. At the close of their speaking, the men said they wanted them to go to the hills with them. At first they were a little frightened by this proposal; but a feeling came over them that there were

unseen ones present; and then they heard whispering in the atmosphere around—"Go; be not afraid! The bolder you are the greater will be your success." Before they got to the top of the hill the tent was pitched for them. Here was a new field of labour opened up for them.

At night they gathered round a great fire, close by the tent. The chief men questioned the two brethren about the Great God or Spirit, and what He had done for them. My friends laid before them the simple truths taught by the Master—what he had done and said, so that they and all other men might know that there was but one Great Father, and that He desired them all, everywhere, to live in peace as children of one family.

Some reference having been made by them to the Arabians who had been at the monument, and the good that had been brought on them and their village by their acceptance of the teachings of Jesus, the wild men said that the Arabs came and hunted on their grounds and stole from them, that the Arabs had even slain some of them, and they, in turn, sought for opportunities to retaliate. They believed in evil spirits, and they sought to appease their wrath. Whenever defeated or beaten by the Arabs, they ascribed the disaster to the malevolence of devils.

My friends went to the root of the matter, and showed them how that the great evils that beset men were the work of their own hearts—that if they cherished ill will to their neighbours, evil spirits would come and urge them to acts of robbery and murder, and thus would they become the very slaves of these evil ones. They then set before their wild hearers the necessity of living, not like the beasts of the field in holes and caves of the earth, but as men and women, made in the very likeness of their Father, the Great One who made all things on the earth and sea and skies.

After a stay of three days with these poor benighted ones, the brethren took their leave, telling them that if it was the will of the Great Spirit they would come back, and that they would arrange to get some one to come to them and teach them things that they ought to learn in order to live like men.

[In reply to a question,—The savage tribe belonged to that country known to you as Abyssinia. My two brethren were thus the means of introducing Christianity amongst the Abyssinians.]

Fourth Sitting.*October 18th, 1882.*

A College Proposed—News from Persia—A Monument to Hafed—Parting from the Church—Arrival in Egypt—Hafed Controlling—The Church in Egypt—Church of the Slaves—Slavery—Jewish Sabbath Adopted—A Feast of Love.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two friends, Zitha and Anah, had been asked to remain permanently in several of the places they visited. They had learned the Arabian language and could speak it fluently. It was proposed to form all the small and scattered communities of the brethren into districts, so that they might have my two friends to oversee them ; and also to form an institution for training men as missionaries, to evangelise the country. But they told the people that I had given strict injunctions to travel onwards to Rome, where they might meet with those who would be able to tell them more concerning their Lord and Master.

Their stoppages at different places on the journey, and the time occupied in travelling by sea and land, had taken up nearly twelve months from the time they left me, and by that time I had left the earth. They say themselves they only heard of my decease by rumours from merchants who had come from Persia, and had arrived at one of the towns they had visited. From the talk in the market-place, the brethren learned that a great persecution had arisen in Persia against Hafed and his followers, and that he and many others had been cut off. Some of the brethren there, who had known and greatly esteemed me, proposed to set up a monument in honour of me ; but my two friends told them to do no such thing, as they would be acting contrary to my opinion of such things—that, in many instances, that which had been set up as a mark of esteem, had, in course of time, come to be looked on as an object of homage or worship : that the Great Father, being the only one to be worshipped, everything that might lead men into false worship should be avoided : that even Jesus, who had done so much for them, had not claimed worship—he came to lead them to the Father.

My two friends tell me that their experience when parting from the brethren at the places visited, was very painful—that it was just like a renewal of the parting with the church in Persia—like the opening up of an old sore, and that, but for the promise

they had made to me, they would have stayed amongst the dear brethren there and ended their days.

After above twelve months' travelling and sojourning, as I have said, they reached Egypt, and visited the church at a town where now stands a city—Cairo. Coming with tidings of Hermes and his faithful band, they were very gladly received, and the letter which Hermes had written to the brethren in Egypt a year before, and which they now presented to the church, was greatly valued. They told them of their meeting with Hermes and his band; of their journey along the shores of the Red Sea, where they had found several churches planted by Hermes; of the condition of these little churches; of the high esteem they still cherished for Hermes and his noble band of Arabian evangelists, who had so faithfully wrought for him, and stood by him; and of the wonderful things that had been done through him. The assembled church greatly rejoiced on hearing all this from my two friends.

The negro merchant, Ion, who had accompanied Hermes on his mission to Ethiopia, took my two friends to his own house, and kept them there during their stay. They went in and out among the people, speaking in the open air, and at the gates of the city.

It was while staying in this city that they became conscious of increased strength—their voices were more powerful, and they felt inspired. That I can account for. By that time I myself was operating on them. I was myself an eye-witness to a good deal going on in Egypt while they were there, though a dweller in the Spirit-world. I was proud in heart to know that those who had suffered so much persecution still held together, and even defied the priesthood of Egypt. The church at this time was not wholly composed of persons of humble position, but many connected with it were men of great influence. The priests were now but poorly supported; for the country was falling fast into decay, and the national faith along with it. It was not as in the olden time, when one would not have dared to worship God in any other way than in that approved of by the priests.

My friends make mention that one morning, during their stay in this place, they went out for a walk before the sun had risen above the horizon. As they walked along, in the cool air of the

morning, they approached a grove of palm trees, from which they heard voices. They could not see any one for the brushwood which grew at the bottom of the trees, and down towards the water. They listened—it was music. It seemed to be the sound of the harp, an instrument used by the Egyptians, and also the metal or small gong, hung in a triangle, while many voices sang in chorus. My friends stood still, and listened till the sounds ceased, after which they heard some one speaking. They went into the grove, and found therein some ruins, amongst which stood the persons who had been singing. They came closer, and saw that the assembly was composed of males and females of the negro race, and that the speaker was the steward of the merchant they were staying with. They continued listening, and they say they never heard one speak so eloquently, and with so much enthusiasm as this man did to his enslaved brothers and sisters. They were all slaves, every one of them bound to their masters, and some of these were hard task-masters, who, if they came to know they had been attending there, would lay the whip to their backs.

My friends still stood listening. He that spoke told his hearers of the great love which this man and brother, Jesus, had for them—that he had been crucified for them all, and that he was now in heaven, beyond the gate, and into the Paradise, where grew the golden fruit : that this loving brother would give to all those who followed him, the golden apples of Paradise ; that even in this life he would give them power to heal the sick, and those who had bad masters he would help, by opening the hard hearts of these masters, and make them good ; and so, my friends say, he went on for some time, the people attentively listening. He then lifted up his hands, and prayed earnestly for the small congregation gathered around him. After prayer, this true minister of the Spirit-world again addressed the people on the subject of the after-state. He gave the Egyptian ideas of the future state, as recorded in their Book of Death ; but in the course of his address showed how far they were wrong in hiding the truth under much of a dark and mystical nature—that, according to a man's life in the body, so would it be, for good or ill, in the spirit. The people again sang, the negro maidens playing on the instruments. After blessing, he dismissed them.

When some of the people saw our two friends they took them for watchers, but the steward soon undeceived them by introducing them to the worshippers, who on learning who they were, would have them to go back with them. But that would not have been a wise course, and they promised to meet with them on the following morning.

It was always on the early morning when the sun began to rise, when the masters lay sleeping on their beds, that these poor slaves assembled for worship; for from an early hour in the morning they had to toil all day under a burning sun. All were labourers and all slaves.

Egyptian slavery was at the time I speak of the worst of all, except that existing among some barbarous nations on the shores of the Great Sea. They held their slaves in strict bondage, and often many of them suffered fearfully. We had slaves in Persia, but our system was nothing like that of Egypt. Our slaves were more like bondmen. They were often allowed to trade, only giving their master so much out of their profits; and those who were domestic servants had a certain amount put down to their account as wages, and in course of years, after so much had thus been paid, they had their liberty, and became free men. Many who were bought in slave markets and taken to Persia, under this system, if good traders, soon contrived to buy their freedom, and became rich merchants. In Egypt slavery was slavery, never broken from the cradle to the grave. In olden times, when Egypt was in her grandeur, when her monarchs were powerful, and gave laws to nations around them—most of their slaves were those taken in war. The higher class or order had their domestic slaves—living in their houses, and equal to the middle class of Egypt. But how different when Egypt was hastening to her fall!

The church in this place had set apart one day in seven as a Sabbath or rest-day, on which day they met for worship and to observe the Feast of Love. This was their course on the rest-day. But there was service in their place of meeting every day. There were many feast days and great days in connection with the temple worship in Egypt, and one of these, when all the people were free from work, was adopted by the brethren as a feast of love. On this day there was no work done, not even in houses; the meat was cooked two days beforehand, and carried

to the meeting-house, where it was eaten. There the tables were spread with fruits and unleavened bread, much of the provision being the gifts of the wealthy brethren of the church. After morning service they sat down at certain tables and ate of the fruit and meat; and, again, towards the after part of the day, they returned to the other tables and partook of that which lay before them. There were but two meals that day. Nothing was touched—not a fragment was removed from the tables; but, on the following morning the tables were cleared of the fragments of the feast, and these were given to the poor of the neighbourhood, whether belonging to the church or not.

That was how the brethren in Egypt kept the Sabbath. The system had been introduced by some who came from Jerusalem on a visit to the church, after Hermes had left. They had said it was unlawful to make ready food on the Sabbath or rest-day, and the Egyptian brethren agreed with them on this point, and had stuck to it.

My two friends had promised to meet with the slaves on the following morning, and that was a Sabbath morning. Many of those slaves which gathered together, belonged to masters connected with the church; and they had adopted the same observances of the Sabbath—they had their Feast of Love, and the service before and after. My friends took part in all the services, and afterwards addressed the people, opening up to them the theologies of Egypt, Arabia, and Persia, showing what was true, and what was false in these several systems, and proclaimed the truth as taught by Jesus and his followers. The humble flock appeared to understand and value the teachings of my two friends. Someone asked the question—What is a miracle? One of my friends replied that, really, there was no such thing as a miracle—that what they had been taught to look on as something done against law, was in accordance with law; only, we were unacquainted with the working of the law; they saw the effect, but they did not see the operation causing that effect. The poor slaves appeared to enjoy very much the ministrations of my two friends, who declare that they will ever remember in the world above the blessed time they spent with these brethren in the world below.

Fifth Sitting.*November 15th, 1882.*

Visit Alexandria—Persecution—Help at Hand—The Child and the Camel—A Rigid Leg—Inspiration—The "Power that of God"—The Priests again at Work—Anxious Inquirers—Jesus and His Teachings—The Gift not to be Bought—Priestcraft—The Fire Spreading—Additions to the Church—A Military Minister—Baptisms—Renewed Life—A Levelling Effect—Starting of the Caravan—An Attack—How the Robbers were Driven Off—Spirit Power Displayed—Effect on the Merchants.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—In several of the minor towns in Egypt the spirit of persecution burst forth. The town in which my two friends were was a central one, and being a mercantile community, merchants congregated here to go out, north, west, and south, to other nations. At this time, a caravan was preparing to start for the *south*, and my friends wished to accompany it. By this means they thought they might be able to reach some of the places which Hermes and I had visited, and also open up new fields for themselves. They say they went down to the lower part of Egypt, to the city of Alexandria, on the shores of the Great Sea. There had been much good done in that place, not through me, but through the labours of Hermes, who had established a small community of brethren. My friends found that it had dwindled down to not more than a score of individuals, or thereabout, inclusive of men, women, and children. They found that the nearer they approached the Great Sea persecution showed itself greater—stronger than that experienced in Persia when they left. Wherever Jews were found—and they were found in most of the places they visited—they tried to stir up the authorities against the followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

On meeting with the brethren, they found them in great dependency. Some even spoke of breaking up their meetings, and just meet in one another's houses, so as to keep the fire smouldering till this persecution was past, when it might again burst forth into a flame. They seemed to feel acutely their condition—trodden under foot of their enemies. But, as my two friends told them, that was just the time when they might expect the help of Heaven. They exhorted them to continue their meetings for prayer, and that, though suffering for Jesus and his truth, help would at length come to them in a way they thought

not of. "Be not afraid," they said to the little flock, "but continue to call on Jesus, and he will send you support and comfort by his messengers; even those who have passed away from amongst you, they will uphold you in the midst of sore trial." They set before them the glory and power of him whom they professed to follow. Would the Prince of Heaven and of Earth forsake those who trusted in him? My two friends say—"We, at that time, sincerely believed that not only was Jesus really man, but that he was the equal of God in power, because we had seen him do so many wonderful works, and we ourselves had received that power by calling on his name."

And help did come to the poor little company of brethren in Alexandria, and that in a way not dreamt of. My friends, while passing along the busy streets of that city, being habited as foreigners, were taken notice of as such, but not from a religious point of view. The streets were thronged, and in the throng were many merchants or traders from all parts of the world. There was nothing about my friends to distinguish them as followers of Jesus. It was not so with the Egyptian brethren, who wore a peculiar dress, and were therefore subjected to much vile treatment when they walked the streets. They were often stoned and spit upon; and this bad spirit was more especially shown by those who held to the old Grecian doctrines. Being a city erected by the Grecians, many of the settlers in it were Greeks, or descendants of Greeks. There were temples erected for the worship of Diana and many other gods and goddesses of Greece. The brethren in Alexandria were called Nazarenes by the Jews, and were looked down upon; they were maltreated by both Jews and Greeks; and when they opened their mouths to speak to the people they were assaulted, and stones and every kind of filth thrown at them.

One day as my two friends were passing through one of the narrow streets—they were all narrow, like those of other Eastern cities—they observed several camels and their drivers coming along, and in the way of the animals stood a little child, evidently the child of a poor person. It was seen by my friends that the slave who drove the camels cared not whether the child had its life crushed out or not beneath the feet of the animals. The little one fell, and just as the foremost of the camels was

about to tread on the child, my friend Zitha rushed forward and took hold of the uplifted foot of the animal before it could bring it down, and so saved the child. He says: "I had no thought of doing hurt to the camel, but I found its leg became rigid, and there it stood, while I lifted the child out of the way." The owner of the camels then came up, and when he saw the camel with its leg drawn up, he turned to my friend and said: "What have you done to the beast?" He told him he had merely laid his hand on it to prevent the child being crushed. The owner, who was a rich man, and had power and authority, was somewhat astonished, for there stood the animal with its uplifted leg unable to move it. The servants of the owner and others gathered around, and some cried out to arrest my friends. The merchant again charged them with destroying his camel, and threatened to put them into prison.

"What have we done," said Zitha, who had saved the child, "to be cast into prison? I merely put my hand on the leg of the animal so as to save the child."

"The child!" cried the merchant scornfully. "What is the child of a slave to my beast!"

At that moment, my friend says, he felt as if some one had begun to work on him, getting power over body and speech, and that when he would have held his tongue, his mouth opened and words flowed from him:—"That child is as dear to the Great Father as any one of you who now surround me. The camel has but the life of an animal, and requires the care and guidance of man to keep it from doing hurt in these narrow streets. If an animal is driven in such a way as to hurt one who is made in the likeness of the Great Creator, we should not blame the animal, but the man who is set over it to guide it. When I laid my hand on the camel, and the limb became rigid, the power that made it so was not mine, but that of one who has gifted me with power—one who has power among the nations, even Jesus of Nazareth, who is now Prince of Heaven and of Earth, but whom you despise. By his power has this been done. He is not like the gods and goddesses of your temples, who can neither feel nor speak."

He says he had at the time no remembrance of the words that came from him. The people seemed at first as if petrified; and

the mention of Jesus of Nazareth roused them to fury ; and they would have beaten the life out of him with the sticks they held in their hands, had not his neighbour, Anah, who had never opened his mouth, interposed, and said—"Why raise your staves against an unoffending man? He was walking along the street, and, seeing a child in danger, he took it away from the brute's feet, at the risk of being injured himself. The Unseen God behind the cloud comes forward, and touching the animal, puts its foot in that position so that it cannot lay it on the ground. In the name of that Unseen and Unknown One, whom you ignorantly worship, and by his power, the limb of that animal shall now be as before." On saying these words, he went forward and touched the rigid leg, and immediately the camel put his foot on the ground. The people were amazed, but some of the priests of the temple said it was not by the power of Diana, but by that of the Evil One ; and when the people heard that they made a rush on my two friends, who say—"Had not the unseen ones thrown a cloud before their eyes, and rendered us unseen to them, they would have slain us."

News of this very soon spread over the city, and a number of visits were made to certain of the brethren, under cover of the darkness of night, by persons anxious to know something concerning the two men who had done the wonderful work in the name of Jesus. My two friends arranged to see these inquirers—there were six of them—and spoke to them. They said—"We are strangers passing through your city, carrying a message of peace and goodwill to mankind. This message we are ready to give to you, if you will have it."

To this the inquirers assented. One of my friends then laid before them the chief doctrines as taught by Jesus, our Prince.

An objection was made that they had heard of a certain Jew who had propagated strange doctrines, inducing his followers to rebel against the Government, leading them into the wilderness, where they were overthrown, and many of them slain.

My friends then opened up the life of the Master from beginning to end, showing that there was nothing of evil to be found in him ; that he was neither a robber, nor one to preach rebellion amongst the people ; that, in everything he did or said, he manifested the spirit of love—of bearing injury himself, rather than

seeing his fellow-men injured ; he sought not after the rich, but after the poor ; he did not bestow attention on those who were strong and healthy, but whenever he saw a poor sick or infirm sufferer, he put forth his wonderful power, and raised them by a word of his mouth or a touch of his hand to health and strength. The poor flocked after him, but the rich contemptuously turned from him. He taught that men should love one another—even those who were accounted their enemies. My friends showed these inquirers how very far wrong those were who had represented Jesus as a leader of rebels. "We are not Jews," he continued, "but men of Persia, who have held high position in connection with the Magi, and are members of the Inner Circle of Zoroaster. We do not think it beneath us to give up all our former religious ideas, and go out to the world and proclaim the truths taught by this same Jesus, and to encourage and strengthen those who have already believed in him."

These inquirers seemed curious to know how my friends had got the power to stiffen the leg of the camel, and then to set it free, and some of them offered to purchase the power. They were told that the power was not theirs to give ; that they had asked the power that had been displayed from Jesus to save the life of the child, and that they never asked in vain, for he was, though unseen by mortal eye, ever near them, and near to all who believed in him.

These men, on leaving, asked to be allowed to meet with my two friends again. They were told that they were not certain when the caravan, with which they had engaged to travel for a short distance southward, would start, but they were invited to come again.

My friends were warned in the course of the next day to avoid being seen in the city, as the priests were trying to raise the people against them. These priests, as usual, were afraid of new doctrine finding its way amongst the people, upsetting their system, and lessening the gold in their coffers. It has ever been the same in all ages. How often was I persecuted by those who pretended to be the true worshippers of God, but were merely self-seeking worldlings, greedy of gain, and adherents of that religion which paid them best.

On the following night, these six inquirers made their appear-

ance, and brought other six with them, every one more anxious than another to learn more of Jesus and his teachings. They were truly ardent students. My friends discoursed on the theologies of Egypt, Greece, and Persia, showing how each of these pointed to certain grand truths, though expressed in different terms. The same was shown in the theology of the Hebrews, or Jews. At length they showed how what had been taught by Jesus became, as it were, the very corner-stone of the building—that his teachings over-topped all those that had gone before.

Three days after that occurrence had taken place—I mean the affair of the camel—no less than thirty-six persons were added to the church in Alexandria ; and it so happened that some of these were wealthy merchants, others were officers holding command in the army, and one was a centurion, having many soldiers under him. At first when the brethren saw such individuals coming amongst them, they got somewhat alarmed, thinking it was a plan laid for their apprehension. But, happily, their fears were soon allayed. Strange to say, this same centurion became afterwards pastor of the little flock. He was closely connected with a governor of the city, and held office as centurion and pastor at the same time.

They had been in the city five days, when they were informed that the caravan was ready to set out next day. That night the new converts were taken to a place where there was a pool of water, and they were all baptised. They went there because it was some distance from the city, and so avoided interference on the part of the populace. After the baptisms, they returned to the city, and held one of those Love Feasts, which had been instituted in that place, as in other places where the followers of Jesus met together as churches. The Feast of Love being over, they assembled for prayer. New and old converts each took their turn, and supplicated the Great Father for guidance as a church, and besought a blessing on my two friends, that they might be guided in their wanderings, and be brought back safe again, if God saw fit, that so they might once more listen to their teachings.

My friends say that the success of their work during the few days of their stay in the city gave them great hopes of success elsewhere. Looking at what had taken place, they plainly saw that

the friends of the Spirit-world had not forsaken them ; and if able to aid them in that city, what might they not do in other places ? They felt as if they had got renewed life—strength to encounter all that might tend to dishearten them. They had no idea that such success would always attend them ; yet the truths they taught, which made all equal in the sight of God, ought to find acceptance in every honest, reasonable mind. I myself always held that the teachings of Jesus, when received, had a levelling effect. Though a man might be great in power, having servants under him, yet, great as he was, he, when under the influence of the truth, soon came to see that there was no difference, in the sight of the Great Father, between him and his meanest servant—that, spiritually, they were equal : the inequalities in human life were not from God, but were the results of men's own actions.

At length the caravan with which my friends, Zitha and Anah, had bargained to travel, was ready to set out for Ethiopia. Before leaving they met with the brethren. The new, as well as the old, members each took his part in prayer for a blessing on the heads of my two friends, who had been the means of refreshing them by their labours, and that, if the Most High thought fit, they might once more listen to them. They were then exhorted by Zitha and Anah to continue steadfast in the good way, so as to add to their numbers from among the ranks of those who opposed them.

I may here say that this small body became subsequently very powerful as a church, and the leading community in the city of Alexandria.

The caravan had not been four days started on their journey when a band of robbers was descried making towards them. The merchants at once prepared to receive them by gathering all their animals into one spot, with the servants forming a circle of defence round them.

Zitha, who had, as you already know, been a warrior in his youth, when he saw the band approaching, and the fear which appeared on the countenances of the merchants, stood up, and said—"I once was a warrior, wielding a sword of steel, but now I am a man of peace, bearing the sword of the Spirit. Once I handled the one against the enemy, and why should I not be able to use the other, and stay, if possible, the shedding of blood ?"

He paused, and appeared to consider for a time, and then went out from among the rest to meet the coming band. When they came up to him, they evidently took him to be one sent out from the caravan to make terms with them. The chief of the band said that if the merchants were willing to give up their servants, or slaves, and their animals and goods, and become slaves themselves, without fighting, they would allow them their lives. These were cruel conditions—to take all a man had—for many of them had their all in the caravan, and had wives and families depending on them at home. If they submitted to these terms, who was able to redeem them from slavery—who was to pay the ransom? Such were the terms laid down to him by the robber chief.

“Well,” said old Zitha, “if such be your conditions, they are indeed hard. I am an old man, as you may see, with neither sword nor spear to defend myself, and without strength to use them. But, come, take me as a ransom for the whole.”

This offer was received with laughter by the robbers. “Of what use can this old fellow be to us?” cried one. “He would be but a burden to us,” cried another.

Zitha, turning to them, said—“When this arm of mine wielded a falcon, neither you nor all your band could have withstood me; I would have driven you like a pack of wolves before me.”

They looked, he says, as though they would have driven a dart or spear through him, but moved not. He went up to their leader. “Here am I, an old man, and I dare you to strike!”

The chief turned to some of his men—“Take that old babbling fool and give him the lash.” But no one seemed inclined to obey the order.

The leader, seeing this, got into a dreadful passion, and raised his spear to strike him. Instead of striking him the weapon snapped like a twig, and fell to pieces, leaving a small part in the hand of him who had poised it. He stared in utter amazement, and at length said—“What are you?”

Some one cried out—“He is a great magician!”

This seemed to be enough in the estimation of the robbers, for the whole band, with their leader, turned round and fled, leaving my friend standing alone.

Thus was the caravan saved. The merchants from Alexandria

had some knowledge of what had been done by my two friends in that city in the case of the child and the camel, and now they began to think they were really magicians, for many of the Egyptians and others believed in such things. So that night, after they had pitched their tents, the merchants came together to my friends, and began to inquire into this strange thing that had been done before their eyes. Some of the caravan were Nazarenes, but those who had joined them at Alexandria were not.

Zitha, in explanation, said that when he saw the chief in his anger lift the spear, he asked for the help of those surrounding him—his invisible guardians—to do that which they had seen done. He told them also that he saw the guardian angel grasp the spear and break it to pieces.

The merchants from Alexandria expressed their wonder at all this, and became earnest inquirers.

By the end of the journey these merchants were all brought round to the doctrines of Jesus. The other merchants, who were adherents of the new faith, had aided my friends greatly in this work, by giving their own experience in regard to those things which they had seen and heard at their own homes and elsewhere.

Ethiopia, at the time I am speaking of, was a country not to be despised ; for although there were no great cities to be visited by the caravan merchants, there were a number of towns and villages at which a good deal of trade was transacted by them ; and at those places where they put up for a short time, Anah and Zitha, with the help of the brethren among the merchants, made known the truth to the people, and succeeded in gaining over many to the new faith. After calling at a number of places, my two friends returned with the caravan to Alexandria.

Sixth Sitting.

January 17th, 1883.

Depart for Tyre—Discussion with Merchants—Good Results—"The Church in Danger"—At Tyre—The Little Church—The Old Pastor—Equality—Tyre Reformed—Special Meeting—Judaising Teachers—The Church in Sidon.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Anah and Zitha, having returned with the caravan to Alexandria, resolved to embark in a merchant

ship bound for Tyre, and by that means reach Jerusalem. Getting on board, after bidding the brethren of Alexandria farewell, they set sail on the Great Sea for Tyre, where they arrived in the course of six days.

Nothing special occurred on the voyage ; only this, that they, being ever ready to spread abroad a knowledge of the truth, gave what advice they could to those who showed a disposition to enquire concerning things spiritual ; and several of the merchants, knowing them at Alexandria, and of what took place during their stay there, were anxious for communion with them. Some of these merchants were not altogether ignorant of the new doctrines preached by the followers of Jesus, having met in with many of them when travelling on business from place to place ; while others scoffed at the new teachings, and thought it better to stick to those which had been given them in connection with the nationalities they belonged to. They were a mixed lot, composed of Arabians, Greeks, Romans, and others ; but, though of mixed nationality, these men kept themselves well together, all being dealers in fine and soft wares, such as silk, linen, etc., which they imported from the East into the Western cities. One of these was a Greek, who took special interest in the doctrines of Jesus. He had, in the course of his travels from Jerusalem to Greece, heard some of the great advocates of the new faith. At Athens, on his previous visit, he had entered into discussion with some there.

My two friends, taking advantage of the circumstances in which they were placed, debated with the merchants on the theologies of Greece and other nations, and great interest was shown, even by the common seamen ; so much, indeed, that the vessel became like a little church, where the doctrines of the Prince were taught and enforced with great power by Zitha and Anah. Though the attendance was not large, the listeners on both sides gave earnest heed to what was said by the debaters. They were men of acute minds, and of good understanding, and soon came to see that my two friends were in the right ; while the other party who had given them battle were not ashamed to confess they had been beaten in the discussion. Not only merchants, but a number of the sailors became ardent believers of the truth as it was set before them.

My two brethren looked on the result of their discussions on shipboard as a great victory. Here were a number of men who, in the course of their vocation, were travelling into all parts of the world then known ; and these would now be prepared to tell to strangers they might meet with what they knew and believed to be true, concerning Jesus and the new faith.

At this time there was great agitation throughout the whole civilised world on theological points ; and even philosophers of Greece, when they saw the despised Hebrews, who had come down among them, fight so well in behalf of the new faith of Jesus, turned away from their old and cherished ideas and cordially embraced the truth. At the same time, those having power in higher places of the State, and especially the priests of Diana and other gods, began to raise their voices against the preachers of the new doctrines. They saw that, if these men were allowed to go on spreading such doctrines amongst the people, that which afforded them a good living would soon be swept away—their occupation would be gone, and their coffers become empty. The advocates of the faith of Jesus asked nothing from any one. If aught was offered them they took it ; but they depended as much on the produce of their own labour as on that which was freely given to them. Wherever these evangelists found a small church or body of believers established, there they stayed for a short time, and the brethren were always ready to send them on to another place—if they got their travelling expenses, it was all they required. These men sought not for high living, nor for fine clothing—like myself their good cloak was all that was required to wrap about them. They were not afraid boldly to stand before Kings and Governors and defend that which they believed to be right and true.

After a voyage of six days they arrived at Tyre. There they found a little church (which I myself had established) in a prosperous condition. Although a community of traders and mariners, they seemed to have taken a great liking for the simple faith. Their purses were not drawn upon for the support of the church so largely as had been done by the priests of the Temples. The place of meeting was a plain building requiring little outlay for adornment. Indeed, they had what was better far than mere outward show. They kept a chest within the building into which

the mite of the generous-hearted might be dropped. This was for the poor or those who could not labour; and these infirm ones received more than what was given to the ministers.

My brethren, Zitha and Anah, observed that the church had been conducting themselves in a quiet and peaceful way. They had no liking for quarrels with those who differed from them in belief. They had faith in the power of the truth as seen in the character of those that professed it.

On their arrival, and it became known that they were from me—for I had sent with them letters of introduction to all the churches—the pastor, a very aged man, came and fell on their necks and wept like a child. He spoke of the day he first met with me, when he had even given me battle to the teeth in defence of his own views, and how I had relieved him from the great bondage he had been enduring. He said that many blessings had been poured on him since then. The World of Spirits seemed opened to him. The great fabric of superstition that had stood for ages was tottering to the dust, while the truth as taught by Jesus was spreading. Even he who was highest in power was numbered amongst them.

My two friends met the brethren at what was called a holy feast. They had never seen since the day they had left me so good a gathering, both rich and poor, learned and unlearned. They sat side by side—there was no difference. The church had also been very successful in bringing in the idle and vicious—robbers and even murderers had, under the power of the truth, been brought into the fold. So much had this been the case that the authorities of the town acknowledged that the prisons had become of no use. These had been closed for years. It was a glorious time indeed for Tyre—a city that had for a long time been denounced for its gross wickedness.

On the day following the holy feast, my friends met with grand congregations, morning, noon, and evening. At these meetings they spoke to the people of the wonders they had seen, opening up to them the life of Jesus of Nazareth, and laying before them the truths he taught in a simpler way (as they said) than had been done by any of the Hebrew brethren who had been there before, and who sought to bind the truth with Hebrew bonds. These brethren from Judea had even tried to get them to adopt circum-

cision, but they could not brook to be bound down. My two friends had preached the same truths as these Hebrew brethren, but without the bonds. The brethren of Tyre saw clearly that he (Jesus), who had such a grand and noble soul, could never have burdened his followers under Mosaic laws. They said that what I had formerly taught had been written down from my lips, and to that they had adhered.

My two friends visited Sidon. There they found a small church, yet not in such a flourishing condition as that of Tyre. They seemed to live in agreement with those of the old theology of Sidon. The priests even came to them, and asked for revelations regarding the Spirit-world; and, receiving such revelations, they were fast drifting into the same way of thinking. They could see, and even predict, that idol-worship would soon be done away with.

At this time Sidon was sinking into an obscure place; the shipping was gradually declining, and the visits of merchants fewer. My friends stayed as short a time as possible—only so long as would enable them to give their message to the people. They wished to go to Jerusalem, and meet the brethren there, and see the place where their Lord had suffered. Their former visit was when Jesus was a little child.

Seventh Sitting.

January 24th, 1883.

Jerusalem—Invited to the Council—Circumcision Discussed—Zitha opposes the Jewish Brethren—Anah's Speech—Form of Worship—Paul against Peter—Paul Accused—Zitha and Anah refuse to obey the Council—They Preach in Jerusalem—Advice to Delegates—Depart for Cyprus—The Church in Cyprus—Image of Bacchus set up as a Beacon—A Young Seeress—Something Occult—Temple of Diana.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night, when I spoke to you about our two friends Zitha and Anah, they had been at Tyre and Sidon, and had left for Jerusalem, having been invited by some of the brethren to the Council, which was about to meet in that city. Being the only representatives of the so-called new faith from Persia, they went up; but on their arrival they were told by some of the brethren they would not be admitted into the Council

because they were not Jews and had come from a heathen nation. However, at the assembling of the Council, my two friends went there, and claimed to be representatives of the Church in Persia. They insisted on being recognised as true followers of Jesus of Nazareth as much as any of those who were assembled there.

Some of the Jewish brethren (according to the statement of my two friends, now made to me) rose up, and, in order to get quit of the difficulty, proposed that the brethren from Persia should submit to the rite of circumcision, taking on them the same vows as the children of Abraham. But my friends would not listen to such words. They knew well that Jesus, so far as I had learned of him, had sternly set his face against all such distinctions amongst his followers. Zitha, in the course of his argument, even claimed to be nearer to the Lord than those assembled: for, while those of Judea only had known him for a few years as a man, they of Persia had been commissioned by Heaven's High Lord to welcome the infant Jesus in Bethlehem. He who had sent them out as evangelists (he said) had laid on them no such vows as had been proposed by some of the Jewish brethren. Why should they call Persia a heathen nation and idolaters—people who worshipped the true God? Was it because they, the Persians, did not conform to Jewish rites or ceremonies, or bend the knee before the Holy of holies at Jerusalem? But they worshipped at the Altar of the Flame, and served the living and true God; and what more was asked of them by God? Why should men raise up such objections when the World of Spirits did not?

After this a discussion followed, some in favour of admission, others against.

Then Anah rose up, and said—He had been commissioned by one he looked on as a leader among the people of the East—one who had sacrificed his life for the cause of Jesus, his Lord; he had been sent out into the world to proclaim the glorious truths, as taught by Jesus, to all mankind—to proclaim the truth that all men were brethren, children of the same Great Father—to break the chains of the slave, and to raise the meek and lowly ones from earth to heaven. Why, asked Anah, should they not be admitted as representatives from a nation which had stood high among the nations of the East? They were both aged men, and had served the Most High as priests among the Magi. Would

they not be able to give advice still, along with their experience as servants of Jesus, their common Lord?

After some further discussion, it was agreed to receive my two friends as members of the Council.

One of the points taken up by the Council was that of uniformity of worship and order among the various churches which had sprung up in the several countries where the new faith had been embraced. Certain of the brethren argued in favour of Hebrew practice and modes of operation, binding all the churches, wheresoever planted, to the observance of hard and fast rules. This was not at all relished by my friends, Anah and Zitha, who, admitting the use of a few of the rules, stoutly opposed the enforcement of hard laws on the various communities. Why should the Hebrew brethren seek to bind down the people of other nations to their ideas of order and worship? Remembering what had been taught by Jesus—the love of God to all mankind—the brethren of every nation who had accepted the new faith should be allowed to worship in their own way. Why should they strive one with another over such matters? Had they not enough to battle with when they had to overcome the opposition of the enemies of Jesus and his truth? “Why,” said Zitha, “should we be fighting amongst ourselves? Will not those outside say—‘These men cannot agree, they quarrel among themselves’? Why should we raise such a stumbling-block in the way of those whom we seek to win over to our Master? Seeing that we have suffered from the intolerance of our opposers, let us avoid every appearance of the same spirit; and then, as Jesus taught, we shall be able to pray for those who raise their hands against us. Are not many suffering persecution, as dear to the Lord as we are? Are not some cast into prison—some sacrificed in the arena? How many have become martyrs! Many of you are young, and require to be guided by older heads. Reason must sit firm on her throne when you go forth. And, when the enemies of our Lord turn on you, show the same loving spirit which he showed when nailed to the Cross. Though you are beginning to grow in strength, the time may soon come when you will have trouble, and be scattered as the little flock in Persia. That small church of the brethren, who loved one another dearly, are all scattered. Some have gone with their venerable and beloved pastor to the

World of Spirits—gone to the Master they loved—having cheerfully laid down their lives for him and his truth. There may be many assembled here who may have to pass through the same ordeal. Be ye, therefore, strong in the faith; yield not to the enemies of the Lord; breathe not out curses on them, but pray for them. When they cast you into the cold dungeon, and chain you to its damp walls, still pray for them. In that dark hour you will not be forgotten, for the angels of the Highest will be there to support you. We have faith in God that we will never be deserted. If it come to us, as it has come to others, that we have to leave the world before our allotted time, we will pray for the cause of right, and thank Jesus when he receives us. That is the mind we are in—that is why we have gone forth. We left our persecuted brethren in Persia with tears in our eyes, and sorrow in our hearts; for a dark cloud had spread over us—even as a thunder-cloud gathering in the heavens, ready to burst forth at any moment. We did not wish to leave. We had no desire to get away from the storm that was impending, but we went at the bidding of our teacher. He and the brethren were prepared to pass through the ordeal, but we, he said, had a work to perform in the gathering in of souls, before we left earth for the home above.”

After speaking in that way for some time, there followed a number of addresses from others. There were among them, besides Hebrews, Ethiopians of black visage—black, compared with the white and tawny colour of others—and even some Arabs of the desert were there. These had all been circumcised, except Zitha and Anah. Nevertheless, though they had thus submitted to the Hebrews, they agreed with our two friends that it was wrong to impose the rule on strangers who were opposed to it. So it was settled that, in future, strangers from distant nations should not be asked to conform to Hebrew rites and customs. At this time some of the Goths were beginning to come in amongst them.

It was here they met with Paul, who asked very kindly about me. Paul was one of those in the Council who agreed with my friends; and he combated Peter, who, being a Hebrew, was determined to stick by the law. Paul took my two friends' view of the subject, and maintained that the Master never laid down any such rules. Though Paul was a Hebrew by birth, he was a

close observer of mankind in general ; having travelled in many lands, and seen the manners and customs of the people, the inhabitants of these lands, he was prepared to denounce the narrow notions of his Hebrew brethren, and to insist on the doctrine that all men are equal in the sight of the Great Spirit—all in every nation were His children, and could call on Him as their Father.

Another dispute arose on the following day ; and this was the cause of it : Paul, anxious for farther conversation with Zitha and Anah, took them to his own lodgings, where, before retiring to rest, they supped together. This was in the eyes of the Hebrews an outrage of the law, for no Hebrew would sit down and eat with a barbarian. But Paul, when accused, stood up in the face of them all, and showed that the Master himself had done so : that Jesus had never refused to eat with anyone—it mattered not of what nation—to sit down and eat even with unwashed hands. He looked on the inside, not the outside. Many a one who had a rough outside might be clean within. It was not alone by outward appearance he judged. Jesus knew well the character of those he sat with at meat ; for he could read the minds of men when he cast his eyes on them. “Why, then (said Paul), should we stumble at such things ? Are we not all professed servants of the Lord God, through Jesus of Nazareth, our great Master and Prince ; and, as he has set us an example, why should we not follow it ?” But many of the Hebrews would not yet give in ; they could not get over their old prejudices.

The Council having appointed bishops or pastors, selecting them from persons fitted for the office, and sending them back to the places whence they came, they desired my two friends to return once more to their own country, and rebuild the church which had been scattered. But they refused to do so, saying that they were resolved to follow out the course I had laid down to them—that was, to go to the utmost ends of the earth, and proclaim the teachings of Jesus their Master.

They continued in Jerusalem for some time, preaching in various streets of the city, and in other places. They also addressed a great assembly in the place where Jesus was crucified. The priests and rulers would have laid hands on them, but were afraid to do so, they being strangers ; and so, while the

Hebrew brethren were not allowed to speak to the people, the two brethren from Persia were free to speak anywhere. Jerusalem was not in a very settled state at the time of their visit.

Before leaving the city all differences had been made up among the brethren ; and on the evening before the departure of my friends the members of the Council assembled to eat the Feast of the Lord as they called it. It was somewhat similar to that which we had in Persia. On this occasion, the brethren, having settled all their disputes, seemed to vie in showing love to each other, and in contributing the support that was required by those of their number on their return journeys, which they were about to take. Words of caution and advice were tendered to the brethren who had come from distant parts. They were entreated to be watchful over the churches ; to be careful not to give offence to the authorities under which they lived ; to show to the people among whom they mingled, in their every-day actions, that they had learned of the Master, and so commend his teachings to those that were not of them.

My two friends parted with Paul next morning. They were parting never to meet again on earth, and they felt sorry to bid farewell to one who had shown them so much kindness. But at length Paul tenderly embraced them, and bade them God-speed.

They went by way of Syria, to Cyprus ; for they wished to visit the church which I myself had there planted. Now they arrived in Cyprus some short time I believe before Hermes came that way. They found the little church in a prosperous condition. A goodly number had been added, and they were not interfered with by any one. They tried if possible to keep on friendly terms with those of other faiths on the island. Some of the priests came to be a good deal of their way of thinking ; inasmuch as they had altered their forms of worship somewhat to those of the new faith. But they had not taken away Diana. She still stood, in all her gorgeous array, on her pedestal. Some of the rich merchants and others, who had embraced the new faith, still gave offerings for the upholding of the Temple, and no fault was found whether they came or stayed away. The priests were satisfied so long as the gold was given.

On arriving Anah and Zitha were invited to address the brethren. Their place of meeting had once been a small temple

of Bacchus, and his image, with all its several emblems, still occupied its pedestal. On entering my two friends were greatly astonished, and Zitha said—"Why not cast that fellow from his pedestal—why should he stand leering down at your worship?"

He who acted as pastor said: "No, my brother, we let him stand there, and bid him defiance. There is no riot here now; no longer drunken dances. We are a sober people. Let him look down if he will and mark the change we have made. He stands as a landmark to us. How many of our forefathers have broken their heads on his pedestal, or sunk down at his feet in drunken sleep! That image has its use: it reminds us of the deep degradation of our fathers before us. The authorities when they saw we had done so well in having taken away from him his besotted victims, gave us the house we had cleansed; and the house is as good as any other one. We can worship here the Great Spirit as well as in any other place, and here His messengers come to us with messages of love."

My two friends saw the force of these words. The image of the god of wine stood there as a reminder of the past—of sinful indulgence. And yet it looked so strange to see the followers of Jesus the Master worshipping in a temple of Bacchus! They say they passed some happy days there. Most of the addresses they gave to the assembled people they had from the Spirit-world. Some of the brethren were seers, and perceived beings from the other world in their midst.

A little damsel, a mere child, came to my two friends—I was there, and I saw her. She told them I stood beside them, and described me. They looked in wonder when she said so. Just then the pastor of the church came forward, and, seeing the little one beside them, said—"Those of the priests who have oracles shut them up, so as to keep them apart from the world. We do not. This little maiden goes in and out among us, and we have through her such beautiful things! She tells me of her wonderful visions; and from her come messages to me that I may deliver to the people. She even says she has seen him whom we all profess to follow. Oh, if my eyes were but open to see the things which some see here! I would give worlds, if in my power, for just one or two turns of the glass to be in such a happy condition!"

After the service that night was over, they went home with the

pastor and lodged with him. They had their inner circle, and this little damsel was there. She became like one of those who were not dwellers on earth, but of the Spirit-world. She even became to their eyes transparent, and gradually vanished from their sight. Shortly thereafter the form of the little maiden again appeared to them, holding in her hand a scroll, which she presented to them. On unrolling it they found written on it a long epistle from one of the brethren in Persia, addressed to Zitha and Anah. It was written in such a way that if ever they returned to Persia, what it contained would be useful to them. It gave them an entire history of the church from the time they left—how they had been persecuted, and what they had suffered, both in the arena and in other ways. The unseen writer then stated that, getting old and frail, he had fled to the mountains, where he remained as a hermit, shut out from the world, but had devoted his time to the instruction of the peasantry around him, and to writing. The little maid could not tell what came over her, till, as she said, she found herself standing by the old man, who was writing this scroll. She described him minutely. She said she had told him how she had just left the presence of the pastor and his two Persian friends. He said he knew it, and was just finishing a letter to them. She told him she would, if he wished it, carry the scroll to them. He gave it to her, and there it was.

One of my friends, who doubted a little how that could be, at once said—"Could you carry a message from me to the old man?" She said she did not know, but she would ask, and at once went down on her knees, and, raising her eyes to heaven, she asked her Spirit-friends if they would enable her to do this, seeing her statement was doubted. All at once a voice was heard, saying, "Yes, do it. Let there be no doubting minds among you. We require all faith and truth." My friend thereupon wrote a short epistle, folded it up carefully, and having put a private sign on it—known only to the Persian brethren—he put the letter in her hand. She again became invisible, and in a run of the glass, they again saw her come as before, when she presented a small note to the one who had sent her away. My friend read the note, and said—"No more shall I doubt the power of our Lord Jesus. All I have seen before I have believed, but this one thing I doubted, and he hath now con-

vinced me that I ought not to doubt again." He to whom the little one had carried the letter had at once written the answer, giving the other sign, which my two friends Anah and Zitha understood.

The following day they went to the Temple of Diana. On entering the priests were at worship. A number of young females stood before the goddess ; they were very nigh naked, and gave music on the flute, while priests in their robes moved before the altars of sacrifice. The greater portion of the building was filled by people, both of upper and lower ranks in life, who stood listening to the words delivered by the oldest priest from the oracle or message, given through one of the priestesses they kept for that purpose. My two friends stood leaning their shoulders against one of the columns, watching the ceremonies and listening to what was said by the old priest.

After his address to the people the old man came down from the steps of the altar and gave his blessing to the female through whom the message had come. Then turning to my two friends he said : "Come near me. I have something private for your own ears, not for those of the people assembled." He then said that he had been told through the oracles of their coming ; that they would be the means of taking many of their people away from the worship of Diana ; and they could see the time when the sacred goddess would cease to be worshipped by the people. He wished my friends to tell him all they could. He said he had listened to the ministers of the Nazarene, and they had told him of things beyond the power of the oracles to give him. But he desired from my two brethren explanation of certain points that were somewhat obscure in that which had been given by the ministers of the new faith. They at once gave the explanation required, and also told him what they themselves knew of Jesus of Nazareth, their Master. The aged priest readily accepted all which my friends put before him ; and as was afterwards learned he, in conjunction with the younger priests, began to modify the form of their temple worship, taking away some of the more outrageous portions of their daily service, in order to keep the people with them. But it would not do, for the learned and wise among them easily saw the difference. The people had been led to bow down before the image of Diana as the Supreme Being.

I have no objection to any nation calling the Great Spirit by any name they please, but do not let them lead ignorant people to believe that that block of marble, decorated with silver, gold and precious stones is the Supreme One who gave them life and all things. The founders of these religions did not mean these statues or figures to be worshipped more than we Persians meant the sun and fire, other than as symbols to direct the minds of the people to the Great and Mighty Spirit Himself. Just in the same way as those who came after us, who taught the same doctrines as we taught, introduced the Cross as a symbol of Jesus and what he had endured for mankind. He when on earth would not have any one worship him, but directed his followers to pray to the Father—his Father and their Father—his God and their God—the Father of all. Those priests of the temple of Diana tried to make some variation in their system, to prevent the people looking to the new faith ; otherwise it would be ruinous—the offerings of gold and silver would soon become less, and then they would be compelled to cease their habits of sensuality and sloth. Then, also, would come to an end the licentiousness prevalent in these temples, in which the virgins, the mediums for communication with the Spirit-world, became first the victims of the priests, and were then, for gold, made free to the embraces of the vilest libertines.

Eighth Sitting.

February 14th, 1883.

Origin of the Church in Cyprus—An Important Conversion—Judaistic Teachers—Liberation of Slaves—Good Results—A True Church—The Governor Attracted—A Warning—The Governor's Mother—She appears in Spirit.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—When last I addressed you my two friends, Anah and Zitha, were at Cyprus. The church which had been established there originated in a visit I myself had made to the island ; but as I wanted to be brief in the narrative I gave you of my earth experiences, I said nothing of this and some other places I had visited in my travels. I will therefore give you some account of the origin of this church.

The place where the church was planted was a seaport—its inhabitants being chiefly employed in fishing and trading. The

fish found a ready market in the adjacent city, while a good trade was kept up between the mainland and the island by merchants, who dealt largely in pottery of various kinds, and also in cloth. Cyprus at the time was famed for its purples and fine fabrics for clothing.

In this town, when there, I had been the means of bringing over three persons to the faith of Jesus, and these formed the beginning of the church. They had had a good deal to contend with in their efforts to promote the truth ; for there were temples dedicated to the worship of Diana and to the gods Jupiter and Neptune ; the latter receiving the greatest amount of patronage, owing to the sea-faring character of the place. Notwithstanding the opposition given to my converts, when my two brethren arrived, they found, as I have stated already, a small, but active and flourishing church, composed of twenty-four male members, besides their wives and families.

One of the oldest of the brethren—a convert of mine—kept a large warehouse of goods. He, having been brought up to a sea-faring life, had travelled a good deal in foreign lands in pursuit of his calling as a merchant. He had been in Italy, Greece, and even Spain—a long voyage in those days. In his youth he had been brought up and educated by an uncle, who was high-priest in the temple of the Sun. With the exception of a few, who never got beyond the drudgery of the temple, the priests at that time were men of learning ; and this uncle had bestowed great pains on the education of his nephew, so as to fit him for the priestly office. But the youth rebelled, and went to sea. The old priest was grievously disappointed at the waywardness of the lad. Notwithstanding, at his death, he left all his wealth to the young man, who, on receipt of it, bought a ship and goods, and started as a merchant. By the time I met with him he was well up in years. I found him somewhat hard to deal with, he holding stiffly on by the doctrines imbibed in his youth ; but, step by step, he came to see that there could be nothing in gods represented by images of stone and metal. Gradually his mind opened up to the truths I advanced. I went into the theologies of early times, showing from the sacred writings of Greece, Egypt, and Persia, that what they taught was that there was but One Great God, invisible, all-powerful, all-wise, by whom the starry worlds were created and

guided in their courses—the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth. Then I brought before him Jesus of Nazareth as the Sent of this Great Spirit, to reveal Him to mankind in his true character ; and I showed that men ought not to fall down before man-made figures, but to worship Him only, who was near unto all, and was desirous that man should so live as to become fit to enjoy the paradise He in his love had provided for us—a home throughout eternity for all his children.

At length, after many conferences, he apprehended the truth laid before him. He said,—“I am one with you. How can I help to bring the truth before my neighbours? I have done much by my influence and wealth to uphold those temples with their idol-worship. But no longer shall I do so ; for now my eyes are opened to see the folly and wickedness I have committed in lending myself and substance to this system of idolatry. I see that the ever-present and unseen God may be worshipped and served anywhere under the canopy of heaven.”

This man became a sincere follower of Jesus, and strove hard to bring the people around him into the fold.

Sometime after I left, the little church in Cyprus received a visit of brethren from Jerusalem. By this time the doctrines of Jesus were being noised abroad. These brethren, sincere followers of the Prince though they were, seemed to have mixed up with the truths they had received a certain amount of Judaistic ideas ; and when they met with this merchant, he boldly denounced all such attempts to introduce the traditions of the Jewish doctors into the system of truth taught by the Master, who had not only based his doctrine on declarations of Heaven’s Messengers in the past, but was himself the latest and greatest of all the Messengers of the Most High.

This merchant, like many others in his position at that time, was the possessor of slaves ; and sincerely embracing the truth as taught by Jesus, he at once saw he could no longer hold his fellow-men in bondage. So, having called them together, he told them they were henceforth to consider themselves free men. He said,—“Being myself now freed from the bondage of old superstitions, my eyes have been opened to see the sin of holding you as slaves—you who have been created as well as myself in the likeness of our Great Father, the Almighty and only true God.”

On telling them this, some of them cried, shedding bitter tears ; they had no desire to leave his service, for he had all along been to them a very kind master. Others spoke of paying for their freedom ; but no, he said, it was wrong in him to keep them in bondage—it was he himself should pay, not they who had been wronged. “Go,” said he, “go, my friends, work, buy, and sell for yourselves, for you are all free.”

No one would leave him, however, and he arranged with them that they should receive wages for their service. The good man had his reward, for one and all, in course of time, were persuaded to embrace the truth he had, by precept and example, set before them. A number of these men were well educated, having been captives in war, and, as the custom was, sold into slavery ; but even these would not return to their own land, preferring to remain with him. Bound to them by the ties of love, as brethren of the same faith, and to compensate in some measure for their previous servitude, he at length shared his goods with them.

The reports of this conduct on the part of the rich merchant soon spread over the island, and the effects on the minds of the people were what might have been expected ; for many from all quarters came to listen to the truths preached in the little meeting-house of the brethren.

When my two friends told this good merchant whence they had come, and by whom sent, he cried for joy—saying, as the tears rolled down his cheeks, “I thank God for permitting me to look on the face of Hafed, and listen to his voice ; for from that time I have experienced great joy of soul, which I would not exchange for the wealth of the world. Moreover, God hath given me riches, whereby I am able to do much for the truth and for the welfare of my fellow-men.”

When the members of the church and their families were gathered together, they formed a goodly congregation. Zitha and Anah say they never met with a more God-fearing people. The calm, spiritual glow that bespread their upturned faces when listening to my friends, gave them the appearance of angelic beings. They had frequently manifestations, in their meetings for worship, of Spirit presence and power. They met every night for worship and exhortation. The service was begun by the pastor giving out a hymn or anthem ; after which prayer was made to

the Most High. Then sitting down, he waited for any brother, or sister, to rise and speak to the assembly—sometimes the one, sometimes the other; and even children were allowed to speak. Strangers frequently came to hear; and some had come now and again as spies from the priests, but so many of these spies had been caught by the words of truth that the practice was given up by the priests. They became concerned at the gradual decrease of gold in the temple coffers, and they laid a complaint before the Governor of the evil that was being done to the temple worship. But the Governor told them very plainly that, in the collection of the taxes, his officers had no difficulty in getting the dues from the “Christians,” as he called the brethren, but they experienced great trouble in getting payment from the priests and their adherents, so much so, that, in many cases, they had to employ a body of soldiers to enforce payment. This was a great blow to the priests, but encouragement to the brethren.

It was while my two friends were there that the Governor of the island, evidently impressed by the good character of the brethren, came to the meeting one evening, and listened attentively to what was said. He was evidently interested in the proceedings, for, on the following evening, he again made his appearance. After the usual service of praise and prayer, the little maiden, of whom I have already spoken, rose up and spoke in trance, but her words partook rather of a foretelling of events than of exhortation. She looked towards the Governor, and referred to certain matters respecting his own household. She then warned him of a plot which was being hatched, with the view of getting him removed from his office as Governor of Cyprus; but if he would take a certain course he would defeat the plotters, and become more firmly fixed than ever. He seemed deeply moved when the Spirit spoke through the little maiden, and when she sat down, he rose and said—“I have listened to the oracles of the temple, but nothing delivered there can be compared with that which I have now heard from this little maid; for she has referred to things which no one knows of but myself. There must be truth in her words. You all know me, for I have been your Governor for years. You know what, as your ruler, I have tried to be—honestly exact in all my dealings, giving fair and righteous judgments, and doing my duty to all over whom I am set as Governor. Notwithstanding

all this, it would appear I have enemies. You have heard this virgin speak of certain affairs of which you have no knowledge, but I understand that which she has uttered ; and therefore will I watch, and ask the aid of the invisible ones who have warned me of my danger. I have seen the folly of my past life—my ambitious desires—my love of war, and my devotion to the god of battles. Henceforth I will seek to know more of this Great God of Love and Truth whom ye worship, and of whom ye speak. Ah ! my friends, how much better to serve this God of Love than to lift the sword against our fellow-men, urged on by ambition and the thirst of conquest ! May the day never dawn when I unsheathe my sword on the battle-field ! Farewell, friends ! but only for a short time. I must meet those who are now plotting against me. When I return to you, I hope to be received by you as a follower of Jesus of Nazareth.”

Before leaving, he went up to the young maiden who had spoken and kissed her, saying—“O that I had a daughter like you—a messenger from the Spirits of Truth—to guide me on my way. May Jupiter and his temples be razed to their foundations ! No longer shall I prostrate myself before those senseless figures. I am not afraid of those who plot against me ; I am prepared to thwart their schemes.”

He appeared to be somewhat cast down. He had his faults : he had been a proud man, haughty in his demeanour amongst the people, but now all haughtiness had fled, and he had become as a little child. He went home that night a humbler and a better man.

The mother of this man had been a virgin of the temple, and as such had been married in secret to an officer of high rank. When the connection was discovered by the priests, she was doomed to death. This sentence was carried out, and she was left for dead—but, recovering, she became a priestess. In course of time the young man found out who his mother was, and he often visited her. On one occasion she told him she was not a believer in the temple worship, and tried to open up his mind to the reception of spiritual truth, but found it a hard task. He attended her on her death-bed ; and, in the near approach of her departing hour, she told him that though her body died she herself would still live—she would not go out of existence, and that wherever she went she would in Spirit be nigh to him.

On returning to his palace after meeting with the brethren, he sat down alone in one of his grandly furnished chambers—but he saw nothing of the grandeur around, for his mind was taken wholly up with thoughts of eternity and the world beyond. Turning his eyes upwards, he beheld a beautiful being standing before him—so gloriously bright, he thought at first she was a goddess sent as a guide to him. But he soon saw that the form was that of his mother. He was wonder-struck. She said,—“ I come to guard and guide thee, my son. It was I who spoke to thee those words of warning through the little maiden ; but now, I will be able to visit thee myself. I feel so happy now that you have come to see the truth I have tried so much to impress upon your mind.”

[Here the medium appeared to be introduced to a stranger spirit. On inquiry, we were told it was the Mother of the Governor. The medium, controlled by this spirit, spoke as follows :—“ Sisters, how beautiful ! Love draws us all to him !—draws us from our beautiful place in the paradise above ! When I moved by the altars of the goddess of Earth—not of Heaven—when I held the censer in my hand, and would offer to the cold block of marble—how beautiful were the ideas I gathered from that which raised my soul above the things of Earth, and gave me grand ideas of the Spirit who rules over all. I have often hovered around you. I have often drawn close by, yet afraid to raise my humble voice that I might aid these holy ones who are here with you. By their permission I have been allowed to speak to you. When sitting in my solitary cell, high up in the temple’s towers, I enjoyed the sweet breezes of the evening, as they gently were wafted from the waters, and there I saw angelic beings all round about me, from whom I received oracles, which I proclaimed to the people in the morning. I often think now how foolish, how wicked of me, to allow the minds of my fellow-worshippers who came together—the sweet maiden from her *frill*, and the matron from her home—to remain in ignorance, to bow the knee before the statue, when I might have directed them to higher, holier things. But all that has been forgiven me. Yet I tried to live a holy life on earth. Of my earth-life, I will be able to tell you some other time. It was a sad one, indeed, although I was looked upon, among the great and poor alike, as one superior to all other

beings on earth ; for, as I moved about in my long flowing robes, around my waist a jewelled girdle, I made long prayers, and the poor ones who crouched at my feet would receive consolation, for I had a mother's heart, and could sympathise with them. You will remember when my venerable friend here spoke, giving you an account of his two friends. I am the Mother of the Governor of Cyprus—though not known as such. May the holy angels ever hover around you in nightly sleep, and while you tread the earth, and guide you on your way till you are called away to happier realms of bliss.”]

Ninth Sitting.

March 21st, 1883.

The Governor in Danger—Anah and Zitha Depart—Neither Purse nor Scrip—Spirit Intervention—Transported in Trance—In the Palace—The Temple of the Sun—Evil Spirits cast out—A Prophecy.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—When last I spoke of my two friends, Zitha and Anah, they were in Cyprus ; and I also told you of the visits of the Governor to the meetings of the brethren, and of the appearance to him of his mother in Spirit-form, who had been a priestess in the temple of the Sun. This woman, though acting while alive as a priestess, was a thorough believer in the Nazarene—at least in the doctrines he taught. She had instructed her son when a child in accordance with those doctrines, and which were held by the followers of Jesus ; so that there was little or no difficulty in his conversion to the new faith. The brethren, having such a powerful person among them, were not afraid of persecution there, for at the time it was beginning to put forth its hand over the whole of Lesser Asia, especially in those districts acknowledging the sway of Rome, over which Roman governors ruled, who, being worshippers of heathen deities, thought it their duty to crush the Nazarenes, or the Christians, as they were sometimes called.

Rumours had gone abroad in the island that the Governor had accepted the new faith. There was, no doubt, danger to him in this, for if information of such a change reached Rome, he was sure to be recalled, and, in all likelihood, deprived of his governor-

ship; but he was a man who had always kept the good side of his soldiers, and he had a good many under him for the protection of the island; and, therefore, he was confident none of them would do anything in the way of giving information. Indeed, his officers looked up to him even as they would do to the Emperor himself; he being at the head of affairs in Cyprus, they knew that a word from him might raise them higher in office, for every Roman soldier looked forward to the day when he might rise to the highest post in the army, if not to the rank of Emperor.

My two friends having been invited by the governor to the capital, they bade farewell to their brethren of the church in the humble village on the sea-coast, and set off for the capital with nothing but their staves in their hands and sandals on their feet. They travelled in true evangelistic form, having neither purse nor scrip, looking to those they came amongst to help them on their way. When they went forth from Persia on their mission they had well-filled purses, but through the many calls made upon them for the relief of the poor, by the time they reached Cyprus they had nothing left; so that my two friends were not at all afraid to travel alone. What was to be gained by an attack on them—two aged men, who had neither money nor jewels, or anything of that sort? But they had that within them—a jewel beyond all price—which they were anxious to give to rich and poor alike.

On the second day of their journey they slowly walked along, conversing cheerfully on the hopeful signs that had sprung up in Cyprus. The setting sun gilded the tops of the mountain range, while the deep valleys began to be shrouded in darkness, and the blue mist was descending on the earth. They had passed into one of those darkened gorges that intersected the mountains, when they were stopped by four men, who appeared to bar their way. My two friends essayed to pass, but they would not allow them. They told them they were but humble travellers, and wanted to find shelter, as the evening was fast falling on them, and the moment the sun dipped behind the western hills darkness would come on and they would not be able to find their way. But still the four individuals stood in the way, as if determined they should not pass. They carried no arms; nor did they attempt to ill-use them, but beckoned to them to go back. My two friends knew not what to think; but at last both held up their hands to heaven

and said—"In the name of Jesus our Lord, allow us to go on our way." They had no sooner used that name than the four men appeared in shining raiment, brighter than the sun at noon-day. Whereupon my friends fell flat on their faces before these messengers from heaven. But one of the bright ones said—"Arise, and stand upon your feet." And when they rose up, the angel said—"We are sent to warn you not to go on your way. Come with us to the mountains, and we will show you the way from danger."

Then said Zitha, "Who would attack us? We have no riches. Why should men lay hands on us?"

The angel told them that the priests of the temples, seeing the success attendant on their labours, and afraid that, with the help of the Governor, their old system of worship would be upset, their temples pulled down, and they themselves be driven forth as outcasts, had hired men to waylay them and assassinate them.

My two brethren permitted themselves to be led by these holy messengers, and, reaching a certain place, they felt inclined to sleep. They tried to shake it off, while the four bright ones still stood over them.

They must have fallen into profound sleep; for when they awoke the bright sun was once more shining on the earth, and they found themselves reclining within the walls of a beautiful chamber. They wondered much how they happened to be there. They remembered what had happened the night before with the four angelic messengers, and how they had fallen asleep, but nothing more. Where they were they could not tell, and, as they mused over that which had taken place, they heard the sound of music at some distance, and as the sound came nearer, they looked out and saw a procession of virgins, led by an old matron. They followed with their eyes till they saw them enter a temple in connection with the grounds of the mansion they were in. They continued to look, still wondering where they had been transported to in their sleep, when their eyes fell on the Governor of the island, who looked up from below, and smiled, as he greeted them. Shortly thereafter an Ethiopian came to them and conducted them to the bath, where they washed, and then were brought back to the chamber, that they might partake of the morning meal, which consisted of bread and various fruits. The

repast being over, they were led into the presence of the Governor, who smiled on them as they approached him. My two friends asked him how they came to be there. He said that on the past night he had dreamt that about the close of the previous day four persons presented themselves at the palace gate, and asked an audience of him. At first he would not consent, as he knew not who they were, and when asked they would not give their names, but said they were sent by their Lord and Master to warn him of the danger that beset my friends; that the priests had hired men to waylay them at a certain place while crossing the mountains, and put them to death.

On being told this, he said—"How am I to prevent such a deed if it has been so planned? I may afterwards punish those who have thus conspired to destroy my friends, but I cannot prevent this taking place, as the journey is too far for the swiftest horse to fly over. Even though I sent help on the broad wings of an eagle, he would not be in time to rescue them."

"Think not thou of that. They are under our charge, and we must guard them well. We must bring them into a place of safety. If brought by us into the city, they might be recognised by the priests and slain; but if brought under your roof, we know they will be safe."

Then he told the four messengers to bring them to the palace, and said, if such a thing were done by them—their charge placed under his roof that night—no other God would he serve, not even by the command of the Emperor would he serve another than the God of Heaven, whose messengers they were. He then told them that a certain chamber of the palace would at once be prepared for those they had in charge, and they departed.

When he awoke early that morning (he said), the whole dream, or vision, appeared to him as he had described, and that it had caused him much thought, "and," continued he, "I knew not well how to ascertain if you had been brought hither; so at an early hour I went into the garden, and anxiously looked up to the chamber described in my dream as that one which was to be prepared for your reception, and my very heart leapt within me for joy when I saw your faces at the window."

Before going into the house again, he said, he went to his own private temple, which was dedicated to Bacchus, and, with his

own hands, he hurled the image down from its pedestal, though a beautiful work of art. "No God such as this," he said, "shall I again worship; but henceforth I will praise the Great Spirit, the Creator of all things."

After some further conversation with my two friends, he called all his household together for worship. My brethren then spoke to them of Jesus of Nazareth, of his life, of his teachings, and of his death. They spoke of things past, and prophesied of things to come, while the Governor and his people listened to them with deep attention.

That same day the Governor took Zitha and Anah by their arms and led them to the Temple of the Sun. There, on the altar of fire, the flame of which never ceased, sacrifice was offered daily, while the great orb of light and heat ran his course. The lamb lay bound on the blazing fire when my two friends, with the Governor, entered the temple. They at once went up to that altar, and threw the sacrifice on the ground. While all stood horrified at what was done, one of my brethren lifted up his voice and said—"The Great Father of all asks not blood, nor the life of animals; your burnt-offerings are an offence to him. The sacrifice he seeketh from you is obedience to his laws of love, and purity of life." There he stood by this altar of fire, even as we had stood by our own country's altars, and preached to them of the worship due to the one great Creator and Upholder of all things, and of whom the glorious sun was a fitting emblem, in as much as it was the source of light and heat, daily shedding blessings on all men. They were to worship the Great Spirit, the invisible God, on whom no eye could look—they were to worship Him in spirit within their own souls. "Let your thoughts go up to your Great Father, who is Love. He would have you to go out to the poor, and the sick, and the needy—to stretch out a helping hand to all who require your help. This is the sacrifice he desires of you. Do this, and you will have, as of old, messages from the World of Spirits, telling you what Heaven desires you to do. Bring forth that virgin, on whom the eyes of man hath never looked, and, through her, you will again have oracles from Heaven direct."

The people stood in terror while my friend thus spoke, and one cried out—"Are ye gods come down from Heaven, or are ye men?"

“ We are not gods ; but we have the Divine spark within us, and which is possessed by everyone on the earth, and that spark shines brightly in those beautiful virgins who stand before the altar.”

Then was brought forth the virgin, through whom they received the oracles in this Temple of the Sun. At first she looked at my two friends, and rent her garments, and tore her hair, crying out, “ Why hast thou dethroned us ? Why cast us down ? ”

My friend, Zitha, perceiving she was under evil control, said— “ Begone, ye Spirits of darkness, and let the maid alone ! Ye have told the people truths indeed, but only in so far as these would aid you in your deception. But no longer shall you be permitted to use this maiden. Begone, and let her guardian spirit speak ! ”

At these words, the virgin looked as if released from some oppressive burden, while her face appeared radiant and pleasing to look on. She then poured forth such a prayer to Heaven’s Great King as no one of the assembled people had ever heard before ; then followed an oracle, prophesying the downfall of all those temples, and that the day was coming when the believers in this new faith also would turn back, and a false one would rise in the deserts of sand, and would cause the people, by fire and sword, to bow down before it. (At this utterance my two brethren were troubled.) “ From Rome shall it come. Rome will be the ruin of Rome’s religion ; ” but, after tribulations, it would become pure, “ through the work of one who shall arise in a far-distant age, when greater light shall shine and be enjoyed over all the earth.”

She went on addressing the people for a long time, and when at length she woke up, she seemed changed to another being altogether. She threw her arms around my two friends and wept like a child, and they looked down on her as a daughter. She prayed them to take her away with them. But they said that it would not suit them in their mission to be accompanied by a young maiden. They had no home, and were but wanderers from place to place, and they persuaded her to seek shelter with the band of virgins that had been standing beside the altar.

Here we must stop for this night.

Tenth Sitting.

April 18th, 1883.

Hafed on the "New Faith"—The Sun of Righteousness—The Early Disciples—The Governor's Household—Theological Rubbish—Conversion of a Young Priest—A Priestly Trick—The Doctrine of Non-Resistance.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two friends retired from the temple along with the Governor, and sat for some time conversing on the conspiracy that had been planned by the priests to destroy them, and of their wonderful deliverance by the intervention of the angelic band. And now, though a deep impression had seemingly been made on the minds of the people by the proceedings in the temple that day, a still deeper feeling of enmity would, in all likelihood, be raised in the hearts of the priests. Anything opposed to the current theology of whatever country, at the time, was sure to be denounced, and its promoters subjected to persecution. We have all found that out. For myself, whenever I turned to the new faith—that which had been taught by Jesus, our Great Master—those who had once claimed me as a brother, and, as Head of the Magi, would have fallen at my feet in reverence, turned against me, and would have spurned at and spit on me. Why? Because I advocated this new faith, and yet I had held the great truths it contained from the beginning. In reality, it was no *new* faith, but the revival of that which had, from the earliest ages, been again and again given to man from the Spirit-world. I was refused admission into the Grove, by my brethren of the Magi, that day when I returned from my evangelistic labours; but had they admitted me, no doubt things would have taken a different course, for, as time went on, I would have managed to show the beauty, the truth, the reasonableness of many points in this new faith, without alarming them. No doubt, in due time, I would have also persuaded them to put away the fire from their altars, as a symbol of no use thereon—having the grand symbol of light and love for ever shining in the heavens, giving to the earth beauty, and to the dwellers on it gladness of heart. When behind a cloud, how desolate the aspect; but when he again comes forth, he glorifies all on which he shines. That Sun, so long promised to the nations, had appeared, and the light of truth was now dispersing the thick darkness that had for ages

encompassed mankind. He had imparted this light to us, his followers, and why should we cover it up? Why hide it in our bosoms? No, let it shine on others. That was how I and my two friends acted. They had received the truth into their own souls, that they might give it to those who were groping in darkness and ignorance.

And here, in this island of Cyprus, they had been the means of bringing many under the teachings of the Master, and now the light was beginning to shine within the Governor's palace, a place the most unlikely for the new faith to find a lodgment. But the seed had been sown in the heart of the Governor, when a boy, by his sainted mother, who, though a priestess, had come to know the true object of worship, and bowed not to the beautiful image of the goddess, but to the Great Spirit, unseen by mortal eyes; and those lessons given to him in secret, which had for many years lain unthought of, were now coming up fresh as from a mother's lips, and causing him to listen to the truths proclaimed by my two brethren.

About this time the new faith had been widely proclaimed by the immediate disciples of Jesus. They had found their way to Egypt, to Greece, to Rome, and to many other lands. Paul had been listened to by the Grecians—that nation whose gods exceeded in number those of other nations—and boldly, and with great power, did he denounce the idolatry he witnessed in Greece. [Here followed some observations on the temples of Greece and Rome, contrasting these with the Persian system of worship in the open air, and, though favouring the latter system, showing the reasonableness of using the grand buildings, that had been erected for idolatrous worship, for the true service of God.]

But I have departed from my subject. My two friends, Zitha and Anah, were introduced to the household of the Governor, and in speaking to them, they took care to do so in a way such as would not create prejudice in their minds. I had taught my brethren before sending them out on their mission, to beware of running directly in the face of those people who differed from them in religion, but rather to get at the foundation truths which lay at the base of all the Eastern systems of theology, and show them how far they had departed from these truths by their idolatrous practices; that in preaching the truths as taught by Jesus,

the Master whom they served, they were but setting before them those grand doctrines that had been long hidden by priest-craft from the people.

All the theologies taught in the Eastern nations had in them the true ring of the religion that had been received at first from the Spirit-world—what had been given to Hebrews, Persians, Grecians, and all the nations around—only, you had, as it were, to go into a great bank by the river side, and turn over the rubbish that had been washed down by the stream, before you could pick out the precious gems lying imbedded amidst the gravel. The theological rubbish of ages had to be removed before the simple, sublime truths, given from Heaven to man, could be seen. That was what we had to do, at that time, in our labours to proclaim the doctrines of the Prince, our Master. Thus did my two brethren act while addressing the household of the Governor.

Then came to them the old matron with her maidens, and secretly inquired into the doctrines of their faith, or religion. She had heard somewhat of Jesus, the Nazarene, and had been controlled by the Priestess of the Temple of the Sun, the Governor's Mother. She introduced my two friends to the temple, where they met with a young man—a priest. He had been handed over by his parents (who were high in rank), as an offering to the gods for temple service—and this was done in fulfilment of a vow made by his mother, that the next son she bore should be devoted to the service of the gods, in token of her gratitude for some great deliverance experienced in the family.

This young man had studied in Egypt, and had acquired much knowledge from the priests there. He had also been educated in the theologies and philosophy of Greece, and was generally looked on in Cyprus, coming from a great family, as taking the lead, or ranking as chief of the priests. But, during the time of his education in Athens, he had met in with Paul, and had listened attentively to some of the apostle's addresses. Though a deep impression had been made on him by what he had heard, he still continued to cling to the old faith.

Well, as I have said, my two friends met with this young priest, and he asked them to come aside with him into his cell.

There he put questions to them about their belief, and when he found that the doctrines they held were similar to those he had heard preached at Athens, he at once accepted them, and glorified God. He did not hesitate to do so, inasmuch as the same things declared by Paul were confirmed by my two brethren. "Now," he said, "will I give up all this, and join myself to you, following you wherever you go."

Then Zitha said—"We cannot agree with you in this matter; for I am persuaded that, with your name, and the knowledge you have acquired, you would do more good within these walls than by following us about from place to place. We are aged and poor, and you would be subjected to hardships, trials and tribulations that you are unaccustomed to."

"But if I stay here," he said, "I have nothing else to expect, for, within these walls, there are certain of the priests who cherish a vindictive spirit, and if they learned of my change, I would not be allowed to live. I would disappear from the sight of men, even where other marked men have gone. I am young, and wish to do some good in the world. But I fear, if I remain here, I will be shut up in darkness, and my bones will go down to the dust. And yet, why should I fear for all they can do to this body? There is something else—my spirit. What is it, and whither goest it?"

He seemed much disturbed in mind in view of the consequences should his change of faith be discovered, and to be afraid of death, and Anah said,—“Ask when thou goest if thou art fit to be weighed in the balances of the Just One, for the deeds thou hast done in thy short life. Paradise—the heaven of glory—is open to all men who have done justly, it matters not what their faith. As taught by Jesus of Nazareth, if thou hast walked up to the light that was given thee, doing good as much as in thee lay, even though thou hadst worshipped in another name—that paradise will be thine. Ages and ages have passed away, and many hath entered into that land of bliss, who wait to welcome souls to their happy home above. But if judgment should go against thee—that undying part, which will live throughout eternity, will go down with thee to the caverns of darkness, and there thou wilt be left to mourn over thy wickedness till the light of truth penetrate thy thick cloak of selfishness, and lead thee upwards, step by step,

from the prison-house to paradise. But, wiser far for man to avoid that terrible discipline by doing all the good he can while in the body ; and we have hopes that thou wilt choose the better way, for I perceive in thy countenance a desire to teach those truths which Jesus our Master taught his followers, and which we have made known to thee."

To this he said,—“Had I the power to draw down the lightnings of heaven and shiver these gods to atoms before the eyes of their worshippers, I would do it.”

“Hush, speak not thus ; these priests know as well as you that their pedestalled idols are nothing, but the poor people know no better.”

This conversation with the young priest took place in his cell, within hearing distance of what was going on in the temple ; and at this point the young man called the attention of my two brethren to the sound of a voice proceeding from the mouth of one of the idols. “Wait and hear what the priest says, for though the ignorant people who are bending before it believe it to be the voice of a god, it is but the utterance of a crafty priest.” They listened, while the voice was heard pouring down curses on the heads of the poor people for not bringing offerings to the priests, and that the curses would not be removed till they brought offerings of gold.

My two friends stood aghast when they heard the dull heavy sounds proceed from the gigantic beggar ; and as they looked from where they sat, they saw the mouth of the idol open, and sounds seemed to come from within ; while its eyes rolled, and its hands went up and down as if denouncing the people.

My two friends were angry at the deception practised on the ignorant worshippers, and would have rushed forward and denounced the whole thing ; but the young man restrained them, telling them that if they interfered then, not even the Governor could save them from death or the dungeon.

“Dungeons!” said Zitha, “have you dungeons in this temple?”

“Yes ; we have such here. The soldiers, or guards, seize an offender, and carry him to a dungeon beneath, where a court would be held, and he would be put to torture, or to death. I am too young to be told the secrets ; but, as a learner, I have used my eyes to note what is going on. When I had finished

my education, and went to Egypt and Greece, and there visited the temples, I became aware of such deeds of darkness, and I soon found that the same system existed here." After describing the contrivance adopted by the priests to give the appearance of life to the gigantic idol, they retired from the temple.

The Governor called together his family and his household, and my friends once more addressed them. Before they departed, they again conversed with the young priest, when he told them he would remain behind, and work silently for the good cause.

My two friends went out to where the poor were found, for they thought it far better to labour amongst the poor and needy, than to go to philosophers or learned men; and the young priest went to hear them discourse to the toilers in the fields and the fishers by the sea-shore. These were more ready to listen to their teachings than others who moved in higher spheres of life. They, in preaching to the poor, showed how the doctrines of Jesus put all men on a level; that all being the offspring of the Great Father, were the objects of his love and goodness—that there was no respect of persons with Him. They showed that they could, each one for himself or herself, worship the Great Spirit without the aid of priests, who dragged from them their substance for the support of their temple worship. Thus my two brethren continued to sow the good seed amongst the humble toilers of Cyprus, while the young priest took advantage of such opportunities as offered for increasing in knowledge of the truth.

Before again setting out on their mission, my two brethren ordained this youth as pastor of a small church gathered in the house of the Governor. On that occasion the Governor said he had no doubt that it would reach the ears of the Emperor, and he would be called home. So it proved; for some time after my two brethren had left Cyprus, the Governor was summoned to Rome, but before he reached the capital the Emperor died, and ere a new one was elected, the case was forgotten. But he, the Governor, still retained his position as a Roman general.

At parting with Zitha and Anah, he had spoken to them of the teachings of certain of the followers of Jesus, who held that we should be meek; that where a hand was lifted against you, you were not to defend yourself or retaliate; if you were robbed of your goods, you were not to go to law to recover these goods, and

so on. (I had stood out against this, and thought it was not even justice. I saw with my eyes people robbed, the weak even stealing from the strong, and the strong tamely submitting to the outrage. I saw that this encouraged crime, and I stood out against this doctrine, and so did my two friends.) He (the Governor) asked them—"How can I be a soldier of Rome? How can I lead armies to battle? How can I glory in the victory I may win?" They showed him that, though they sought earnestly to have all men to be at peace one with another, the world—the nations of the world—were not prepared to be at peace; and, in that case, nations should be prepared to defend themselves against those who came against them. If one came against him to injure him in body, or take away his life, he was bound by the law of God to do all in his power to preserve that life. As with individuals, so with nations. If one nation made inroads on the country of another nation, they were bound to drive back the invaders. They said he should continue to be a soldier, and ever be ready to do battle for the weak. They exhorted him to be a bold and staunch soldier also for the cause of Jesus. Even if threatened with torture, or made a spectacle for men and women to gloat over in the arena, boldly die for the truth; for, in so sacrificing his life, the follower of Jesus became the means of leading others to embrace the truth for which he suffered.

Eleventh Sitting.

November 14th, 1883.

Leave Cyprus—Early Churches—Signs and Symbols Used—Mission of Hermes—Enthusiasm of New Converts—Priestcraft in Power—A Church Formed—Story of Two Young Maidens—Picked Up—A Good Old Woman—One of Hermes' Band—A Shining Face—Mother and Son—Clairvoyants in the Church.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two friends were just leaving Cyprus when I last spoke of them. They set sail on their way toward the Hellespont, and landed at a small village—a village, though a seaport—a place where many of the merchants, in crossing the strait, generally landed. Some business was done there; and there were a great many fishermen round about that quarter. On landing, they found a number of the traders or merchants, who generally stayed there a while, waiting for fishing vessels passing

and re-passing to the other side. Some of these merchants had been connected with the churches formed by Hermes and by myself in that quarter. These they had found through their use of certain signs or symbols, worn by the brethren of the new faith. Though entire strangers from other nations, these signs and symbols were readily understood by the brethren. Many of the merchants could speak most of the languages of the different countries they visited on their trading expeditions.

My two friends, before landing, had been told, by certain merchants who had sailed along with them, that they would, in all likelihood, meet with some of their brethren, who believed as they believed. So, when they landed, they led my two friends to the market-place, which, though small, was attended by a number of merchants, from various countries, for the sale of their goods. As they went amongst them, they could see one here and another there wearing the symbols referred to, showing that they belonged to the new faith. They spoke to them as friends would speak to one another, and at length a goodly company of them were brought together. They also found that a number of inhabitants of the village were believers ; and here they heard of one highly spoken of—I mean Hermes.

My two brethren at length spoke to the people ; and, as they brought before them the words of the Prince of Life, they bent their heads towards the ground, and cried out to the Most High, that He would shower down His Spirit on them, that they might all be able to go forth to enlighten the inhabitants of the earth still shrouded in darkness.

A great many of the early followers of the new doctrine, when they first got hold of it, rushed forth to the world, thinking they could, of themselves, bring mankind to the new faith by simply declaring it. My two brethren showed them that could not be—men had reason, and they must be reasoned with—they must be made to see the truth in its true light. They were not to go forth like men that were mad, but calmly and coolly, and show by their daily walk that they practised the doctrine of that religion which they professed to believe in ; that every man was alike in the eyes of God—he who sat on a throne was no more than the beggar at the wayside, and they were bound to look on all as children of the Great Father.

A great many, especially of those in Central Asia, and the parts toward the Caspian Sea (who had been converted by Hermes and his band, who went forth to the world with merchandise), wished to dispose of the jewel they carried in their bosoms to all mankind, and even tried to force the truth on them, and some thus brought great trouble on themselves.

At the time I speak of, different theologies were taught in different places—especially in Greece, where the priestcraft had power, and the reins of Government in their hands—the rulers of the people even bowing down to them. These priests were ever jealous of any encroachment on their craft, by which they managed to live in a position higher than that of kings and mighty men. They taught the poor ignorant toilers on land and sea that they should bring to them a tenth of what they acquired by their labour, to hold up those gorgeous buildings, with their golden idols and marble statues; and the poor labourers, with the sweat on their brows, had to submit and give from their little store what these lazy, worthless priests demanded. There were, however, some connected with these grand temples that were worthy, and these were the poor females who were pent up in the upper room, through whom the oracles were given to the priests, but who twisted them to suit themselves. These priests jealously guarded the poor creatures, who wished to break the chains that bound them to slavery and superstition. If idol worship had been understood by the people as it was by the priests, it would not have been so far wrong; for the idea first set up was, that the people were to bow before the image, that so their attention might be directed to the Great Spirit—not to pray to the block of marble but to the Creator of all things.

After my two friends had been there for some days, a small church, as we may call it, was formed, and elders were ordained, one of them to be pastor of the church—one who was able to expound the doctrines taught by myself and Hermes, as we had received them from Jesus, the Prince of Life, who had brought the truths he proclaimed from all the theologies for the good of mankind. My friends spent some ten days among the brethren—about the happiest time ever they had passed in their long life course.

There were two young maidens who became members of the

little assembly, who had at one time been oracles in one of the temples at Trebizond. They had been there when Hermes visited that place, and heard of him. By some way or other, they got quit of the temple, and went and heard him speak. The next time they were there they had been thrown into the trance condition, when they met with those of the Spirit-world, and were told by the Guides of Hermes to leave the place they were then in, and to go forth, it mattered not in what direction—those who had been their guides in former days would lead them to a point where they would be much required.

The two maidens had never met, and knew not each other. Both had been kept in the temple from childhood till they reached womanhood; both escaped at the same time, and both met together at the one place. Strange to say, other two individuals met with them, and these two were young men. They travelled along the highway, and as they walked they spoke to these maidens as if they had known them from childhood. The young maidens, having had little communication with the outer world, knew nothing of these young men; but as they went on talking to each other, they found that the longer they were in their company the better they liked them. The subjects of conversation were those they understood—things connected both with the inner and outer worlds; and as they led them on they knew that they must have travelled a great distance in a very short space of time. They had left the temple in the dusk of the evening, and in the early morning they were at the outskirts of the village—the same place where my two friends were—and then the young men left them, bidding them go into the village—that there they would become of some use. The young maidens wished them to continue with them, but the young men told them they could not remain. “We have been with you often in the dark cells when held in bondage; we were with you as guardians; and now we have led you from your prison-house. We are not of this earth, we are of the world above.” The maidens had never seen them before. They had often met with individuals from the World of Spirits, but had never seen them like themselves. They beseeched the two young men to take them with them. They said they could not; they had certain work before them which must be done. They had worked long enough for those who turned the

communications of the Spirit-world to evil account; now, they would work with such as would respect their communications as those which were intended to upraise mankind.

The two lonely maidens, who met as strangers, now embraced each other as sisters. They said that as these young men were the only ones they had ever seen, no other man would ever fill the place they had taken up. They came to the village, and wandered up and down for some time, till an old woman, who had been at the market-place, coming along, saw them in their forlorn condition. She spoke to them kindly, and, finding they were strangers, and did not know where to go, she asked them to come with her to her humble abode. They gladly accompanied the old woman to her house, which was but poorly furnished; but she gave them a hearty welcome, and set meat before them, for which the maidens thanked her.

Before rising from their repast, one of the two maidens fell into trance, and said a blessing had fallen on them and on the old woman, for the angels of the Most High had taken up their abode with her; and now, though her home was but humble, they would gladly abide with her.

This woman's son was a follower of the Nazarene. She was of Arabian descent, and her son had been one of those who had, for some time, travelled with Hermes, and, when he returned to his mother, he told her of the wonders he had seen and heard, and she became a disciple of her son. Whatever she had, she could not see a stranger in need but she would bestow the very last bite on them. She would go hungry herself so that she might be able to give food to those who were starving. It was with this disposition she gave shelter to these two forlorn maidens. When her son was told what had happened, he was astonished. She said it was true. "My house has now become the gate of heaven. I hear, through the lips of that maiden, angels speaking to me." She said the maiden had told her of things that had happened to her from the time she was a child till she became a wife and mother—till she became a widow. Her husband came back and spoke to her through the lips of the maiden, and so much had she realised his presence that she was ready to clasp the empty air, thinking to clasp him who had been and was still so dear to her. She fell down on her knees, she said, and prayed to the

Great Spirit. She would have rushed out to bring in all her neighbours to see and hear all that she had been blessed to see and hear—for she had also seen the bright angels around the maidens ; but the one who was not in trance said to her—“ Stay, that which hath been spoken is for thyself. Close it up in the chambers of thy bosom. The day will come when thou mayest give it to those ready to receive it ; but if thou disclose it now, the people will say—‘ She hath gone mad ; let us bind her fast, she hath gone beside herself.’ ” The good old woman saw the force of that, and stayed.

A day or two after this, my two brethren, who had arrived in the village, met with the members of the church for worship, when this old woman and the two young maidens entered the place of assembly. It was observed, as she entered with one on each side of her, that her countenance shone with a light not ordinarily seen on a human being : more like some one descended from the world above than a dweller on the earth ; and when she came in she seemed familiar with all that were there. Many of them, no doubt, knew her. Her son, when at home, was always in the market-place. He was a bold, fearless individual ; no matter what company he was in, he would tell what good the new faith had done for himself. Being an Arabian, he thought he had a right to speak. He bowed his head to no man. As he told the Governor on one occasion, when requested to bow his head—“ I bow to no one. I stand erect when I address the Great Spirit of Heaven and Earth, and why bow to man ? ” The old woman had a good deal of her son, and he had a good deal of his mother.

She walked erect as she entered betwixt these two maidens, and prayed for a blessing on those met to worship the Lord of Heaven and Earth as He ought to be worshipped.

First one and then the other of the maidens went into deep trance, and uttered some wonderful things, to the great delight of those who had no previous knowledge of speaking in that condition ; but there were others there who said,—“ These but play the pranks played on us before by the priests.”

The old lady and my two friends said, “ No ; listen to them, and believe them. At least, hear what they have got to say before you condemn them.” The entranced maidens began, first of all,

with a merchant, and referred to many transactions of his former life ; and so with various others in the assembly—they told the good and bad, hiding nothing. Many were thus made to hang their heads, and to cry out,—“O Lord, forgive us!” My two brethren confess that they themselves shrank from inspection by the maiden seers ; for well they knew that many of the deeds of their early life could not stand the light of day, and before men they would rather have them buried in oblivion.

The two maidens, under the influence of their unseen guides, continued to speak to the assembled people, exhorting all to live good and holy lives, and, on every occasion, to manifest the spirit of love one towards another, as members of the brotherhood. They also entreated the brethren, who were there from many distant parts of the then known world—even some from your own country [Britain], to remember the vows they had made—that to whatever quarter they went on their trading journeys, they should endeavour to act righteously in every transaction, as in the sight of the All-seeing One and his angels—that they should, with all boldness, proclaim the new faith, intended by the Most High for the benefit of all mankind ; and denounce superstition, idolatry, priestcraft, and wickedness, from the very porches of the temples.

The little churches that were to be met with here and there, bound themselves to no hard and fast creed—nor were inclined to do otherwise with those who came amongst them from many distant parts. They simply laid down what was understood as the rule of the Master—Love to God and love to man ; an honest, faithful, and upright walk or course of life was all that was asked.

I will stop here for to-night.

Twelfth Sitting.

January 23rd, 1884.

The Church in Trebizond—A Bold Preacher—Priests Paralysed—The Populace Aroused—The Mob Quieted—An Oracle brought out to the People—The Priests Released—Attempt to kill the Oracle.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two brethren, after a short sojourn at the village I spoke of at our last meeting, left along with some merchants who were bound for Trebizond.

Now Hermes and his company had been there some time before, according to the account he has given you. In Trebizond, a church had been in existence for some time. When my two friends arrived there they found that the church had grown in numbers. In fact you might almost say, that the whole of the inhabitants of that place had become followers of the Nazarene; yet there were still a few that stuck to their old religion, and among these were some of the higher classes. The priests were terribly annoyed at witnessing so many of the people attending the meetings of the Brethren, and had tried several times before the arrival of my friends, to stir up a persecution against the church in Trebizond, as had been done in other places where the truth had prevailed; but notwithstanding their efforts to put down the new faith, they found they were losing ground; for even among some of those who still clung to the old worship, there were a few who went slyly, as it were, to hear that which was spoken by the ministers of the new religion, and became more or less interested in the truths proclaimed.

You will remember of Hermes telling you about a young man, a priest, whom he had won over to the truth—one who had been stirred up by priests to make an attempt on his life. He visited Trebizond shortly after my two friends. But he was not content with preaching to the people who assembled in the house in which they worshipped; he stood boldly upon the marble steps of the temple, and proclaimed the truth unto the people, who came in crowds to hear him. The priests, enraged at this bold step of the young man, rushed out from the temple, and the people ran back; but he, along with my two brethren, stood unmoved, and just as the priests were in the act of rushing on them, he looked on them steadily with his eyes, and they became fixed as marble statues. Then in a voice, heard by all the people, who stood at a short distance, he denounced the paralysed priests as teachers of false doctrines, and deceiving the people by trickery and illusions; and not only so, but taking the money given for the upholding of the temple service, and the support of widows and orphans, and squandering it in the gratification of their own lusts and pleasures.

His words were uttered with such power that those who had gathered around to listen became greatly excited as he denounced

the priests, who were still standing, unable to say a word or move a muscle, and who, instead of inspiring terror, had become a laughing-stock in the eyes of the people. At length the crowd, pressing closer and closer to the steps, shouted—"Down with the priests! down with the robbers!" while the young man and my two brethren beseeched them in vain to keep quiet. "No, no," some cried. "Away with the thieves! No more let us be deceived by their mummeries!" while others cried out to tear down the temple, and leave not one stone upon another. The young man, perceiving that the more violent of the people were about to put their threats into force, went and stood before the great gate of the temple, and holding up his hands, said—"Stand back! This house was erected for the worship of the Most High, and it has been desecrated, defiled. But let no one dare destroy it. The Great Spirit will find a way by which to purify it, and bring it back to that for which it was designed; the Great God desires no such acts of destruction."

This young man knew that a mob, if once they could get within the walls, would tear down its golden images, and destroy everything precious within it. The crowd was partly composed of men who had come down from the hills—men who were continually lounging about the town—and who would not scruple to destroy the building for the sake of the spoil, while, for such depredations, the poor of the town would be made to suffer. While he spoke, they seemed to be awe-struck, some saying—"Surely he is more than man; for what man in this city could strike these priests by a glance of his eye, or thus hold back an infuriated mob, as he now does?" Others of the more violent sort, balked in their intentions of outrage, said he was an evil spirit, and cried out to put him down. But he said, "Why, O men, do you denounce me as an evil spirit? I have not come to do you harm, but to do you good. All I want is, that everyone who heareth me should become the worshippers and servants of the living God; and to know that when you bow yourselves before the image of the beautiful goddess, *that* is not worship. True worship is to raise your minds upward to the Great God and Father of us all, who dwelleth in light unapproachable—the Creator and Sustainer of all. He is the God of Love, and will have all His children to be as He is. Think not, therefore, that the All-Seeing One can be

pleased with violence. But shame be on those priests who have allowed you to grow up in ignorance ! ”

Here some cried out that the Oracle had not come forth with messages from the gods.

“ The Oracle has not failed to give messages,” he said, “ but when these do not suit the priests and their ways, they withhold the messages from you, their deluded votaries. Let the Oracle now come forth, and let her speak so that you may understand.”

The words were hardly uttered, when there was seen slowly moving towards the gate, a tall and slender female, dressed in white, with a golden hoop, ornamented with white coral, upon her head, and holding a silver censer, in which she carried perfume. Her eyes were closed, and when she reached the gate, she mounted the steps to the broad marble platform on which stood the stricken forms of the priests. With the censer in one hand, she, with the other, touched the priests as she passed by, and they seemed to be relieved from the power under which they had been held. She then ascended to an elevated seat, or throne, on which she stood, and cried aloud—“ Woe, woe, be to this house ! for the fiat hath gone forth from the Highest ! The end hath come ! The New Star hath arisen, and his Light shall shine over all the world ; and man shall yet own him to be the Prince of Heaven and of Earth. There stand the men who have robbed you of the truth ! They have perverted the words I have spoken, and that which hath been written by me have they destroyed, or transformed to suit their own wicked ends. Away ! away ! Hide ye ! Repent, O ye priests ! The doom hath been pronounced : no more shall the oracles come to you, because ye are false ! false ! ”

Having said these words, she slowly opened her eyes, and when she looked on the assembled people, who seemed deeply moved, she staggered and fell. My two friends Anah and Zitha went and raised her up betwixt them in their arms. All eyes, both of priests and people, were now fixed on my two brethren ; and when the priests saw that they were Persians (for my friends still wore the dress of the Magi, though they spoke that which had been taught by the Nazarene)—when they saw these strangers and the oracle standing between them, they rushed towards them, and once or twice attempted to strike her to the ground, for they

were afraid that through her they would still farther be exposed. One of my brethren took hold of one of the priests, who seemed greatly incensed, and said—"Let not thy hand dare to strike this maiden, or thy knife shed one drop of human blood; for shouldst thou do it, assuredly the same knife shall be used against thee." But, in spite of the warning, the enraged priest made a second attempt to slay the maiden before she left the temple: he struck her in the back, but while making the stroke his foot slipped, and he fell on the marble steps, his knife piercing his heart. By the slipping of his foot the blow was diverted, only causing a slight scratch of the skin—but from which a few drops of blood issued. Thus were the words of my aged brother quickly fulfilled. The priest died by the same knife that he had raised to take away the life of the virgin oracle.

Chirteenth Sitting.

January 30th, 1884.

Women's Rights—The Oracle Sheltered—The Church Revived—Persecution—Natural Result—A City of Inquirers—Priests Baffled—On the Black Sea—Attacked by Pirates—Sold as Slaves—A Little Maiden—A Profitable Conference—Inland Markets—Frost and Snow—Market Town—Discussion in the Market-place—Unknown Tongue—The Slaves and their Master—Ransomed by the People.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—At our last meeting I gave you an account of the excitement created in Trebizond by the powerful appeals of the young preacher from the steps of the temple, and the appearance of the oracle and her denunciation of the priests.

After things had quieted down, she accompanied my two brethren, and found refuge among the followers of Jesus. Shortly after, she joined the Brethren and became a speaker in their assembly. But some Hebrews who were there at that time would have put her down. My two friends, however, had been brought up to look on woman as man's best helpmate, and showed the Hebrew brethren they were wrong in trying to put a bar on the utterances of females in the assembly. As Persians, they always held that women excelled in many things, and that especially they were better fitted than men to speak to the soul. If women (said they) were able to give forth oracles as well as

men, why should they be debarred from speaking in the assemblies of the brethren as the Spirit gave them utterance? There were some, too, who murmured, saying she had been preaching idolatry, and she might continue to teach it there. Afterwards there was no more said about it. Hearing that certain misrepresentations had been made affecting her, she addressed the assembled people with so much power that the place became, as it were, turned upside down. And not only were the wealthy and influential people attracted to the meetings, but the Chief Magistrate, once a bitter enemy, made his appearance among them.

At this time persecution had again commenced in many places, and the brethren in Trebizond felt more secure because of the favour shown them by the Chief Magistrate. But numbers of those who elsewhere followed after the new faith saw nothing else before them but flight to distant parts.

Now, one would have thought that those who adopted persecution against a new belief, or persuasion, should have seen, had they been wise, that the natural effect would be that the persecuted people would fly to other parts, where they would be free from the violence that threatened them, and at liberty to propagate their views. Their enemies tried to put down the new faith by every means, but failed; for wheresoever they fled the brethren carried the truth with them, and in course of time it appears to have been very generally accepted. Much, also, was done to promote the truth by the undaunted behaviour of the followers of Jesus. The people saw and considered, when the victims were brought forth to fight with wild beasts, or to suffer death in some other form, that there was no renouncing of their faith, but with boldness they defended the doctrines they had embraced. And what were these doctrines but those that had from time to time been taught by heaven-sent messengers from the beginning, and at last by the greatest of all—Jesus of Nazareth—that there was one God, the Creator of all things, the Father of all men, who alone should be worshipped; that, in order to attain to happiness in the Spirit-world, men should love their fellows as they would love themselves—even as their Father in heaven loved all.

The excitement caused by the efforts of the young priest, after the lapse of a few weeks, though somewhat quieted down, was not altogether abated, for the people of the city would talk of nothing

else, and those among them who showed a deeper interest than their neighbours, ran here and there to the houses of the brethren, to hear what was to be said concerning the truth as taught by Jesus ; so that, in a short time, it seemed as if the whole city had been won over to the new faith. Indeed, for some time, the doors of the temples were shut, but this did not last long, for gradually many of the people went back to their old system of worship. In going back, however, many carried with them so much of the truths proclaimed by the brethren, that the priests found they had lost much of their power and control over the people. These men, galled at this state of things, and unable to get the chief magistrate to aid them, applied to the Roman military officer, but he thought it not right for him to interfere. Had they applied to head-quarters (at Rome), they might have been successful in raising a persecution in Trebizond.

At length, after a short sojourn, my two friends, Zitha and Anah, took passage on board a Black Sea merchant ship, and when on their course westward they were attacked by sea-robbers, who had evidently been lying in wait for the ship. These robbers made it a point to know all about certain ships that were about to sail—where they were bound for, the nature of their cargoes, and other pieces of information. The vessel in which my friends sailed was large and well armed, but, taken by surprise, they were captured by the robbers. Having secured what was most valuable of the cargo, my two friends, along with others, were carried away by the robbers to the port they belonged to, situated on the north-west coast, there to be disposed of as slaves.

My brethren had passed through many dangers, yet, amid all their hardships, their freedom had never been taken from them till now. They sat, sad and downcast, thinking what might become of them and their mission, now that they were slaves. A little maiden, the daughter of one of the merchants who had sailed with them, was sold to the same slave-holder who had bought them. They thought not so much of this little maiden being in slavery, but they, being old men, of what use could they be as labourers? They found out, however, they had been represented to the man who bought them, as learned men, able to transact business in the way of correspondence, etc., and he, being an extensive dealer in slaves, saw how they might become useful to

him. Still, my friends, though relieved from the prospect of field labour, mourned over the loss of their liberty.

While the two were sitting one day, very much cast down, this little maiden came close to them. They looked at her, and she, looking on them, said—"Why are you so sorrowful? *You* have not lost your father or your mother?"

"No," was the reply, "we have not; they have gone to heaven long ago, little maiden."

"I heard you tell the people about heaven, and about the good ones there, and how they can assist those on earth who rely on them," returned the young maid.

The aged teachers felt reproved as thus she reminded them of the lesson she had learned from their lips in Trebizond; and taking her words to heart, when evening came they joined together in prayer for a blessing on this little maid who had reminded them of that which they had for the time forgotten—that there ever hovered around them those unseen ones, ready to help and guide. Thus, through means of the little maiden, were their souls raised from brooding over their distress, to contemplate the goodness of God, and His ever-watchful care for them. Though they had been taken and sold as slaves, they felt they were still free, for God was their Father, and having Him, they had all things. Besides, had they not been brought into communion with the holy ones, the servants of the Master whom they loved, and to forward whose work they had been sent out to the world? Why, then, should they be cast down? That work must be accomplished before they left the earth, and they would gladly labour till their time came.

Two or three days after this incident they received notice from the slave-master that they were going to travel to some inland towns where, at certain periods of the year, markets were held for the sale and purchase of goods, which were brought from the interior of the country, and he would require them to go with him. So they set off, and were four days travelling in frost and snow, the like of which my friends had never experienced before, and they suffered severely from cold. But they kept up their hearts, for they knew well that at that time they were not on business for him who claimed them as his slaves, but that they were going about their Master's business.

They reached a large town, in which they put up, and where their earthly master purposed to do business. He supplied them with everything possible to make them comfortable. The people of the place they found to be strange in features, and their manners and customs were likewise very unlike those of other peoples they had seen. The slave-master took them to his place of business in the market-place, and he gave them a horn and pen, so that they might write down, or enter, such goods as he purchased from various dealers ; while he himself bargained with the people in their own tongue, for my two friends were strangers to the language. Thus ended the first day of their new, and, to them, strange work. The second day was spent in a similar way. On the third day the master took badly, and was confined to his inn ; but he wished them to go along with one of his officers to the market-place. They went, and, during the course of the day, some great dispute arose in the market-place over something, they could not say what at the time ; but they went in among the crowd, and after they had listened for a while they parted the one from the other to different quarters of the great assemblage, who seemed to be all taken up with discussion. Then Zitha, occupying an elevated position at one portion of the gathering, and Anah on another, out of each other's hearing, began to speak to the people around them, and they continued for an hour addressing the crowds, who listened with deep attention to what fell from their lips, wondering and apparently astonished at what they heard ; while my two friends were about as wise at the end as when they began, for they knew nothing of what they had been saying to the people.

On the officer (the one who had accompanied them to the market) getting home, he told his master what had taken place, and he was wroth with my two friends for leaving his business and interfering with things they had nothing to do with ; and then he upbraided them for foolishly attempting to speak to people who were ignorant of their language. They told him they new nothing of the language of the people, and yet they were listened to attentively by the crowds that had gathered round them. But he said they must not interfere in any such matters again, but proceed with the business he had sent them to do.

On the following day they went again to business, but when

they arrived, the people in the market-place seemed as if about to rush on them, and to do them harm. This they at the time thought ; but it was not so. The people were only eager to listen again. So that day they went and stood up as before, and spoke to the people for three hours. On learning this, the master rose from his bed, and armed with a whip, went to the market-place for the purpose of chastising his disobedient slaves ; but when he saw the power my two friends had over such a wild set of people as he knew them to be, he was afraid to do anything, and went off after asking them a few questions. He could not be altogether ignorant regarding the character and mission of my friends, for, as they found out, the little maiden, whom I mentioned as talking with them when they sat betwailing their condition, had been adopted by the slave-master, he having no children of his own ; and no doubt she would tell him what she knew of them and their work. The slave-master had no expectation that my friends would return to the inn that night,—but they did return ; and then he began upon them, and said he would bind them in chains, and send them back to the sea-robbers. But they said nothing.

Before they left off speaking to the people in the market-place, they told how they had been taken and sold as slaves to this man who held them in bondage. Thereupon the people gathered together a sum of money, and went to the slave-master, telling him that as he had paid down gold for his slaves he had a right to have it returned. He said nothing, but took the money, and my two friends returned with the people who had released them from slavery.

The religion of the place was not pure idolatry ; they had a reverence for beasts and birds, etc., but so great was the impression made on the hearts of the people that the priests welcomed my friends to their house of worship, and there they proclaimed the doctrines of Jesus. Those who had been their priests and teachers gladly became pupils, anxious to know more and more concerning that which they and their people had heard from my two friends. Next time we meet, I will say more about this place.

Fourteenth Sitting.*February 13th, 1884.*

Winter and Winter Clothing—Daily Services—The New Faith Preached—Summer—Drought and Plague—Opposition—Use of Herbs—The Governor Plague-Stricken—Prejudice overcome.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—My two brethren, Zitha and Anah, continued their labours among the people of the town, in which they had found an open door for the preaching of the new faith ; but the winter soon came on, which was very severe, and they, not accustomed to very cold weather, suffered much from it. The people seeing this, brought clothes to them, which were made of the skins of beasts. When my two friends proposed to leave the town, the people would not hear of it, for they not only esteemed them as teachers, but looked on them as some kind of divine incarnations, or superior beings, that had been sent by God specially to them. Seeing the anxiety of the people to retain them, they resolved to remain throughout the winter.

They had meetings every day in the week—a part of each day being set apart to the service of the Most High God ; and at these services, many of those who came to listen to the addresses of my two friends were merchants, who had come from great distances on business, and who had heard of the preachers of the new faith ; and so the doctrines taught by them were carried far and wide by many of these traders.

There was no idol worship amongst the people of this town or city, though they believed in a number of gods, and revered certain birds and beasts. My two friends saw the necessity of upturning all this, and they at all times sought to lay before their hearers the great truth, that there was but One True, Living God—the Creator and Preserver of all things in the heavens and on the earth ; that He was not only the maker of the world on which they lived, but also of all the starry worlds that spangled the firmament above : all were the works of His hands. The Great and Invisible God was One, and there were no gods of a lower order. I have no doubt my two brethren would likewise tell the people about the World of Spirits, and of Paradise and its joys, where the spirits of good men and women dwelt, and of those dark regions where unhappy spirits groped about, bewailing their

mis-spent lives on earth ; and that to attain the one state and to escape the other they should do to others as they would have others do to them, be upright and noble before all men,—loving their brethren of mankind, even as the great God loved all men.

But my friends not only gave heed to the instruction of the common people, the rulers and others in authority in that town and neighbouring places came to hear them, and appeared to be as anxious to learn as were the people. There were also a number of priests and young men whom they instructed in the doctrines of Jesus, so that these might be able in due time to minister unto the people : for, as my two brethren said, they ought to remember that they were aged, and could not remain with them long, even though they wished ; like all other men, they must pass away into the World of Spirits, but they had been sent out on a mission, and that mission fulfilled, they must pass away. There were others, besides the people of this town, who had come from distant places and heard them, and they requested my friends to go with them so that the same truths might be proclaimed in the places where they dwelt. But they were impressed to stay where they were, and they went on with the good work, gratified to see the people striving to help as much as they could, and evidently feeling deeply the great good they had derived from their labours.

The winter passed away, and summer once more appeared with its leafy trees and fruitful fields ; but as the season advanced there was a great lack of rain experienced, while the sun in great strength poured his hot rays on stagnant pools. This was followed by a plague, and great numbers of people sickened and died, while those who were still alive began to leave the city, flying in all directions for fear of infection. In this state of things, my two friends went to the Governor of the city, and set before him the necessity of getting the people to remain, for by running hither and thither to avoid the plague, they were spreading it abroad. Being Magi, they had studied the causes at work in such breakings-out, and they were allowed all the freedom they wished in their efforts to stay the ravages of the disease in the city and its neighbourhood, by impressing on the inhabitants the necessity of cleanliness ; while they also endeavoured to get the people who had fled to return to their homes.

But while my two aged friends were thus engaged in their

good work, certain of the "wise men" who had, previous to the appearance of my friends in the city, exercised great influence over the people—who professed friendship to my brethren, but in their hearts hated them—went out amongst the inhabitants, and cried out that my friends were deceiving them, and that they were not there to minister unto them, but to breed discord amongst them. Zitha and Anah heeded them not, but went about from door to door, and wherever they found any thrown down by the plague, to these they attended, sitting by their bed-side, and administering the medicine they had prepared, and which they carried about with them ; or, in the case of those who were passing away, speaking to them of the better and more enduring life beyond. By so doing, the people would not believe these "wise men" who were going about crying my friends down.

In the mornings my two friends went into the fields and gathered herbs, and these they prepared as medicine for their patients, and the effects were seen in very many who recovered from the sickness. Many of the young men whom they had been training during the winter, were also instructed by them in a knowledge of the medicinal use of herbs, taking care to show them that there was nothing mysterious, or belonging to hidden things, in the virtues of the herbs by which the cures were effected.

In course of time, the Governor, or Great Man as he was called, was attacked by the prevailing disease, and one of my friends went to him. At first he refused to take the medicine prescribed, for he had some little belief in what had been told him by the "wise men," that this medicine was poison, and that it would be sure to cause his death. My friend tried to reason with him on the foolishness of listening to such statements in view of the many cures that had been made amongst the people by the use of the medicine.

He said he believed they were followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and expected that they should do as he did.

"Well," said my friend, "we are attempting to do as he did ; and he himself on some occasions used means in order to effect the cure of sickness. Like him, we ask neither gold nor honours, for we require not such. Our reward is in seeing good done."

At last he was persuaded to take the medicine, and soon after-

wards he fell into a sound sleep. My friend continued to sit by the bedside for some time. At length the sleeper awoke, and looking around him, he with a smile put forth his hand towards my friend, and said—"I feel myself a little better—all pain and sickness gone—but I feel weak—weak as a child." He then referred to the statement of the "wise men," and regretted having listened to them. My friend, who had sat with him for a long time, took leave of him, trusting that when he rose from his sick-bed he would rise a wiser man, and be able to rule wisely and well over the people.

Fifteenth Sitting.

February 20th, 1884.

Plague Abating — Baptisms — Departure — Public Feeling — Wayside Beggars — Cures by Laying on of Hands — Cofna, the Governor's Son, accompanies the Two Evangelists — At an Inn — Innkeeper's Daughter Cured — The Household Assembly — Journey Resumed — Dangers — A Band of Robbers — Kind Treatment — Sail for Greece.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—The Governor soon got well, and the plague gradually abated in its ravages as the season advanced. Anah and Zitha, believing that the band, or class, of young men whom they had trained to take their place were sufficiently instructed for the duty, resolved to set out once more on their mission; and, accordingly, at all the meetings they held these young men attended, and were introduced to the people by my two friends as persons able to instruct them in a knowledge of the laws and doctrines they had laid down for their guidance; and if these young men stood true to themselves and true to others, they were not afraid but they would succeed, and be an honour and a blessing to all in the city and its neighbourhood.

A very great change had taken place on the inhabitants of the city and the surrounding districts by the preaching of my two friends, insomuch that they introduced the practice of baptism. Young and old alike were baptised. They went down into the river which ran close by, and baptised by pouring water on them—explaining to the people that what they did was symbolical of the purifying effects on those who accepted the truths taught by Jesus, even as the water which came rushing down from the

mountain was fitted to purify or cleanse the body ; and also that water, pure water, showed forth the purity of the High and Holy God.

As the time drew nigh for their departure, they met with the young men whom they had trained ; and, after prayer, they counselled them in regard to the work which lay before them—that though but young men, and young in the faith, Jesus, the Great Master himself, was but young when he began his ministry in Judea, and would sympathise with and give strength to all who trusted in him. My two friends, after many exhortations, prayed that the Spirits—the holy ones from the presence of the Father—might abide with them.

When the day of departure came all the places of business were closed, for all the people had gathered together to see my aged friends on their way. As they passed along women held up their infants for them to bless before they went from them, and cheerfully did Anah and Zitha comply with the request, and asked the blessing of the Most High to descend on the mothers and their babes.

A great multitude followed them through the gates to the outside of the city, and there they found that animals had been provided for them, and were in waiting ready for them to mount, for it was known that they had resolved to travel to Greece. But before they could leave, they found there was more work before them. Outside the walls a great number of poor people had assembled who had many infirmities. Some of them were palsied and others were lame, or otherwise disabled : they had begged by the wayside, or went from door to door when the weather would not permit of them sitting at the wayside.

Now begging with them was not looked on as something wrong ; for the people reasoned thus : “ they are lame or infirm, and are, therefore, unable to work, so it is our duty to help them,”—indeed, it was considered as one of their religious services. But, I doubt not, there might have been found among the beggars some who pretended illness ; for such there were in my own country ; and wherever I travelled I found there were always some who tried to excite commiseration in the passers by, pretending to be unable to do anything but beg. Those who were gifted with the Spirit soon found out who were deserving of help, and who were not.

So, as my friends left the gates of the city, there were assembled fifty of those infirm individuals ; and on these they laid their hands, and they were made strong, and able to do work. When the assembled people saw what was done, they invoked blessings on the heads of Zitha and Anah, and not only so, but expressed their deep gratitude in loud laudations for all that had been done by them during their sojourn with them.

My friend Zitha then stood up and thanked the people for the way in which they had honoured and respected their services. "We came amongst you," he said, "in a strange way—even as slaves ; but we knew our Great Master had work for us to do for him, and we have done what we could, and we hope to do more before we pass away to be for ever with him. And now, before we leave you, we tell you again that you have gladdened our hearts very much this day—we, who were sent to you as slaves, have been treated by you as princes, and sent from you as kings. Farewell, dear friends, and may the Most High pour down blessings upon you."

At length my two friends set off on their journey, accompanied by very many of the inhabitants, who were still loth to part with them, and preceded by a number of young men, who sang and played on certain instruments as they marched along. Towards evening a great many people dropped off, and went back, shedding tears. Still, there were some who continued following for a while longer, till they could go no further, and they felt very sad when the last parting had come. My two friends themselves could not help breaking down. Some of the young men would have gone on with them, but they persuaded them to return. There was one, however, who pleaded hard to go with them, and he was the Governor's son. His father, who had convoyed them thus far, also pleaded with them to take the youth along with them, and at length they consented, telling him, at the same time, that they had no expectation of faring so well in some places as they had fared with him and the people he ruled over. But he said he wished to do something for that same Jesus who had done so much for him and his family ; and his son, though young, he would give up to the work with all his heart. Accordingly it was arranged that the youth should act as correspondent for them, so that they might let the Governor and his people know where they

were, and what they were doing, by letters sent with merchants and others, going to the city.

After parting with their friends, they travelled on for some time till they came to a way-side inn, and there they halted. Putting their camels into the fold, they went into the inn, so that they might have refreshment and rest after the day's journey. (They had, however, been well supplied with everything necessary for their comfort on the road by the kind friends they had parted from, who had also told them of certain houses they might put up at, and of convenient places, where there were no houses of entertainment, at which they might rest.)

As they approached the door, the innkeeper came towards them, and beckoned them away, saying that his little daughter had been stricken down by fever. But one of my brethren said,—“We thank you for your warning, but we are not afraid to enter any place where the hand of disease hath been laid on any one; for we are of those who have been appointed to use our utmost skill to restore health to the sick, whether they be rich or poor, old or young.” Having thus spoken, the innkeeper admitted them.

On entering the large apartment, where travellers were received, they saw the little maid lying on a couch, and sorely stricken. On seeing this, the Governor's son, who was called *Cofna*, ran towards the couch, and stretched himself over the sufferer's body; while the father and mother, afraid for the child, rushed to the couch to take him off, thinking he was mad; but my two brethren, perceiving that *Cofna* was under spirit-control, beseeched the parents of the little maid to let the young man alone, and all would be well. In a little while the child opened her eyes and looked around her and asked for water, and when it was presented to her she eagerly drank of it. Then the young man rose gradually from the couch and stood on his feet, while the child rose to a sitting posture, and appeared to be in perfect health, or as if waking up from ordinary sleep.

The parents seemed amazed, and from the words which fell from their lips, they thought the cure had been effected by some kind of magical arts or necromancy. But my two friends, in the best way they could, tried to show them that that which had been done was not the work of man, but that of the Most High God,

whose holy angels had used the young man to accomplish the good work. The father and mother were overjoyed, for she was their only child, and they hastened to call the servants, who were in and about the house, that they might rejoice together over the restoration of their daughter, who had been so wonderfully brought back to life from the very gates of death.

This was an opportunity which my friends took advantage of, and they stood up in the midst and addressed the people, speaking to them of Jesus their great Master, who had come down from heaven to show unto mankind the way in which they should live. They told them of his spotless life—how he had gone about doing all manner of good, and doing such wonderful works as that which had just been done before their eyes that evening. My friends were glad when they saw the good effect produced on some of those who had been listening to the words spoken.

On the following morning, when my friends saw the anxiety of the household to profit by their presence amongst them, they resolved to remain for two or three days. The servants of the innkeeper spread abroad the tidings of what had been done in raising up the sick child, and numbers of people belonging to that district came to see the restored child, and to hear the words spoken by Anah and Zitha, who gladly embraced the opportunity of declaring the truths to willing hearers.

On the third day, they set out on their journey, travelling towards a mountain range which cut them off from the Great Sea, to the coasts of which they were bound. They were aware that they were coming into a wild district, infested by bands of lawless men, who lay in wait for travellers. But as they were but four of them (including the camel-driver who now became their guide), and two of the four were very old men, they were not so likely to be attacked as those who carried arms and were possessed of valuable goods. So they continued their journey for some days, stopping at certain places for rest to themselves and their beasts.

One day they were suddenly surrounded by a band of fierce-looking men, and commanded to stand; but, as they showed no resistance, and the robbers, seeing they carried no weapons of any description, did nothing to them. But as my friends calmly looked on the fierce faces of the band, they beheld a face they knew—one whom they had been the means of relieving from

prison, after he had recovered from the plague, during its ravages in the city they had left. The moment the robber saw my friends he fell down before them, doing reverence to them. When he rose, he told them of the life he and the rest of them were living. They remained with them for some time, trying by every means to get them to abandon their lawless course of life ; but the men said they had been driven there by the tyranny of those who were the representatives of the people of the city where they had resided. They promised, however, that they would try and do better in time to come.

My friends then resumed their journey, and arrived by the next night at a fishing village on the coast of the Mediterranean, where they stayed for some time till once a ship would arrive (for there were always vessels coming and going) to take them to Athens. They might have made their way to Athens by another route, but to take ship was the nearest and the safest way to reach that city. They found a small church in the place, but they were received with coldness by the pastor of the church, who imagined that they were not what they professed to be, but employed as spies by the enemies of the new faith. Notwithstanding, they preached to them on the day which they kept as the Sabbath. At length a trading vessel came into port, which carried fish, and, on inquiry, the fisherman told my two friends he traded to Greece, and that he had even sailed to Gaul and elsewhere. Accordingly, they made arrangements with him to take them and their young companion to Athens ; so, after a few days, they arrived there. But I must leave the account of their labours in that city till our next meeting.

Sixteenth Sitting.

February 27th, 1884.

Athens—The Old Priest—A Storm Brewing—Character of the Brethren—Cofna Amissing—Anxiety—A Vision—The Night Service of the Church—Moving Addresses—A Morning in Athens—Cofna Appears—The Jailor—Cofna Arrested—Before the Magistrates—The Jailor Charged—Pleads Guilty—The Jailor's Dream—Conference with the Magistrate—Oranges and Trance—Polonius, the Persian Martyr.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night I was with you, Anah and Zitha had arrived at Athens, along with Cofna, the Governor's

son. At that time a great many of the followers of the Nazarene had settled in that city, and the church had grown to a goodly number. Paul had been there after I left. You will remember, that, as given in the story of my own life, he and I met in Athens. You will, perhaps, also remember of an old priest, with whom Hermes and I had something to do. He, at the time my two friends visited Athens, had become Bishop, or Pastor of the Church, and was as zealous in the faith of Jesus of Nazareth as he had been in that of Diana.

During their stay in the city, they had many a happy day, meeting with brethren from all parts of the world—from the barbarian to the highly-cultivated Roman or Jew.

Some time before their arrival, there were certain rumours abroad concerning the new faith. There was evidently a storm brewing, not far distant, of persecution against the brethren. The doctrines of the new faith were often discussed on Mar's Hill by the philosophers that met there; and many, though opposed to the doctrines, declared that they who held them could not be a bad people, whether right or wrong—inasmuch as that all their dealings were honest and straightforward—and they stood firm and true to that which they believed to be truth; when they said they would do a thing it was done: they seemed, indeed, much better than other people who made higher professions. It was also observed that the Nazarenes were very earnest in their worship—that even the slave, connected with the new faith, who toiled for his master from early dawn till night, met with others, when he should have been sleeping, to worship the God they all believed in.

One day, shortly after the arrival of my two brethren and the young man (the Governor's son) at Athens, my friends missed their young charge. No one knew where he had gone to—nor had any one seen him; and my two friends became sorely vexed, because—although he had come of age, and was responsible for his actions—he had been committed to their watchful care by his father when he parted from them.

After being two days amissing, my friends sat in their lodgings, sorrowfully talking over this trial, and wondering what could have become of the young man, when both, with one accord, fell on their knees—which they had never done before, being Persians of

the Magi, who never went on their knees to pray, but stood upright—they seemed to be so much broken down that they fell on their knees, and prayed, crying and wrestling with the Holy One to let them know where this young man had gone to. They were no sooner done praying, when the whole heavens as it were became opened—it seemed as if the house had been shaken to its foundations by an earthquake, and the walls became rent asunder; while in the citadel, or prison, where criminals were kept, they saw the young man Cofna sitting in chains on a stone bench. He seemed in deep meditation, or prayer; and as they gazed they saw two shining ones come and stand beside him. One of these appeared to be a female, the other a male Spirit. They spoke to him. He seemed to recognise the female; the other he did not appear to know. The male form seemed to take great interest in him. They told him that he must beware of his jailor that night when he presented to him the cup—that he was to cast it from him. Then again, with a great rumbling noise, the walls seemed to go together—the vision faded away, and my two brethren found themselves in the same attitude of prayer—on their knees. They arose, and looked each other in the face, asking what was to be done! The great noise had only been heard by themselves; neither had the walls become opened: but their spiritual vision had penetrated through all material obstacles to the inner prison where their young friend sat on the stone bench. That night they could not rest on their bed—yet, what could they do? They went to the meeting-house—the brethren of the working class and slaves always met in the night time. They went there to seek consolation. They found he who had been appointed their pastor ministering to them. He was beyond my two friends in age. Whenever they entered the house and came nigh to the desk whence he addressed the assembled brethren, they offered up prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord of heaven for the opening of their spiritual eyes, so that they had seen him whom they had lost. They said—“We have seen him, but have not yet found him. Just let us wait—lo, there are those his guardians! The Lord, through him, will work a wonder, and all Athens will ring with the glory and power of him we serve.”

That night my friends worshipped along with the rest. They took turns in addressing the people, and spoke to the very souls

of those who stood before them, so that before morning the very floor was wet with the tears which fell from the eyes of the people. Many were deeply affected, while one cried out, "We are at the gate-way, if not within the very walls of Heaven! Praise be to the Everlasting and Glorious One—even to Him who sitteth on the throne, and giveth judgment to all mankind—who giveth wisdom and strength to those who minister to us here on earth, so that we may be enabled to withstand the temptations of the world! We are bond-slaves to masters who care not for Him we serve; but may they also have their hearts touched, so that they may become like to us, and have the same happiness as we have! May the wine-cup that passes round their tables be for ever cast away, and their riches go to feed the poor! How many are starving, while they live riotously! Blessed is he who shares his morsel with the beggar who sitteth at the gate! May the Lord of Heaven enable us to render service to all who stand in need thereof!"

As the morning sun burst through the mists which enshrouded the hills around, throwing out his glorious rays on beautiful Athens, they walked along the streets, and passed by several of the altars, before which stood many worshippers, bending before Greece's warrior-gods. But it was not thus with my two brethren—they lifted up their thoughts to the Great Source of wisdom, power and love, as He was seen displayed in the grand emblem that poured his life-giving heat and light on the earth, holding on his course from east to west, blessing all, rich and poor, good and evil, all alike—so fit an emblem of the Everlasting Father. After their morning prayer and praise to the Great Creator (for, remember, my two friends never forgot that they were still priests of the Most High God, according to the Order of Zoroaster) they returned to their lodgings, much refreshed, and resolved to wait patiently the course of events, and see what would happen to relieve their anxiety concerning their young companion.

About mid-day, they heard the noise of a great tumult outside the house; and when they went and looked down on the street below, who did they see but their young friend, wearing his strange-looking garments. He was not dressed like the people of Athens, but had a huge cloak of fur around him; and with folded arms, he marched down the street, followed by a great crowd.

Some would have laid hands on him, but his steady, cool tread as he walked along, seemed to produce fear, and no one dared to touch him. When he came to the door of the house where my brethren lodged, he turned round and rebuked them for following after him. An old man, more like a beast than a man, and who seemed to have the face of a demon, cried out, "He has broken loose from prison—lay hands on him!"

A gentleman passing by, said—"It is your duty, if he is an escaped prisoner, to do so."

But the old man seemed afraid. Yet he went in with him to the house, but appeared to shrink from our young friend.

"Go back to thy prison," Cofna said. "Before two days are passed, thou wilt come and ask me what thou shalt do to become a follower of the Nazarene."

He went back ; but he had not long gone, when a centurion and soldiers came with an order from the magistrates to bring the young man before the court.

My two brethren went with Cofna. He could not tell them what charges were laid against him. All he knew was, that he had stood in one of the great squares and spoken to the people. "I will not," he said, "answer for that which I said to them ; for I knew not that I was speaking to them in their own language—I did not understand what I said myself."

When they arrived at the Court-house, the magistrates had assembled, and sat on the benches. It was something new for the young man Cofna to witness the grand array of the court and its officials. When asked what he had done and said, he shook his head, not understanding what was said. My two friends explained to the magistrate who had questioned him that he was ignorant of the language of Greece. The magistrate said he was surprised that two aged men should say what was evidently false ; for he had been accused of speaking in their own language to the people of Athens against the rulers of the city, and also against the Temple of Diana ; and not only so, but he advocated the doctrines of the Nazarene, which had become a pest and plague in the city.

To this one of my friends replied—"We, sir, are not here to discuss what this young man said to the people who listened to him, for we know not what he said. He may have spoken against

Diana and other things you might not approve of; but one thing we are assured of—no magistrate in any of the cities of Greece would hire an assassin to present a cup of poison to an uncondemned prisoner—does this court condemn a man before he is tried?”

The magistrate looked astonished, exclaiming—“ May the gods forbid we should do such a thing !”

My two friends then went on to show how the jailor had that morning presented a cup of poison to their young friend, instead of giving him water to drink; that his unseen guardian angels had stood by him, and had disclosed to him the evil purpose of the jailor; and that these same guardians, the servants of the Master whom he served, had opened the prison doors, and had brought him home; that these guardians had also protected him from the violence of the jailor and that of the people on the streets. “This great Athens,” Anah went on to say, “cannot withstand the hand, when put forth; of Jesus, our Master. What is the charge laid against this man? It is but frivolous, if he said this worship of Diana could not help the people of Athens. Our young friend worships the God of Heaven, and you have seen how He, the Great Spirit, can protect those that trust in Him. You must know that the Master whom we serve put the language of the people into his mouth that he might speak to them.”

“How is it, then, asked the magistrate, that you are able to speak to us?”

“Because we are priests of the Magi, and learnt your language.”

On saying that, the Chief Magistrate said—“I acquit this young man. I see nothing in which he has given offence. Bring forth the jailor.”

He was at once brought before the court, and the charge of presenting the poison to the untried prisoner was laid against him. He was asked if the accusation was true. He said it was true.

“Who gave you orders to do this deed?”

He said it was an individual connected with the Temple of Diana. “But,” said he, “I have had such a fearful dream—I can hardly tell it. I dreamt I was dead. The same cup I had given to the young man was given to me. It was hemlock, and I drank it for water. Oh, the torture I endured! Then came to me great fiends, with fingers like eagles’ talons, and each of them fastened on me, and tore the flesh from my bones, till I became

a fleshless skeleton. And still I lived, with the burning poison within me, and the sharp talons seemed still to cut into my bones. Oh, what fearful torment ! I cursed my very existence. All the evil deeds I had done in my life rose up before me. All whom I had wronged, and he to whom I had given the cup of hemlock seemed to pass before me, and, as they passed, they pointed at me, and jeered me ; but the young man I thought I beheld there, went and picked up the flesh, and put it all together again on every bone, and, as he touched me, the pain seemed to pass away. Then I found myself in a garden of orange trees, and, plucking the beautiful fruit, I squeezed the juice into the same cup, and when I drank of the juice, a bright view was opened up to me, and I saw thousands and myriads of beings moving towards me, and each one appeared, O, how beautiful ! around me—till at last I beheld a golden throne, transparent as glass, and a glorious Being seated thereon, and thousands ministering about Him. Then this young man said—‘ This is my Brother, Jesus of Nazareth, who sits a King, or President, for the great God of Heaven.’ Now, I throw up my office of jailor. Let me, I pray you, be a slave to this young man. I will follow him wheresoever he goes.”

The Chief Magistrate, greatly moved by the words of the jailor, said—“ I grant what you desire, and we give you the money due to you.”

“ Keep it,” said the jailor. “ If I were to finger one golden piece, it would burn the flesh from my bones, because it has been earned by wickedness, sin, and murder.” So saying, he left the court.

The Head Magistrate, or judge, who sat on the case, looked over to my two friends, and said—“ I desire to see you in private when I rise from this.” So they retired along with Cofna, and the old jailor went with them. The soldiers in attendance showed them a private chamber, which they entered ; shortly after they were joined by the Chief Magistrate, who was not now in his official robes.

He told them that when they spoke of Persia and the new faith, it had brought to his remembrance an old acquaintance of his—Polonius, a young Persian of high rank. “ We were well acquainted, and both of us studied under the same master and philosopher. He went home to Persia, and, I believe, he embraced the Nazarene faith. Rumours have come here, now and

again, that my young friend had become a martyr for his faith—that he had died a lingering death. Is it true?”

“Too true,” replied Anah. “We know well to whom you refer. He was the first they laid hands on in our small church.* When we two left and went out on our travels to propagate our faith—the faith of our beloved Master—the church soon got scattered; and now the best of our friends have gone to be with the Master in the Spirit-world.”

He invited them to his house. It was a beautiful villa, surrounded with orange trees, some distance from Athens. There they dined with him. Strange to say, he did not object to the old jailor going with them, for the young man showed great attention to him, and seemed to have taken a liking to this jailor, who had been so rough and cruel in his treatment of the prisoners committed to his care. They wandered about the orange trees, and, while doing so, the young man took some oranges, and squeezed them into a cup, and gave it to the jailor. This he drank off, and fell into a trance, during which he told Cofna about the things his (Cofna’s) father was doing at home.

While at dinner, the Magistrate showed great sorrow about Polonius, his early friend, and spoke much about him. He said if Polonius once undertook a thing, he would carry it out to the end. But he never thought that any doctrine would have carried him so far as that he would leave his father and mother, and die a martyr’s death. My two friends remarked, in course of conversation, that if any man took hold of the doctrine of the new faith, he would not give up one jot or tittle of it, but would stand true to Him who stood ever true to them—even to the death.

Seventeenth Sitting.

March 12th, 1884.

Athenian Philosophers—Anah and Zitha Discuss—Secret Adherents—The Jailor—A Native of Britain—Like a Little Child—As a Preacher—How it Appeared to an Athenian—Britons in Rome.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night we met, we were at Athens, where our young friend Cofna was brought into trouble about the

* See “*Hafed Prince of Persia*,” pp. 206-210.

jailor, who had resigned his office, and joined himself to my friends. Their fame at the time, especially after this, began to spread over Athens. Many of the philosophers came flocking to see those individuals who had turned Athens upside down. The Athenians had a high opinion of their own learning, and when strangers came amongst them, they were ever desirous to "measure swords" with them—to see which was superior in philosophical questions. Now my two friends had a number of such calling upon them at their lodgings. In fact, it became an annoyance to them—for the greater number of those who called on them did not apparently come to learn anything, but rather to debate. Well did these so-called philosophers know the tenets of the Nazarene doctrine—the newly sprung-up religion as they termed it.

My two friends argued that theirs was no new religion, but that it was as old as man himself. Jesus of Nazareth had come to clear away the accumulated rubbish which covered over the truths taught by the Messengers sent from the Spirit-world from time to time to mankind; that he was the greatest of all Heaven's Messengers; and that the doctrines taught by him were so clear and simple, that there could be no misunderstanding of them. These teachings had been laid down to man from the beginning of time, but they had been corrupted. "Certain of your philosophers," said Anah, "have introduced theories of an after-life, and what will happen to the spirit in that after-life. They are but theories, springing from false philosophy. But this is what Jesus of Nazareth taught his disciples: After death there is happiness to all those who follow him—that is, to all those that strive to be like him. He, as the Messenger of the Great God, our Father, came from Heaven to Earth, to reveal to us, his brethren of mankind, the character of God. Zoroaster, the servant and messenger of the Great Spirit, also taught that all mankind are children of the same Great Father; and that, after a righteous life on Earth, we pass away from the body and enter on the ever blessed life of Heaven—a Paradise, where the trees are as gold, and the leaves as silver—that their fruits are as precious stones, and give to the eye such pleasure that the souls of mankind are stirred up to praise the Great and Glorious Spirit, who continually provideth for the wants of his children. That is what Zoroaster

taught us ; and Jesus of Nazareth taught us the same, and more. But the Jews crucified him. And why ? Because he put his foot on their corrupt doctrines, and taught pure and simple truth from God to man. Be ashamed of your philosophy, and think of that Great and Good Spirit whom Jesus came to make known to us. You have many gods in this great city. You have set them on pedestals. He who trod at early morn that hill of tombs, years ago, told you the same, that ye in your blindness worshipped the Unknown God. Have you not set up an altar to him ? But your conception cannot even shape him ; and, like the ancient Egyptians, you worship Him behind the cloud, and that cloud in you is your own dark philosophy."

So, say my two friends, that was how they spoke to these philosophers of Athens. Sometimes they would come in where the brethren met for worship. They came to discuss, twit, and catch them—not to learn. My two friends say they must have been upheld by power more than they themselves possessed. They felt they had more power of speech than they ever had before. They were in a great seat of learning, and would have found it more difficult to address those learned men than mere barbarians, had they not been aided by their friends of the Spirit-world. Yet they did a great deal of good while they remained in Athens. Those who sat at the feet of these philosophers began to see that what was taught them was not what man really required—man needed something more. Still, many were prejudiced against the Nazarene. He had been represented by the Jews of the city as but a carpenter's son, of no learning, who had raised sedition, and rebelliously enticed people into the wilderness.

There were some who tried to stir up persecution against the followers of the Nazarene ; but, notwithstanding, no one could be found who could say any ill against them. All they said was, that they followed after strange doctrines. They lifted not the cup of wine to the god Bacchus ; nor did they prostrate themselves to worship idols, but they worshipped the Unseen. Neither could any one say that they were guilty of falsehood, or that they were unjust in their dealings with their neighbours. In those days the followers of Jesus had in them something that impelled them to walk straight and upright before their fellow-men ; so that none

could point the finger of scorn at them, and say—"He professes one thing, but acts not up to his profession." They always made sure to walk according to what they taught. To those who abused them, they gave love in return for hatred. But this course seemed to make their opponents more bitter. The priests resorted to false charges to stir up the people against them. They said they stole children, and sacrificed them to their gods or devils ! They were not so bad as that in other parts of Greece. Notwithstanding, there were many who sat at the feet of the philosophers, listening to their discussions, who became secret inquirers as to the new faith, and in the darkness of night came to talk with my two friends. Even the Chief Magistrate of the city made inquiry regarding the doctrines they taught. These doctrines were so simple that many became secret followers of the Nazarene, and by and by came out openly, but often were subjected to greater persecution than were those who had been publicly known as holding the doctrines of the Nazarene.

My two friends now saw it was time to leave. They were getting old, and wished to accomplish as much as possible before leaving earth. It matters not what a man believes, or wherever he goes, he generally wishes to die near his native place, and so it was with Zitha and Anah ; they, in the midst of their labours, felt that they would like to return to the land of their birth. The old jailor and Cofna were inseparable—they were like father and son. The former was not a beauty, for what he had passed through had marred him very much. But there was, with all his outward roughness, a kindliness of disposition that all wondered to see. He was a native of Britain. He had, when a youth, been captured along with others by the Roman troops, and taken to Rome, where he was sold as a slave. His master was the superintendent of the Arena. At first he was employed in feeding and looking after the wild beasts. Being a strong and healthy young man, he became a gladiator. He had gone through all the forms, step by step, and had been successful in a hundred fights, but was greatly disfigured thereby. He had once been a comely man, but now his face and other parts of his body were very much marred. His master, shortly before the accomplishment of his hundred battles, had given him his freedom, and he became a free citizen of Rome. Having been seriously injured by a large wild animal, a

Grecian gentleman, a spectator in the Arena at the time, took a kindly interest in him, and on his recovery got him into the position of keeper of the prison in Athens.

(I have no doubt that, in course of time, the jailor will give you a sketch of his life, and it will, I think, be worth hearing.)

This man had fought with men and beasts, driven chariots, and been a stern jailor; and what was he now? He was even like a little child—he had all the demeanour of a little child. One of my friends asked him one day how he felt after all he had passed through. “How I feel?” exclaimed he—“I feel happy!” Was he not afraid on account of the many lives he had taken when in the Arena? He said he deeply regretted what he had done. But what he did in ignorance would not be laid to his charge. The Great God and Father had forgiven him; while those he had sent to the World of Spirits before their time, if they were not there to meet him when he entered the Spirit-world, he would search them out and ask their forgiveness also. Jesus, whom he had been called to serve, would also hold out his right hand to him, and press him to his bosom; for had he not promised Paradise to the thief who was crucified beside him, “and why (said he) should not I be with him there as well as the repentant thief? That vision made me what I am—when all those devils were let loose to tear the flesh, piece by piece, from my bones—O the agony I suffered! yet here I am with all my senses. Out of many a hard fight, I am a living monument of the loving-kindness—the goodness and mercy of the Great God. I must carry these scars while I walk the earth. When I have thrown off this earthly covering, I shall arise in a new and bright form, and shall stand in the glorious Paradise, where dwell the spirits of the upright and just, and there shall I be—the image of my God and Father. Amen.”

This Jailor of Athens was doubtless a great and valuable trophy—greater than many others of a higher class who were gathered in. He seemed to have no fear.

“This jailor,” one was heard to say, “though an unlettered man, boldly stands forth and harangues the people. And see, how dignified he is! Why, he looks as if he were one of the city fathers. Then, he speaks to the point. Many stand up here and talk about things they know but little of; but he seems to

know well what he is talking about. It matters not what a man is, it is what comes from the man. It would be well for us, who think ourselves greater in knowledge, to open our ears and listen to him."

"Ah," was the rejoinder of another, "art thou, too, become a disciple of the Nazarene?"

"Would to God I was! I begin to think the doctrines of the Nazarene are the purest, the simplest, and the most likely of all. Here in this city of ours we have so many subjects discussed in places of resort. We go to the temple and hear a harangue from the priest before the altar. What is he talking about? To whom is he speaking? He is addressing pieces of marble. But here we have these simple individuals, such as this unlearned jailor, who ask not for riches, or gifts, but that we should give ourselves to the Great Spirit. We, more or less, think there is a Great Spirit—there must be some one who made all that we see around us and in us. Most of us have some little belief in a future life. The Hebrews, the Egyptians, and other Eastern nations, along with many of our own philosophers, have spoken of a Great Spirit—the one source of all things—and of a Paradise; and Jesus of Nazareth teaches how a man can enter into that Paradise. Here, in the case of this jailor, we have a sample of the good flowing from these new doctrines. Look at this jailor, and the young man who stands beside him. That young man was thrust, under a false charge, into one of our prisons. That jailor, to whose care he was committed, instigated by certain priests, attempted to poison the young man. But, by the wondrous power of some unseen being, the prison doors were thrown open, and the prisoner walked out. The jailor became a follower of the Nazarene. Look at these men now—they are like two loving brothers, rather like father and son. Surely there must be something in these truths of Jesus of Nazareth, to produce such effects! Again, I say—Would to God I were a true Nazarene!"

[In reply to a question, Hafed said,—I was in Spain before Paul. I opened up that quarter. There were many natives of Britain in Rome.]

Eighteenth Sitting.*March 26th, 1884.*

Cofna receives a Call—Anah, Zitha, Cofna, and the Jailor, embark for the West—Respect exhibited by the Athenians—A Church Afloat—Arrival at Rome—Idolatry—The Gladiator at the Arena—Secret Nazarenes—The Jailor Objects—In Pompeii—A Love Feast—A Young Priest—Coming Destruction Predicted—The Young Priest's Vision—An Old Man's Tears—At Lyons.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—The last evening I was with you I gave you a brief account of the Jailor of Athens, my two friends, and their young friend Cofna. Their work being done, they made an arrangement with the sea captain to take them farther West, to a port in Gaul. The young man was strongly urged by the church in Athens to remain with them; but the advice of his old friend, the jailor, prevailed on him to accompany my friends to the West. Cofna was a talented individual, and during his stay in Athens, he seized every opportunity of inquiring into the philosophy of the Grecians, and that of others who came from all quarters to that city. Some of the Hebrew brethren at first objected strongly to him, as he would not yield to many of their ceremonies connected with worship. The Hebrews adhered to a number of their old forms along with the doctrines of the Nazarene. Circumcision and other observances they tried to get introduced wherever they went among the different nations. Had they succeeded in introducing the practice of circumcision, the people might have had some reason for accusing the followers of the Nazarene of stealing young children for human sacrifices. One of my friends says—“I even tried to persuade him to remain in Athens, and I might have got him to consent, but the old jailor took a different view of the matter.” He said,—“Athens is visited by many—all come here—Jew and Gentile, Roman and barbarian, all alike. Why should you remain among them? Let us go forth to those who are still in darkness—who have never heard the glorious news of the great Redeemer. Let us fight new battles. You are young, and able to fight valiantly on behalf of the Truth, and though I am old—having fought a hundred savage battles in the Arena, to please those who delight in bloody spectacles—yet I am willing to fight a hundred battles for Him who saved me.”

As the Captain of the vessel was about to sail, they again took passage with him. They were accompanied to the beach by a

great congregation of the brethren—male and female, young and old—among whom were many of those who were not of the same faith, who had come to bid them farewell. At the first, when they arrived in Athens, they had met with much opposition, but some of the philosophers and others had gone to their meetings and discussed the doctrines with them, and had gradually come to respect them, and even to love them. Before they left the city, valuable presents had been bestowed on them by some of these philosophers and friends, who also wished them success in their intended mission to the West. Was not this encouragement? Surely these were with us to a certain extent, although they held opinions quite the reverse of those held by my friends.

They started at early morning, when the sun was rising in the heavens, and the distant hills of the Grecian Isles were tipped with his bright rays. All in the bay was beautiful—the ships riding in the bay, viewed from the sea-shore, looked their best—all was pleasant to the eye. It was as if they were setting sail for a voyage on one of the seas of Paradise—the land of heaven, into whose blessed dwelling-places they knew they would soon enter.

They sailed with a fair wind, and soon left the shores of Greece, and before night came on, they were in other waters. Nothing particular happened during the voyage. Most of those in the ship had been their companions before, and they all knew each other, and had come to believe alike—indeed, all on board were Nazarenes. The commander of the vessel was very strict in his conduct; and, before his watches were set for the night, the sailors were called together, when he engaged in prayer with them. During the time my friends were on board, they took part in addressing and praying with the captain and his crew.

My four friends resolved to visit Rome, inasmuch as some of the merchants who had hired the vessel belonged to Rome, and they thought this a good opportunity of seeing the Imperial City—though one of them had been there before—and they knew that they would meet with many of the brethren in Rome. It was true they might, in visiting Rome, be in danger, but they knew they had to do a certain work, and that till that was accomplished they were safe. This their Spirit-guides kept always before them. A certain amount of mission-work they must do, and till that was

done they were safe from the attacks of man or beast. They might put them into prison, and bind them in chains, but nothing would harm them while under the protection of their friends of the Spirit World.

At midnight of the fourth day they arrived at the nearest port to Rome, a small fishing village. The captain cast anchor there to await orders from the city, while my friends went up to Rome, and, before entering, were met by many of the Nazarenes; for at that time it was not even safe for them to meet in public in the city. There had been a great outcry in Rome against the brethren, but, as in Greece, their enemies could not find cause to condemn them. They could not say they stole, or robbed, or lied—but that they had broken away from the regular worship of the gods. As the priestcraft were those interested in the idolatrous system, they were the parties who made the greatest outcry. And it has ever been so—the men who fatten on corrupt systems are always opposed to reformation, or introduction of new ideas. The priests at that time actually employed magical arts to hold the people under them. They pretended to bring fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices on their altars; they managed to bring sounds from the centre of the altar; and even the idol was, apparently, made to speak to the devotees around. Crowds of people entered the gorgeous temples from morning till night to see the wonders that took place—wonders greater—as the priests asserted—than those said to have been done by the Nazarene.

The Jailor led my friends to one of the temples, and from thence to the Arena, where thousands assembled to witness bloody spectacles—where so many men had fought with their fellow-men and beasts, as he himself had once done. He showed them where many a drop of his blood had dyed the floor. He was well known at the Arena, and a number of his old friends gathered around him, and would have carried him shoulder-high to the nearest tavern to treat him.

But he said, "No; here is water from the fountain. I drink this which has been prepared for our use by the Great Creator, the Great and Mighty Spirit of all." When he had spoken in that way, they said he had surely become a Nazarene. He said he would not deny it. He would never deny him who was his Lord and Master—Jesus of Nazareth. They knew he was no coward

when he was among them. He never shrank from battle. However placed in the Arena, he was always ready. It mattered not what beast was put against him, he was always ready to grapple with it, even though only with his hands, the weapons nature gave him. "Now," said he, "I have seen through all that—that which was bringing me down, bit by bit, down to that earth from which I sprang, while my spirit would have gone down to Hades, to remain there for ages. Now, my friends, I have shaken myself free from all the fetters which bound me. He who snatched me from the dark caverns of Hades, is worthy of all honour; and now I have engaged to fight for Him and Him alone—now will I fight for the truth and against all evil. I am, and mean ever to be, a follower of the Nazarene."

My friends met with several of the citizens in private. A number of the chief men had secretly joined with the brethren; and also officers of the Emperor's Court were connected with the despised Nazarenes, but still secretly, in order that they might hold their places. My friend the Jailor (who knew these men as supporters of the Arena at the time he was connected with it) told them it was a shame to conceal what they believed to be true. They argued with him, however, maintaining that greater good was thus done in Rome, than by openly acknowledging themselves as Nazarenes, and being thrown out. "Now," they said, "we are able to bring our doctrines before those who are our companions; while if we act otherwise, the opportunity would be lost." But this did not satisfy our Jailor friend.

The captain having sent a message to my friends that he would again sail in the course of two or three days, and not being able to go openly about and preach in public, they thought it better to leave Rome. Instead of going direct back to the ship, they were advised by the Captain to join the ship at another place on the coast to which he was bound.

They visited several places, and at length reached the beautiful city of Pompeii, where they met with many of the Brethren from various parts. The Brethren had become very strong in Pompeii, and my friends had meetings with them for over a week. They found many of the upper classes connected with the church in Pompeii.

The night before they left the city, a Love-Feast was held for

the first time by the Brethren, for the breaking of bread, and a happy night was spent with those who assembled. The meeting was held at night, to accommodate those members of the church who were still held in bondage or slavery; having to attend to the labours of the day, it was only at night they were at liberty to assemble. They required rest for their wearied bodies; still they were willing to dispense with that, and meet for prayer and praise to the God of Heaven, and to their Lord, Jesus of Nazareth.

That night, after devotional services, every one brought forth their eatables to the table. There were grapes from the rich man's vineyard, which were squeezed into the cup and drank. Those who did not use the juice of the grapes had water from the fountain before them; while the fruits of the earth were spread on the table. The pastor, or head elder of the church, implored Heaven's blessing on the assembled people, and also on the food or fruits on the tables. All partook of that which had been laid before them, after which, one after another had something to say in the way of comfort to their brethren and sisters; while some of those who were bondmen, expressed gratitude to those in authority over them, for the liberty and privilege they enjoyed.

There were several young priests, who had been brought into the church by some of the pastors. Amongst these was a young man, who had come time after time to their meetings, though he had not connected himself with them, inasmuch as he could not see how he could do so and still be a priest in a heathen temple. That night he arose, and addressed them in eloquent language (for the priests were all highly educated men), and, as he spoke, he seemed to fall into a deep trance, but did not appear to know what he was saying. Yet he spoke with such power that many were deeply affected and shed tears. He foretold the destruction of the city, and warned them to leave it. The gods (he said), warned them to flee from the city, and leave all behind. It would come like a thief in the night, and they might not have time to escape from the destruction which would follow. When he awoke from trance, he sat down, and, looking wonderingly about him, seemed surprised when he saw the sad and serious looks of all around. He thought he had fallen asleep. He spoke to one sitting next to him—an old man, with grey locks—and he saw that tears were rolling down his furrowed cheeks.

“What can be the meaning of all this?” he said to himself, and turning to the aged man beside him, he said, “What aileth thee, father? All here look so sad. Has anything happened while I slept to cause this change from joy to sadness?”

Again he looked about him, and, rising to his feet, said, “I feel as if in my sleep, my soul had been lifted into Heaven—that there I met such an assembly as I never witnessed before. I thought I had been ushered into the company of the gods, and, when I entered, it seemed to me as if they stripped me of all I had. The flesh appeared to fall away from my bones, and my bones to go apart. I felt as light as the air around; there was no oppressive heat, but I felt as if I could bound from star to star. And then,” he said, “I thought that One, higher, brighter than all the others, came and stood before me. His countenance shone like a thousand suns in one grand blaze. I covered my face as he stood over me, with uplifted hands and shining garments. He put his hands on my head, and I seemed to become a new being. Then I knew who he was, and was satisfied as I looked on his glowing countenance. He said—‘Thou wilt become one of my ministering servants, to go forth and do service for me on the earth. No more shalt thou attend to altars, and offer up sacrifices at them. We have no love for sacrifices. Worship thou the Great Spirit, the Father of All. Him alone must thou worship. I am but His servant, and His work I do. Now I come to bid thee go forth, in my Name, likewise.’ He left me, when I was surrounded by a great many more. Then I thought I stood on a great hill, which was familiar to me. The pasture seemed to me of a lovely green, and the cattle were grazing in the valley below. I thought I saw the galleys in the bay. All at once it seemed as if the ground beneath my feet shook, and gradually sank down, while, as I looked upwards, smoke began to issue from the peak of the hill near which I stood. I felt afraid, for in that smoke I thought I saw horribly demon-like faces. It seemed to me as if something awful was about to take place. This mountain, or hill, on which I had so often stood, and looked at the beautiful vineyards around here, was shaking like some mighty monster in pain—vomiting dense smoke, while darkness came over all around. Mingled with the smoke there seemed to be flames and ashes. As I gazed on the terrible scene, one came and carried me away—where to,

I cannot tell—but I waked up, and found myself here among you all. This is my dream, or vision. That glorious One I saw was him whom you all serve, and he has chosen me as one of his ministers. This very night, my friends, I cast in my lot with you, for no longer will I continue to kindle fires on altars, or offer up sacrifices. God desires no such sacrifices; He has no pleasure in them.”

Then they told him what he had said in his trance. “Yes, I now remember something of that. I thought one told me about our city being about to be buried up—I think I can see it all now.”

The old man rose from his seat, and said—“My brethren, I have done this night what I have not done since I was a little child. I have traversed many lands—I have followed my Emperor into many a hard fight, and many a wound have I received; yet never, till this night, has a tear trickled over these cheeks. But, brethren, I feel ashamed to shed tears. For what? Is it fear because of the words of warning which have been spoken? Is it for the loss of earthly goods—for the destruction of these marble palaces? Some one whispered when our young friend spoke, it was a truth what he said. We may laugh, and say there is no likelihood of such a disaster happening just now, when the fields look fair and beautiful. But, my brethren, are we to believe the words spoken, or are we not? I would say, Believe. When those of the Spirit-world have spoken to us, we have never found them lying—not one has spoken a false word. This young man, we might all see, was speaking under the control of Jesus of Nazareth, whom we all love and profess to serve. It is therefore from our Lord the warning has come. Let us then believe it as true. And as the Spirit-world has warned us, let us at once warn our fellow-citizens. If they laugh at us, let them laugh. Let us try to help those of them who cannot help themselves—the lame and the blind. Let us be ready—as the time is near at hand—to go forth, leaving all behind. It is but worldly loss. All the wealth around us, what is it, after all? Nothing, my brethren, compared to that which will be given to you when you come to stand before our Lord. O for the precious moment when I shall be in the company of those glorious ones who stand before Him! Yet, are we not surrounded, even here, by the

blessed spirits, the servants of the Lord? Are we not all spirits, though clothed with flesh?—all equally the same? Some day when we meet together we will remember the four strangers who visited us, and spoke such kind encouraging words to us. When they hear of the great disaster that is to come on our city, they will remember we were forewarned, and we were ready when it did come upon us, like a thief in the night.”

That was the experience of my friends in the beautiful city of Pompeii, which was so soon to be buried in ashes, by one of the Earth's great safety-valves vomiting fire, ashes, and mud.

So our friends left Pompeii and joined the ship, and from thence sailed for Sicily. They stayed but a short time in Sicily, but made good use of the time they were there, in affording help to the small gatherings of disciples spread over the island. The captain of the vessel had been engaged by the merchants to dispose of their merchandise on both sides of the Great Sea, and our friends accordingly had many opportunities of proclaiming the new faith. At length they reached Lyons, where they left the vessel, to make their way overland.

Eight or nine years thereafter, Pompeii was destroyed. All the Christians escaped, having left the city the night before. They had warned the citizens of the coming disaster, but were jeered and laughed at. The young and strong amongst the brethren, however, remained, and helped the lame, the halt, and the blind to escape. That young priest remained with the brethren and ministered to them. He is with us now.

Nineteenth Sitting.

April 16th, 1884.

Landing in Gaul—The Druids—Human Sacrifices—Festivals—The Old Jailor at Work—Prayer for Forgiveness—Primitive Worship—A Pastor of the Olden Time—Tribal War—Non-resistance Doctrine—The Jailor as a Mediator—Visits the Hostile Tribe—A Bloodless Battle—The Captive Chief—Captives sent Home.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night I spoke of Pompeii, my friends embarking and sailing for Gaul. They landed there safely, after having visited various places on both shores of the Great Sea. On their arrival at Lyons, the Captain did some business,

but having to sail to the Western Islands, he proposed to carry them thither. But my friends having accomplished thus far by sea, resolved to travel northwards through Gaul, and join a vessel on the Northern shore for the Islands.

Just at this time, when they landed in Gaul, some of the more Northern tribes were at war. Though some of the followers of the Nazarene had penetrated beyond where I had gone myself, yet a great deal required to be done. The natives in that part of the country you might term barbarians—a great many of them—yet they were somewhat advanced, though not equal to us in the East. Many of them were beginning to follow after more civilised countries, such as Rome, Greece, and other nations—though some of these were in their decline. They landed about the same place as I myself had landed, which I described to you when giving you my own story, and when I spoke of the Druids.* My two friends found a number of them, but they had mixed up the doctrines I taught with their old theological notions. Many of the Nazarene institutions, as they thought, harmonised with their religious ideas, and had been adopted by them. At first, my friends demurred to this, and if possible would have stopped it. But the Old Gladiator said—“No; why should you stop it? There is no harm in their former observance of days or festivals being put to better uses.”

Now, one of these festivals occurred just at the time they arrived there, and there was great rejoicing and merry-making among the brethren. Their sacrifices were all done away with: neither had they adopted different gods, but instead of having a god for every day of the week, they worshipped the One Living and True God. Do you understand me when I say that? Before I visited them, for every day they had a certain deity they worshipped, or sacrificed to, and they brought all these together and made one of them, which was the Great God and Father of all.

My two friends went about their work, and began by showing the people that those former deities they had given a name to, were but ideas springing from the minds of men, and had not a Divine origin, and they did well to cast them aside, and give

* See *Hafed Prince of Persia*, page 184.

themselves to the worship of the One Living and True God ; that the early teachings of mankind in the far East had come direct from God who had created all—He was the Great Father of all. Ministering Spirits had so taught them. Jesus of Nazareth (He whom they professed to follow) was an offshoot from God, and He a teacher who had brought together all the doctrines taught by the prophets, or messengers, that had been on the earth, in all ages. He combined all these teachings, and made them one grand whole. They should cast aside all ideas of seven deities, and look to the One Great Father, who was everywhere present though unseen by them ; that every thought and idea that passed through their minds was known to Him.

This people, who had sprung from the Druids or ancient faith, have often been misrepresented as going so far wrong as to offer up human sacrifices. They never did ; although they deified the planets of Heaven. You might blame us (Persians) for doing the same thing, when we bent the knee before the great orb of day, as he rose in the Eastern skies ; but we did not worship him, even though he is the nearest emblem we have of the Great Father God, inasmuch as he shines on all. Our Father showers down His blessings on all, whether wayward or righteous ; He makes all alike the receivers of His goodness ; for each one of His children on earth is as dear to Him as another. It matters not how low a man may be in the scale of humanity, he is as dear to God as the highest in civilisation and refinement.

They began one of their festivals—they made it a day of joy and mirth, rather than an occasion of prayer and fasting. Now, my two friends thought this wrong. If the day was set aside for the service of God it ought to be observed with due solemnity. Our rough friend thought differently : he was of opinion that the people actually served God and glorified him when they set apart a day in which, having thrown off all worldly cares and business, they might rejoice and be happy with sobriety. Still, my two friends were not convinced. This rough old gladiator, though holding this opinion of the festival, when he came to the market-place that day, stood upon one of the old altars on which in former times they used to sacrifice to their gods, and cried to the people to gather round him. At first they looked up and thought he was a madman : he was very rough looking, and

certainly his countenance was not beautiful ; yet they graciously gathered around the man ; while some laughed, and others jeered at him, because he spoke to them and they understood him not ; but as they continued to listen, they could see he was in earnest, and began to understand his words. He thought when he began he would be quite able to speak to them, for he had got a little of the language when, as a gladiator, he had met with some of the same people. The people at length seemed to understand his words fully, and he understood what he was saying. They stopped jeering, and were all attention. He said he did not wish to keep them long. He spoke of the harm he had sometimes done their countrymen, but it was done in ignorance. Then he thought it right to be master of the fight in the Arena ; but now he thought it right to pray to God, and also to the spirits of those he had slain in battle, to forgive him for sending them into the Spirit-world unprepared. The people seemed surprised at his words, for they had not been so taught by me ; neither had my two friends taught such doctrine. Yet the old gladiator argued his point, that he required the forgiveness of those whom he had thrust violently into the Spirit-world. How could he face them when he met them there ? They would, in all likelihood, cast him from them. He prayed to them that it might do him and them good ; and so, he said, it had done. "I know it does them good, and that it does me good. I have been visited by them night after night. They came to my couch while I slept, and they have forgiven me what I have done. They have thanked me for my prayers, and acknowledge the good which they have got from them." At last he said—"As we have come to you not to teach you, but to do what we can to help you, we expect you to do the same for us. We have many things to learn from you, and we will all learn much from our two friends."

He came down from the old altar, and the assembled people called for one of my two friends to address them. He went up, and he told them who they were—how they had been my (Hafed's) companions ; that they had been priests of the Living God in the faith of Zoroaster, before they became followers of Jesus of Nazareth : how, when worshipping at the altar in the centre of the grove, they had been sent on their mission to Judea, to welcome Him into the world—that Light which was to be a

shining light to mankind, and whom they claimed as Master. They told them also that they had been sent to them by me (Hafed), so that they brought my greeting to them : and likewise letters from others they had met in with on their journey to the elders in their churches. My other friend, and also the young man Cofna, addressed them.

When they were done speaking, the people told them they were applying to the magistrates to get this place for a meeting-house. The town was not large,—not a great population. This square in the centre had been one of the principal places used for worship in the Druid times. As all the inhabitants had turned from that faith, and were followers of Jesus of Nazareth, it had been out of use for a long time, and the altar on which they sacrificed had gone greatly into decay ; so they got the altar repaired, and whoever addressed the people, spoke from its summit, so that their words might be heard by all ; for all the town were gathered together when addresses were given—indeed, there was no house large enough to hold the vast assemblage of people. There was a stringent law existing among them, that no one was to be absent from worship at a certain time of day ; and unless they had a proper excuse for so doing, they would be fined in a certain amount. My friends did not consider this rule to be right—they thought it was rather hard. Yet the people did not seem to feel it as a hard law,—the service was only for a short time : only while the minister or elder addressed them, commenting on the epistles sent from other churches on the Great Sea, and after praise and prayer they were dismissed. The pastor, or elder, in this place, wrought with his hands like any other man. He ploughed in the field, and would have left his oxen and gone in the morning to the place of meeting, engaged in the service, and thereafter returned to his oxen in the field.

When my two friends saw this, they thought the pastor should have some support in his great work. When they spoke with him on the subject, he said he felt much happier when he went behind his oxen, for there were ever hovering around him the unseen ones, whispering in his ear, giving him inspiration, so that he might be able, next time he met with his people, to speak to them in spirit and with power.

While my two friends remained there, they took the evening and morning service alternately, so that the chief elder was relieved from his labours for a time.

My friends were still there when word came that a neighbouring tribe had been threatened with war by another tribe a little further off. This neighbouring tribe had been brought to a knowledge of the truth, by one of the young deacons of the church in the town where my friends were. This young man had married one of the neighbouring tribe's young virgins, and gone to live with them, and he had taught them the doctrines of Jesus. The people of this tribe were now greatly disturbed in mind; and, as I have said, sent word concerning the war threatened by the hostile tribe. Since embracing the new faith, they thought it a great sin and crime to go to war with other tribes. A great many of the early Christians thought the same thing. My two friends had to argue the point with them: that it was their duty to defend their property against those who would rob them of that property: that they were not to sit down calmly, and allow an enemy to come down on them and take all their worldly goods, and—if they did not take life—leave them as beggars: they had a right to protect themselves and their families.

Well, this tribe, troubled in mind as to what course to take, sent messengers to this people with whom my friends resided, asking for counsel, and suggesting that some one should go to their enemies as mediator. On learning this, the old Gladiator said—"Have you no fighting men among you?" The messenger said—No; all had laid past the sword and spear; the old Chief had died, and the young one was too young to lead them to battle, even if they were willing to fight—but they would not fight, as they considered it wrong to raise their hand against their fellow-men.

"True," rejoined the old Gladiator, "I fought for honour and glory, not in self-defence, but to make my name great as a gladiator, while I stood in the Arena, displaying my strength of muscle and arm. Such I was once, but now I am a soldier of my Lord, Jesus of Nazareth—one ready to fight for those who are not able to fight for themselves. I am ready both to draw my sword and to use my tongue to protect the weak. So, if no one will go as mediator, I will go."

The hostile tribe was fierce and war-like. They had not yet attained to this knowledge, though some of the Hebrew followers of the Nazarene had been amongst them, at the risk of their lives. They would not allow them to dwell amongst them, and overturn their old faith. When they heard of this neighbouring tribe accepting the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, they sneered at them, scorned them, and called them cowards, trying to provoke them to fight. But our rough friend, the Gladiator, said he would go as mediator—he was not afraid to meet a whole army. “Why, what have I to be afraid of? They may kill my body—myself they cannot kill. I will live for ever. If they should try to kill me, it would be but relieving my spirit of an old worn-out covering, which it has now used for many years.”

He set out with the messengers on their return; and, on their arrival, he spoke to the assembled people, saying it was the duty of every man to protect his home, his wife, and his little ones. Why should they allow the barbarian to come down on them, burning their homesteads, and selling their wives and children into slavery? “Rise up like men,” he said. “Nature has kindly provided you with hands, and the beasts of the fields with claws and talons, for self-protection. Use ye your hands in defence of your homes and liberty.”

But they seemed at first not to care. Their idea was, that, being believers in Jesus, if smitten on one cheek, they were to turn the other to the smiter. He that stole their goods, might do so, but they would not return evil for evil. He tried them for some time. At length he observed, in some of the younger men, the fire begin to kindle in their eyes. He had seen it often in the eyes of men before. The war-spirit had sprung up in them. “If you old men,” he cried, “have thrown aside your swords and spears—if you have not yet made ploughshares of them, and they still hang on your walls—give them to your sons, and see what they can do in your defence.” But the fathers only shook their heads despondingly. He saw he could not prevail on the old men. Even the wives cried, and hugged their little ones to their bosoms, and shed tears over them; yet were they willing to lose them and go into slavery, rather than that their husbands and sons should fight.

Our rough old friend left them and went off to meet the other

tribe that was causing all this trouble. He carried a spear, on the end of which hung a skin. He was met by one of the hostile tribe. He said he was sent with a message from their peace-loving neighbours; and he was led into the presence of the Chief, to whom he addressed the message, which was, that the tribe from whom he came were willing to give so much of their goods to them if they would withdraw. The Chief seemed surprised, and said, "Go back to those who sent you, and tell them if they have become so great cowards as not to defend themselves, they ought to be sold into slavery—that they ought not to be counted as men, seeing they have given up the noble art of war."

To this the old Gladiator replied—"Those people for whom I speak are subjects of a greater Chief than thou art, and wish to fight only with the sword of the Spirit—not with the weapons made by mortal hands. But why should there be any fighting? Why not take what they have offered, go back to your homes, and live at peace with your neighbours?"

On hearing the old man speaking thus, he was told that he was as cowardly as those who had sent him.

"I am not of that tribe," he rejoined. "Do not think that I am afraid to meet you. I am no coward."

The Chief was angry, and frowned on him, while he seemed ready to grasp a javelin to throw at him, but contented himself with deriding him as a poor, cowardly fellow.

Our old friend said he would go back to the people he represented, and would see by next morning what could be done.

On his return, he told the assembled tribe that their enemies would come to no terms whatever. They were determined, if they would not defend themselves, to seize on them, and dispose of them as slaves. Fathers and mothers would be torn from each other, and from their children, and scattered as slaves over the wide world. "Why," continued he, "so downcast? Rise up, and, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, go forth, and show ye are not afraid to meet them in battle!"

On hearing this, one of the young men rose and said,—“We will go, but let our fathers remain behind. We are not ignorant of the art of war, though we have never practised ourselves in fighting; but we will go. If we are slain, our spirits will go on high to the paradise Jesus hath prepared for us.”

This declaration of the young men, accompanied as it was by enthusiastic plaudits, roused up the spirit of battle in the breast of the old Gladiator, and he seemed, like the war-horse, impatient for the fray.

Who was to be their leader? They had none. A number of the more prominent of the young men came forward, and one of them said,—“You, noble stranger, if you will but lead us! You said you were a soldier, and your appearance confirms your statement. Therefore, lead us on, and we will follow you!” They were all armed—they had been preparing the night before.

By the early dawn of the morning, our old friend, with two hundred young men at his back, marched out in battle array. He had selected a sword from among the rest—a Roman sword, such as he had formerly used.

When the other tribe saw them approaching, and so few in number, they laughed scornfully—they thought they might swallow them up. The hostile Chief came rushing along, and when he observed our old friend, armed only with the Roman sword, leading on the youths, he made for him, thinking to finish the battle by slaying the leader. But he found him more than a match for him. In a moment, he had only the shaft of his spear, the head was torn from it. The old Gladiator had the Chief by the neck, and would have slung his sword towards the breast of his opponent, but he hesitated. “No,” said he, “I cannot do it. Once in a day I would have done it.” But just then he seemed to have acquired double, or triple, his ordinary strength. He threw his arm around the Chief, dragged him among the young men, and ordered them to bind him. This was speedily done; and then they raised their old war-cry, and rushed towards their enemies—who, when they saw the fate of their chief, were panic-stricken, and fled. The young men followed in hot pursuit; but our old friend called them back; before, however, the call was made, they had captured many of the women and children. These had been placed in the rear of the hostile tribe; and when they broke and fled, the poor creatures were left behind.

Here was a battle fought without bloodshed. They kept the chief a prisoner, along with the women and children, but their goods they did not touch.

There was great rejoicing that night when the young men

came in with their prisoners, who thought they would all be sold for slaves. The chief was unbound and brought into the council-chamber. He said to the old Gladiator, "You are a Roman. I suppose you mean to make me your slave?"

"No," said our old friend, "I want to make you a slave, but not my slave—I wish you to become a servant and slave of Jesus of Nazareth, my Master, the Lord of Heaven." He claimed him—that was all he asked from the people for the service he had done them. He asked to be allowed to keep the chief as his prisoner. At the same time, he requested the people to keep the women and children for a time; but on no account were they to communicate with any party that might come to redeem them—to do nothing, but to keep them in ignorance: they were requested, however, to impart to the captives as much as they themselves had learned of the new faith; and in a short time he and his friends would visit them, and see how they were progressing. When the captives had been taught for some time, they were to give them presents, and send them back to their own people.

Having taken off the bonds from the chief, who was of a fiery temper, the old man told him to go with him quietly—but if he tried to make his escape, to remember that he still carried his sword with him. So he set out, with the captive chief, to see my two friends; on their arrival, Anah and Zitha were astonished to see the old Gladiator with a sword girt about his loins; and the young man, Cofna, said to him—"Why, have you again girt on the sword? I thought you were done with it for ever."

"And, in truth, I am done with it," he said. "The sword is harmless while it hangs there; a piece of wood would do as well; while hanging there it does not hurt. It is there for a purpose. In the eyes of some, it is there ready for use; but I have no intention of using it in the ordinary way. But, I bring with me one who is my prisoner—I will not say he is my slave. I mean to keep him as my prisoner till I have taught him a little of the truth that I myself have gained, and then he will go back to his people."

When the barbarian chief saw how he was treated by his captor—how he was permitted to go here and there without hindrance, he gave his word he would not try to escape. He

went with them to their meetings in the mornings, and listened attentively, and at last began to inquire at our old friend concerning the things which he heard at the meetings. "If you had listened to me I would have told you of these things," said the old man ; but it is well as it is." And they instructed him, and he became an apt scholar.

When the old Gladiator saw he had gained what he desired, he told him he was no longer his prisoner ; and said it would be well to appear before the head-man, who was acting till the young chief became of age. They accordingly went to him, and the captive chief begged his pardon, which was cheerfully granted. When he saw all the captive women and children, he pled for them, thinking they purposed to sell them. He was told they had no such intention ; they were only doing for them what had been done for himself. The chief seemed highly gratified when he was told this, and earnestly besought my two friends to visit his people and teach them that which he himself had been taught. My friends agreed to accompany him home.

There were many presents given to these women and children, and they and their chief were escorted to their tribe. They rejoiced greatly when they saw their chief approaching ; while, at first, a number of them thought he was also bringing with him the other tribe as prisoners ! But he at once summoned a council, and told them all that had taken place, while the women and children showed the presents they had received from those they had treated as enemies and threatened to enslave.

Twentieth Sitting.

April 23rd, 1884.

The Priests Oppose — Constitutional Government — Church and State — Druid
 Priests Conform — Secret Meetings — "The Star in the East" — Winter — Coffin
 Wanted — Should he be Sent — A Seance — The Spirits Consulted — Deception
 Exposed — Help Promised — A Healing Medium — The Wonderful Boy — The
 Barbarian Chief — Scene in the Sick Chamber — Rescued from Death — Nothing
 to Pay.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*) — When the chief with the women and children were escorted home to their own tribe, our friends went with them. Formerly, this tribe were opposed to the new, or

Nazarene faith, and had striven hard against all others that embraced it. Even when my friends arrived at their town or village, the priests tried to raise the people against them. They saw it was going to be ruinous to their craft if the people embraced this new faith. They even tried to raise the people against the chief, but he was a powerful ruler and had great control over the tribe; for from his youth up to the present time, when he was about 40 or 50, he had been a great warrior; he had led them often, and was at all times successful. He had been the means also of bringing a great number of slaves and much plunder to the priests. They saw that all this would be put a stop to; and as they had reaped the best share of all that had been taken, they soon perceived that their harvest would be gone, and a dearth, to them, would ensue. The people had loved their Chief when a Barbarian, and they still loved him when he became a Nazarene. They saw that the doctrine he preached to them—to live at peace with their neighbours—would become much better for them in the end. They had never given their mind much to the cultivation of the soil; but they saw their neighbours, who had adopted the new faith, and had given their attention more to agriculture than to war, becoming richer than they had been before, and beginning to trade with the other tribes around them.

The first thing the Chief did before settling down, was to build a great house wherein he would assemble the people. Thereafter a new government was formed—he acting as their prince or king; while so many elders were chosen, along with the lesser chiefs of the tribe, who acted as governors, and looked after the affairs of the whole tribe, which was divided into districts, and each district was under the rule of a governor. He also made a law that so much of the wood should be cut down, in order that ground should be reclaimed from the dense forests around, for the sowing of seed, so that they might have larger harvests when the reaping-time came round.

But, in addition to these wise measures, the Chief or King decreed that those priests who would not accept the new faith, were to leave the tribe. Now many of them did so, but there were some who saw it to be for their advantage to conform and to remain where they were. As most of them were learned men,

being Druid priests, though in a barbarian tribe, they readily accepted the new faith, and they were made elders of the people, so that they might gather them together and give them instruction ; but whether these undertook the office from pure motives or not, my friends cannot say ; but they seemed almost to be as well acquainted with the doctrines of the new faith as they were themselves. One very old man, who had been the bitterest against them when they came there, told them that certain of the Druid priests had been in the habit of meeting at night, unknown to all others—when they held communion with the departed ; and that the Spirits had always advised them to turn from their idolatry, and look to the East, where a light would arise which would yet shine over the whole world—a Star that would never set while the Sun was in the heavens. They had always looked for this Star, he said, but had never found it. In all their researches, they had never found one star that they had not known before. They looked at it in a literal way. They thought when this Star was seen, their nation would begin to rise. But my two friends showed how this Star spoken of by those of the World of Spirits, was not a star in the heavens—not one of those lights above, but One who had already come to, and had ascended in, the East, and that His was the light they were bearing with them to the nations of the earth. They began then to ask of my friends all about this Great One—this Light that had appeared in the East, and my friends entered into his history from his childhood—and even before, when they had received communications, and were sent out to welcome this Light of the World. They spoke of the Star—the Angel of the Flame who had guided them to the birth-place of Jesus, who had descended from heaven to earth as a child ; how the child had been trained up in Egypt and in Persia—how he had then gone to Judea to his own people, who would not have him, but scoffed at him, and at last crucified him. Yet had he commissioned his disciples to visit all nations, bearing the Light, and it was the Light of his teachings they were now seeking to spread in their midst.

My friends stayed in that place for a long time—all the winter season. They would have liked to have gone farther on, but winter being nigh, the people prevailed on them to remain.

During the winter months, they went back and forward among the tribes round about them. That winter they had their hands full of work. They visited the sick, giving assistance to them, and exercising what power they had in healing them.

I mentioned before that the young man, Cofna, who was with them, was a very powerful healer, and he was much sought after. Tribes at great distances heard of this wonderful healer, and many from these tribes visited them, and, in some cases, got him to go back with them to their tribe. Among some of the more barbarous he was almost worshipped as a god. But he explained to them that the healing power he possessed was the gift of that Great Spirit he desired them to worship.

Now, just as the winter was verging into spring, and when the trees were becoming covered with buds, a messenger came from a great distance for our young friend Cofna. A Chief, who had once been at war with the tribe with which they were staying, had heard of the power of the young man in healing the sick; and having a daughter, about twenty years of age—his only child—prostrate with fever nearly all the winter—he had sent this messenger, when the snow, which had blocked the road, had been melted, to bring our young friend back with him, so that he might get his only child restored to health. My friends wanted to go in a different direction, so that if they waited till their young friend, Cofna, returned, it would be too far gone in the season. But the messenger suggested that they might go on to the place they purposed to visit, while he, with Cofna, would return to his Chief, who would doubtless see that Cofna was conveyed safely to the place they intended to visit.

My friends resolved to consult with the Chief, and with some of the priests, who had turned, and were now acting as ministers of the faith of the Nazarene; so they met with them, and asked if it would be right to send on their young friend with the messenger, to give help to the Chief's daughter? They said, if he went, perhaps the Chief might be enticed to keep him; and again, that that this Chief was one on whom they could not much rely: and yet, as it was for one whom he so dearly loved, he might keep his word and send back their young friend safely. The old Druidical priest said the best way to do was to consult those who knew better than mortals what the result would be.

Accordingly, that night my friends assembled, along with the priests in their place of worship, and they sat down in a small cell. After they had sat for a short time, one after another came to them. Some Spirits advised them not to let the young man go. But the old Gladiator rose up, and said to the Spirits, "Begone ! for ye are not of those with whom we have dealings." The rest looked at him, and asked why he spoke in that way—their advice seemed to be good.

He said he knew they were the same that were the instigators of strife. "They were not the kind my friends have been in the habit of dealing with : the others are not far off, but cannot get nigh to us. If there is not one here a traitor, then there is one amongst us who is a deceiver."

Each one looked on another, to try and find out who it was. The old Gladiator, pointing to one of the youngest of the reformed priests, said, "It is you who bring such among us—you, who only turned to the new faith outwardly, but who inwardly believes in the strange gods you aforetime served."

When he saw he was found out, he then and there confessed. Some of the priests, who had left the tribe rather than conform, had bribed him to remain with those who had submitted to the new faith. Now, when he saw that such deeds could not be hidden, he made an open confession, went down on his knees, and asked the Great and Mighty Spirit to forgive him.

The moment he did so, the Spirits left, and the ones my friends had been in the habit of consulting, came in, and appeared to them in bodily form ; and they told the young man, Cofna, to go with the messenger—not to be afraid—they would be with him. He would (they said), be successful in this case as he had been in all others. He had but to ask strength and help from the Most High for the accomplishment of the work ; and that, in the work he was about to do, he was opening up a way which others who followed after him would carry on and finish.

In reply Cofna said to the Spirit—"I have faith in thee, and I have faith in the help thou shalt give me, but I am to be parted from those whom I love, I am going alone among strangers. No doubt I will be guarded, but ye may be unseen."

"Be not thou afraid of that," was the Spirit's reply, "We will be seen, day and night, by thee. We will travel with thee, and

when asleep we will watch over thee ; for many will lie in wait for thee ; but those who would seek to harm thee shall be brought low."

After they parted that night, our friends went to their lodgings, and the four of them remained the whole of the night in prayer and fasting. Though but to be parted for a time—each of them loving Cofna as a son—it was like tearing a beloved one from their bosom.

He went away in faith and hope, that he would have help from Heaven in all the dangers that lay in his way, and in the object of his journey—to enable a fellow-creature to rise from a bed of sickness, and, it might be, to heal a wounded soul—and to throw in new light amid the darkness of a barbarian tribe, so that they might rise above their savage state. The messenger seemed to be proud of success in his mission ; and all the people of the town came out to bid them farewell.

Our friend Cofna, during his stay in the village, had taken a great liking for a little boy, and just before leaving, he laid his hands on the child's head, and asked that the blessing of the Most High and His holy ones might descend on this boy, so that he might have the power which he himself had of assisting the weak and ailing. My two friends thought the child would not know how to keep and guide this power—that he might put it to a bad use—they never had such a case as this ; but they would wait to see the result.

Cofna left them and went away with the messenger, while tears rolled over the cheeks of the Chief and many of his people when they departed. Some of the priests seemed to envy the gift bestowed on the little boy, and thought Cofna might have done better by awarding it to them, such a thing being more in their line. "You," he said, "have not the strength this boy has ; nor has any of you the heart. His soul is pure before the high and holy ones, and they have chosen him to be a ministering servant to all. Through him they will be able to work. Had I asked such a power to be given to you the result would not have been the same."

My two friends and the Old Gladiator, after Cofna's departure, watched over this little boy with a jealous eye to see how he would use the power he had got. They found him occasionally

in the woods all alone. Our young friend Cofna had taught the child how to pray ; while his parents began to think something had gone wrong with him. But one of my friends said, " No, there is nothing wrong with your boy. He will yet become an ornament to the whole tribe ; his name will yet be made known over the whole land."

This boy seemed (say my friends) to have a great heart within him—a great soul ; his love seemed to go out to all the animal creation—man or beast, he seemed to feel for all alike. One day when he was in the wood praying, with our friends close by him, a hawk or small eagle was observed hovering over the tree-tops. It made a spring at one of the small birds flying about, but did not catch it—but the wing of the little bird was broken, and it came to the ground. The eagle would have darted on its prey, but the boy was quicker than the eagle, and snatched the wounded bird from the ground, while the assailant flew away. They observed that the boy shed tears as the bird lay helpless in his hands. He seemed as if feeling the pain the poor bird was suffering, but he softly stroked it, then he put it on his finger, lifting its shattered wing gently, and it flew away. He appeared to be enraptured as the bird flew off. He went down on his knees, and buried his face in prayer. When my friends saw that, they said, " He is one that will walk in the steps of our friend that has gone away from us."

After two days' journey, our friend Cofna and the messenger arrived at the place of the barbarian Chief. When they arrived, all hope had been given up of the maid's recovery. When shown into the apartment where she lay, the Chief seemed to be bowed down to the earth in grief.

" You have been long in coming," he said. " I was afraid you would not come, for I had heard of thy fame, which had been spread over all the land, that thou wert able to heal the sick, and snatch the ailing one from the hands of death."

Cofna said,—“ I have no power of myself. But I come to you with great hope and faith in the power and goodness of the Great Spirit. Rely not, therefore, on me, for I am but a man like thyself, but rely on Heaven. If it is the Divine will, your daughter shall rise from her bed in health and strength.”

He went to the bedside, and, taking hold of her hands, he

looked in her eyes, when she seemed to drop away into a deep sleep as of death.

Her father seeing this, rushed at Cofna, crying out,—“You have killed my daughter!” and would, with uplifted hand, have struck him, but his arm remained outstretched—there he stood, unable to move. His daughter woke up, and said,—“O, my father, What would you have done!” When she spoke, his arm gradually fell again by his side. Then lifting up both hands, he covered his face, and wept like a child, saying to the young man, “Forgive me, O forgive me! I would have struck thee to the earth, and might have killed thee, and what then would have become of my daughter?”

The maiden began to mend gradually. Every time he laid his hand on her she seemed to gain strength. The third day she was able to rise, and in four days she was able to go about.

The young man seeing that her recovery was sure, expressed a wish to leave to rejoin his friends. But the Chief would not think of his leaving—he must stay and teach them. He said he had called together the wise men of the tribe for advice; but they could do nothing with their charms. He, Cofna, had used no charms, but simply laid his hand on her, and now she was well. He would have heaped presents on him, but no,—“I will take nothing,” said our young friend—“the power that healed thy daughter was not mine; it was given to me by Jesus of Nazareth, through his ministering servants, who come from him to bestow such power on me. I will take nothing.”

[In reply to a question — *Thort* was the name of the old Gladiator.]

Twenty-first Sitting.

April 30th, 1884.

Cofna refuses to Marry—Wedded to Mission Work—Parting and Presents—Embarkation—Landing in Scotland—Signs of Civilisation—News Carried Quickly The Druid Settlement—Their Worship—Burnt Offerings—Entertained by the Priests—Poetry—Spirit Communion—Doom of Druidism—The Nazarene—Follow Jesus!—The Day of Judgment.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night we met I gave you some account of our young friend Cofna going on a visit to the Chief of a tribe, whose daughter had been ailing with fever, and how he had been successful in raising her to health and strength.

The tribe was accounted a very barbarous one—in fact, a tribe which might be described as living on plunder, and great was their ideas as to the wonderful power possessed by our young friend ; they thought he was more than an ordinary man, and expressed a strong desire to have him to remain with them. The Chief himself knew not how much to show his gratitude towards Cofna ; for he looked on his daughter as the one thing worth living for. She had gained the affections of the tribe from her readiness to help the poor and to minister to their wants. The Chief also wished Cofna to remain with them, and would have given this much loved daughter to him in marriage ; but Cofna said to the Chief, that, though grateful for his presents and kindness, he had never thought of marriage. He considered he was solemnly bound to the work he was then engaged in—that he was devoted to the service of the Most High, and that that work was his wife ; if he were to take a wife, the great object of his life would be set aside.

After remaining for some time with this people, he asked liberty to go and rejoin his friends, who were then nigh to the sea-coast. Messages had been sent time after time, so as to keep up communication with them, and he knew where they were to be found. The old Chief, before he went away, fell on his neck, and said how much he and his people had been blessed by his stay amongst them. Cofna, in reply, said he hoped the time would soon come when they would see the good to be got from being at peace with their neighbours, and of serving the Great and Mighty Spirit.

After that he took leave of them, and departed for the shore, accompanied by a convoy of warriors, who got strict instructions to protect him on the way ; and if he came back that way, he was to bring his friends with him. Presents of clothing were also sent by the Chief to my two old friends, in view of the coming winter, and they would require such in the country they were going to. The clothing sent by him consisted of rich furs and other warm articles of clothing.

After a good deal of hardships in passing through the forests and mountainous districts of the country, they arrived at the coast, and there, at a small village, he found his friends waiting on him. They were very happy to receive him once more in their midst ; for they really looked on him as a son, he having

been committed to their charge by his father, and they both felt the duty of a father devolving on them.

From this village on the coast, they embarked in a ship, which was bound for the Islands which lay at some distance, to take in a cargo of tin.

The band had now increased to six ; for two men from the tribe they had last visited had voluntarily offered to accompany them in their mission to the Islands.

When nearing the southern part of these Islands, they encountered a storm, and they were driven to the north. My two friends, and those who were with them, had never seen such a storm before. The storms they had previously experienced were nothing like what they were now encountering. The masts of the vessel were carried away, the oars were broken, and the vessel was left to the mercy of the winds and waves. It was night when the storm came on, and when morning broke they knew not where they were. Yet they were close by the land — indeed, they saw it on every side of them ; and that day they landed on a rocky and wild-looking coast. The natives who made their appearance, though not what might be called barbarous, or savage, yet they were almost naked, or what little they had of clothing consisted of skins of beasts, while many of them had marked or painted their bodies. Though wild-like in outward appearance, the people were kind to the cast-a-ways, for such they were ; the ship having, though not dashed to pieces, been much disabled by the storm, and had to be drawn up on shore for repairs.

During the time these repairs were going on, my friends went into the country, when they found that the inhabitants used horses and chariots, or carriages, and also that they tilled the soil — showing them that the people were, in that quarter, at least, so far advanced in civilization. They likewise found that the people worshipped, and that their worship, or theology, was Druidism.

Not far from where they landed, they observed a rude Druidical temple, and near to it a college, or a place where priests were educated. They were guided by the people to this house, or seat of learning, and there they were kindly welcomed. But they were somewhat astonished, after being well-entertained by

the priests, on being informed that they, the priests, could tell them who they were and what was their mission, and that they had been the means, to a certain extent, of bringing in this new theology, or religion. My friends thought, when they heard this, that news must be carried quickly—it must have travelled before them : but at that time, they knew not that these Druid institutions, or colleges, were spread over the whole Continent, and had even a place in these Islands. Intelligence was carried from one to another, in regard to things interesting them as communities, such as in the case of persons doing aught against them : these were soon known over all the colleges of the Druids.

The Old Priest bade them welcome, and as next day was the grand Offering Day, he invited them to attend, and they would see for themselves whether they were right or wrong. The house being large, with a number of cells in it, accommodation was made for them ; and next morning by the time the sun had risen high in the firmament, they went out along with the priests, who were clothed in long flowing white robes, with their heads bound with laurel and oak leaves, while the High Priest—the most aged amongst them—with a long flowing beard, white as snow, down to his waist, marched in front, having a golden knife stuck in his girdle—the knife made of pure virgin gold of the country. At length they entered within the great stone circle, wherein stood the altar, which appeared to be made of rough unhewn stone. All the people were assembled in the outer circle. My friends were invited to stand close by the inner circle, but were not allowed to enter. When the fire was kindled on the altar, the bullock was slain and placed, after due preparation, thereon, where it was roasted with fire, yet it was not destroyed. After it was well roasted—after the sweet savour had gone up on high—because the gods so liked it!—the flesh was given to the people to feast on it. Then next came sheep and goats, and even deer of the forest, which were also sacrificed. The people afterwards sang a hymn of praise ; after which the High Priest addressed the people in their own language, which was not well understood by my friends. Although they understood a good deal of what he said, the priests could not make it all clear to them ; but as they were apt scholars, and willing to learn, they would soon come to know the language of the people, if they were for a short time

among them. In the course of his address, the High Priest said that the gods had sent my friends among them; and if it was the will of the gods that their ancient theology was to be broken down, then it would be; but the gods had accepted their offerings that day, and they had shown no anger to the strangers who had come amongst them. These strangers, he said, might well dwell among them, for he considered they were as much priests of the Great Spirit as they were themselves. They had their minor gods, yet one Great God they served.

After service they sat down to a good feast, when such fruits as grew in the land were brought, and the carcasses of the animals sacrificed were eaten, while they drank the pure water from the fountain.

The people having retired, my friends went back with the priests to their house. In the course of the evening, they engaged in conversation with the High Priest. He told them that they were well acquainted with all that was going on both in the East and in the West, because there were those of the Druidical faith scattered over many countries, who kept up communication one with another. "But," my friends said—"These are but earthly messengers, carrying messages by word of mouth, and by the time they reach you, may have got changed in the transmission, and not free from error." He said—"No." When they got information from a distance, it was not only conveyed by word of mouth, but they had letters written on paper made from the bark of a tree. He showed them also some threads, or thin plaited cords; on these were various knots on various plaits, which were signs that they alone could read, and these cords or threads, were not so liable to be destroyed as paper.

The people my friends were amongst had not only horses and chariots, and a written language, but they thought they were also poetical in the expression of their ideas. They themselves were well acquainted with the poets of Eastern countries, such as those of Persia, Egypt, and Greece; but they had never thought of poetry in these Western Islands. The High Priest, on their saying something regarding this, took some tablets of thin metal, and read to them some of their productions. Though wild and warlike in their nature, yet they contained some very lofty ideas, towering into the heaven of heavens.

They found this old man well versed in a knowledge of the Spirit-world. He spoke of receiving direct communications to deliver to the people. They had been warned of the invasion of the country by the Romans, but the invaders had not yet been able to penetrate so far to the north. "Proud Rome," he said, "had landed and had conquered a certain portion of the country, and we know our doom is fixed—that our religion will soon be swept off the face of the earth. We have been told so, and that something new and better for man will soon come—that the old must give place to the new." And again he went on to say—"Years ago, when I first entered on my office as a priest, if strangers such as you had come amongst us, and had opposed our religion, you would certainly have been sacrificed ; but knowing now that the old things must pass away, I have been gradually opening up to my people a grand and new theology. I have also been teaching the young priests this new theology."

My friends having asked him if he had heard of the Nazarene, he said there had been distant rumours, but little relied on, of the wonders done by him in his own country, and how his own people had crucified him, notwithstanding his good deeds. "Now," said he, "it is strange that people should take away the life of one who went about among the people doing good. We never lay hands on a brother, unless charged with a misdemeanour of an outrageous nature, and where life is sacrificed. But for people to lay violent hands on one who was continually doing them good, they ought to suffer in Hades."

My friends told him that it was the Jewish priests who maliciously stirred up the ignorant people against the innocent Jesus, and falsely accused him of rebellion against the Roman Governor. "And why had he been thus treated? Because these men knew well that the pure and holy doctrines which he laid before his countrymen, would, when accepted, overturn their system of theology—a theology which had been pure at its source, but, like others, had been corrupted by those who had been appointed to preserve it. Jesus, in his teachings, had shown the people, from their own sacred books, that they had departed from the great truths laid down therein, calling on them to repent, and return to the God of their fathers. But this was too much for these ever self-seeking, bigoted priests, who saw in all this the

ruin of their system, and they put Heaven's Great Messenger to a shameful death. But that death was Life and Light to all mankind. That same Jesus of Nazareth, before he ascended on high, commanded his disciples to proclaim the truths he had taught them, among all peoples of the earth—and here we are in this corner of the West, in obedience to him who is our Lord and Master."

After my friends had given the old priest an account of their labours among the Druid tribes of Gaul, they told him that they had come on the same errand to them. "We wish, if possible, to draw the people among whom you have been labouring, to a consideration of this Holy One whom we serve; to teach you how to follow him—to walk in his footsteps—to be guided by him; for every one who so doeth is sure of an entrance to the blessed abode above—the happy rest of the just and pure—the Paradise prepared by the Most High for all those who love and serve him here in this world below. It is there where the ever-blessed Jesus of Nazareth reigns as Prince and King—where he sits as Judge of all. Good and bad, we must all stand before that Judgment Seat to receive the award of our deeds done here. All are justly dealt with. They are weighed in the balances. If the good overturn the bad actions, so much the better; if the bad outweighs the good, he is sent down to Hades, and remains there till the light can penetrate his darkened soul—the blessed influence which will raise him higher, to become a better, brighter individual."

[In reply to a question, he said—"There is no great Day of Judgment. Every one is judged when he enters the Spirit-world. When the spirit leaves the body, then is the judgment—no formality of court proceedings—no verdict recorded."]

Twenty-second Sitting.

May 14th, 1884.

The Druids and the New Faith—Looking for the Coming One—Messages direct from God—A Resting-Place—A Druid Temple—Scottish Obstinacy—Hospitality—Dying Words of the High Priest—Words of Comfort—A Glance Inside the Gates—A Death-Scene—Character of the Old Priest—Lamentation Discouraged—The Spirit Appears—Description of Paradise—Commissioned by Jesus—There is but One God—No More Druidism—The Sickle Broken—The Funeral.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night I was with you I gave you an account of my two friends and their companions being driven

to the Western Islands, and their landing in the neighbourhood of a Druidical settlement, one of the headquarters then existing in your own country, Scotland.

At this time, when my friends landed, Druidism in Eastern and Western countries had almost ceased to exist, though among several of the barbarous tribes it was still to be found. It seemed to have spread northwards.

I gave you some account of what occurred at the service. They became very good friends with all the priests—from the High Priest downwards. What astonished my two friends more than anything else was the rapidity with which news was carried. I knew a little of that when I visited Spain. At first my friends thought they would meet with more opposition than they did ; but they were surprised to find how far advanced these Druids were on theological subjects. They appeared to be well educated, and well versed on any point spoken of. Even Jesus of Nazareth was not unknown to them. They looked on him as a prophet, or as one sent for a special purpose to the earth ; but one that did not require to be worshipped—one able to dictate how men ought to worship the Most High ; and they likewise listened very attentively to my friends when they gave a thorough explanation regarding Jesus : telling them how, in long years before he appeared, his coming had been known to the people of the East. They said that might be ; for there had been people in their country who knew of one who was to come, and who had long looked for his appearance. Whether Jesus of Nazareth was or was not that one the High Priest could not say. They also spoke of receiving messages direct from God Himself through their mediums or oracles. But this was a point my friends fought hard against, or tried to dissuade them from—that the messages came direct from the Great Spirit. Their argument was this : The words used in the message began with—“ Thus saith the Most High,” and consequently that the message must be from God. But my friends maintained that did not follow. The ministering Spirits who controlled their mediums might carry messages from the Spirit-world to them, but it did not follow that these were direct from the Great Spirit.

My friends had been there for some time, and seemed to enjoy the rest after so much tossing about on the ocean. The

place was truly a haven, or a paradise. It was surrounded by lofty mountains and hills, while at the foot of these eminences lay beautiful sheets of water. On the brow of one of these hills stood the rude temple, formed of great stones, within the circle of which fire ceased not to burn. It was indeed a pleasant spot, and my two friends would have liked to remain there, but it was not their duty to stay in one place, however pleasant and agreeable its situation. They had gone forth on the work of their Master, and they wished to travel over all the island if possible.

Just at the time they would have gone out in furtherance of their mission, war was being waged with the Roman forces in the south; consequently they could not procure guides among the people with whom they dwelt; they being afraid lest they should be taken prisoners by the Romans, and carried into slavery. So my friends were obliged to remain in their quiet haven longer than they would have done. They found it hard to convince these people past their own ideas of spiritual things—indeed, they found them the worst to persuade of all the people they ever met in with. Right or wrong, their ideas of spiritual matters were not to be given up. On the other hand, they found them civil, obliging, and kind to them, because they were strangers.—Every shipwrecked crew received the same kind treatment.

One of the chiefs, who was closely related to the High Priest, offered to build a vessel and present it to my friends and their companions, if they would remain over the winter season. After consulting with the gruff old captain and the seamen, they promised to remain—seeing, moreover, that war was going on in the south, and hindering them from travelling inland, where they might fall into the hands of some who would not prove so friendly to them as those who had given them shelter. Anah and Zitha, the young man Cofna, the valiant old jailor Thort, and the two men who came with them, met regularly with the people at worship. They had been asked two or three times to officiate in the service, but they would not consent. Though somewhat advanced in spiritual teaching, the forms of their Druid worship were really idolatrous: seeing they believed in and worshipped so many different gods; and yet, like many more of the nations, they held that there was but one God above them all—the Great Unseen.

The summer season had passed and the autumn had come, when the harvest was gathered in. The old High Priest was far advanced in years—so far that he had received the “Golden Wreath,” which was given to them on reaching 120 years, according to your mode of reckoning. When they had attained to 100 years, they were permitted to wear the “Golden Belt,” or waist-band. Well, summer was past and autumn had come, when one evening our friends were sent for to come and see the old High Priest. The aged man lay stretched on his couch, while many of the younger priests surrounded him, for they had long looked on him as a father. So when my friends entered the cell, and saw him stretched on the couch, he said, “Come, my friends! you came as strangers, driven in amongst us by the mighty winds of heaven, and by the ocean in its angry mood. But I tell you, you are no strangers with us here, but friends—though in my old age, I thought I was right, and you were wrong. When I pressed you to remain with us, and even got Rudolf to build you a vessel to carry you away from us, it was only to keep you a little longer beside us. I thought to convert you to our old faith, as old as the hills the temple stands on. But, no: you seem to be harder to move than the granite of which these mountains are composed—no impression could be made upon you, so firmly have you taken your stand on that Rock. Must we indeed be dashed to pieces against it? Oh, that old and glorious faith, which we have upheld so long! For more than a hundred years have I been the devoted servant of these gods, and now, alas! they all desert me in the last hours of my life, leaving me to go down into the dark valley alone—not one puts forth a hand to help me through!”

He had thus spoken, when my two friends went up to his couch, and each took a hand, while one of them said—“O dear friend, we look on you as an old and beloved friend. We came to you as strangers—driven in upon you by stress of wind and sea. You were kind to us. In our extremity, you supplied our needs, and more—you gave us beyond our needs. What more could you have done for brother or child of your own bosom, than what you have done for us! We will soon be going the same road as you. Be not afraid. Even now, there are those that love you hovering over you. Though these are not gods,

yet I perceive they are high and holy ones of the Spirit-world, waiting to welcome you when you leave your old tenement of clay. Your faith is old, dear friend,—I have little doubt of that. Thou hast been wrong, though many of thy ideas are true, and it was right in thee to stand by these. Thou hast loved us, dost thou love all men—even those Romans who are taking possession of thy native land ?”

Here the old man’s eyes seemed to flash fire, and he wished the gods to drive the invaders from the country by fiery swords, and consume them.

My friend said — “Remember thou art about to pass away. The God we worship is a just God—merciful and kind—who shows forth His love to all mankind, even to these Romans ; it matters not whether they follow the true faith or not—whether you worship Him in truth or not—His love goes out to all, even as that of a father for his erring child. We have only One God, the Creator and Sustainer of the whole universe. There are no lesser deities.

On these comforting words being addressed to their departing friend, the old man threw his arms round the neck of Anah, and then that of Zitha, kissed them, and exclaimed,—“ Yes, I now hear a voice, as if the Spirit of Prophecy spake within me. Our ancient faith is about to be dashed to pieces. Those Roman eagles—they teach new doctrines and a new faith. My friends, who have been like children around me, gather near. My eyes grow dim—I cannot see : come close, so that I may give you my latest blessing. Though our old faith may vanish away, serve ye the One Living and True God, whom my good friend has been speaking of ; it will be better for you when you come to die. I have a glimpse of the land beyond. I see some of those who have been with us before—those of our own race and faith still. They have the Golden Sickle in their hands—their heads are bound with the ivy and misletoe, just as we have here. See ! they beckon to me ! Oh, friends !—brethren ! what a lovely scene is this ! I look in vain for some strange face that I could say was that of a being higher than man, but I see none but those who have been with me in earth-life. Is this the place we live in after what is called death ?”

My friends knew well from this that he was just on the borders,

and was passing into the World of Spirits. About the last words he uttered were these—"Now I see one who appears to be more glorious than all the other bright ones who stand around him—a face unknown to me—that should be known. His garments have not a spot on them. He must—whether man or God—have passed through earth, sinless, without a spot, blameless. Ah, now I know who he is! He bears the impress in his hands and on his forehead! He beckons me! Welcome! I who have worshipped so many strange gods, and sacrificed to them, while he was unknown? He bids me welcome—he seems ready to clasp me to his bosom. O gracious Lord, I come! I come!" These were the last words of the old Priest. He lay back calmly on his pillow, and nothing remained but the cold body, like a piece of alabaster; all colour passed away from the face, and the limbs became cold and stiff. Such was the departure of one who had done much for the people he had lived amongst. When the word went forth that the aged Father had passed away from earth, there was nothing but weeping and lamentation for him, for he had ever been so kind and good. He had educated them all, and old and young loved him, and so did our friends. Anah and Zitha, and their disciples Cofna and Thort, seemed to feel the loss of one they had all come to love and venerate. One of them said—"I hope my end may be like his, so calm, peaceful, and beautiful!" Those he had been with from early youth had grown up around him, and he was known to them all. Indeed, it was like the passing away of a father from a large family.

They at length carried the body on a bier to the temple and laid it before the altar, covering it with boughs of trees. Then went up the cries of lamentation and of mourning; for, though my friends tried to stay them, and told them it was of no use—that he who had gone away would be looking down, sorrowful at such a display of mourning—the people still continued to lament. It was their custom that when priests died, their bodies were laid before the altar for three days and three nights, and all mourned. My friends could not help going to the temple and looking at the face of their deceased friend, who had shown such kindness to them. They shed tears as they looked on the calm countenance.

The night before the body was laid in the earth, Anah and

Zitha sat by themselves in the cell, in the house where they resided. While the one was penning an epistle to send to the tribe they had left in Gaul, the other was engaged in perusing some poetical scrolls of the people amongst whom they now lived. Both of them being thus engaged, they did not see that a third individual had come into their company, and had seated himself between them. First he looked at the one who wrote, and then at the other who read. At last the one who wrote looked up to ask some question at his neighbour—when, lo! he saw a third individual sitting before him. He knew him at once, and cried out—“And thou hast come back to visit us once more!”

The figure spoke not, but for a short time sat and looked at them. At length he said—“I have come to tell you, for I may not see you again, I was made welcome into the land of Spirits—the happy Paradise prepared for all the good and true of mankind; and I have met with this same Jesus of Nazareth you spoke of. He welcomed me there. He clasped me to his bosom. O how I felt! How can I tell you of the joy that arose within my soul, on feeling his arms twined around my body! ‘Come,’ he said, in loving tones, ‘come into the household of the Great King—come thou and be a ministering spirit to thy ministering brothers of Earth. Now thou wilt serve them in another way.’ Now I see the grand end has come of that old doctrine, which I taught all my life on earth. Old things must pass away to give place for that which is new. The old doctrine may be looked at occasionally to show what we once believed. But is not the new as old as the World of Spirits?—yet is it new to us. To-morrow my people will carry my body to the grave. Tell them, I beseech you, no sacrifice must be made for my soul. There is no need to propitiate the gods; for there are no gods but One. They must take my body and lay it in the earth beside my father’s. My father lived many years over the time I lived. He passed away in the 150th year of his age; while I have gone over to the Spirit-world in my 120th year. I have not yet seen my beloved father—the only thing I regret, but I will see him. I am to be sent on a mission, then will I learn of many things, and much that is now dark will be made light to me. Tell my brethren and my son to lay my earth body silently beside my father’s, covering it over with earth—it is what I have long worn, and I no longer require it. I

will visit them at times. I will see them, though they may be unable to see me. Tell them I will not fail to whisper words of comfort when they require it. They will need help, and I will give them my help. Tell them that now there is no more use for their tythes, nor for the golden sickle. Tell them to take the stone, number 12, and break it down—and give to the poor; for it is done, and of no further use.”

My friends rose early on the following morning. A great company assembled from all quarters round about—warriors in their armour, some in bright and shining raiment, with chariots and horses; while one chariot, with two white horses, stood ready to bear away the corpse. My friends went in among the priests, and they spoke to the people, who listened attentively. They told them how that their venerable father had visited them the previous night, and the instructions he had laid down to them. At first they would not listen, and said if it were so, he would have given a sign. My friends said he had given a sign—“Bring forth the golden sickle and break it before the people, as it is of no more use.” None but some of the priests knew where it was. It was the custom to bring it out, at a certain time of the year, to cut the mistletoe. When it was brought out the priest told the people in their own language—for he could speak plainer to them than could my friends—what their old priest had desired. On being told, the people made a great outcry; some would have withstood, others said No. The sickle was broken, and so ended the Druid faith in that part of the North.

Twenty-third Sitting.

September 24th, 1884.

The Last of Druidism in the North—The Chief's Gift of a Vessel—Thort beloved by the Natives—Perplexed—Eve of Departure—An Appeal to Heaven—The Answer—The Spirit of the Old Druid Appears—A Heavenly Choir—The Three Brethren Depart—Thort gets a Wife—Reformation Begun—Roman Invasion — Non-Resistance again — Thort's Address — To Arms — Thort's Trained Native Warriors—The Romans Attacked—Their Retreat—No Strong Drink.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—I was not with you at your last meeting. I had previously spoken of our friends, who were about to leave that place, where they had landed, and where they had met

in with the Druids. You will remember the circumstances in which they were placed. The people wished them to remain, after the old priest had passed away; and he had once more appeared to them, and bade them adhere to the new faith proclaimed by my friends. You may lay down that as the time when Druidism was swept away from your island, or the time when the gospel of our Lord Jesus was first preached in your country—in the north of the island. There had been several in the south-west, who came from Rome among the soldiery, trying to proselytise the people. But in the far north my friends were the first who planted the standard of the faith of Jesus.

The chief who had all along treated them kindly, told them he would build them a vessel to carry them on their way home. The captain and his seamen assisted in the building of the vessel, taking care that it was made sufficient for the purpose intended. The natives also brought provisions and stores of various articles for use during the voyage. The people of the country, like their chief, manifested a very friendly spirit towards our friends, so much so, indeed, that some of the seamen resolved to remain with them. The captain tried in vain to get them to return, but they told him, they had resolved to settle amongst the natives.

I will, to-night, speak more of our warlike friend, the Jailor. He had now become a good and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, and preached the gospel to the people. Every morning at sun-rise, he was to be seen on some of the hillocks, while around him were gathered very many of the people, listening to the truths as taught by Jesus; but as he alluded to his early departure with the other friends, his hearers got much cast down. They had become very much attached to him, and now he was going to leave them! They earnestly pled with the old veteran of the Arena to remain with them and become their priest or teacher. This caused him to have many an anxious thought. He did not know what to do, whether to remain with the warm-hearted people who heard him gladly, or to leave with those with whom he had thrown in his lot; and then he would think of Cofna, his beloved young brother, who could not bear the idea of parting with him. They had become very dear, the one to the other—they were indeed like father and son.

They were just on the eve of their departure. The people had gathered around the old veteran, and they even pled on their knees for him to remain. The Chief also came and beseeched him to remain with them. He (the Chief) had all along been very kind to them, and now he had provided them with a vessel to reach home; but if he had had his will, he would rather they should have taken up their abode among his people. This old man (Thort) had become very dear to them all. He had, indeed, no beauty of countenance to attract the maidens; but he had kindness of disposition, and seemed to have love for all the people around. He felt himself in great perplexity, and he came to our three friends, and said—"Brethren, here I stand before you, should I depart with you, or should I remain? Believe me, it is like tearing the sapling from the roots, tearing me from my young friend here. We are bound fast together by loving ties. Shall I cling to him? or, think you, I should remain among the people who appear to feel deeply that I should stay with them? If you say stay, I stay!"

On making this appeal to them, one of my two brethren, deeply affected, said—"My dear friend, you have become dear to us all. You are as a brand plucked from the fire by the World of Spirits. Plead not with us, for we cannot give decision; but let us lay the question before another bar, and let the Judge there decide whether you go or stay. Then will we gladly submit to the decision."

The chief, the elders, and also the priests, were asked by my friends to meet with them in the usual place of assembly. They all stood and looked on in wonder as our four friends formed themselves into a circle, and as they knelt down on one knee, with their faces toward the earth, and sung an anthem of the World of Spirits; but they wondered much more when, as our four brethren continued their song of praise, voices were heard in the air above them taking part in the anthem.

At length the old Jailor rose and stood erect in their midst, and solemnly raising his eyes and hands to heaven, he spoke to the Prince, Jesus of Nazareth, and asked that he who ruled the ministering Spirits should decide whether he (Thort) was to stay and do what he could among the people with whom they had been living, or to leave them and go home with his brethren.

Just as he had thus spoken, there stood by his side the form of the venerable Druid, who had left the earth but a short time before. This was his second appearance among the people. He said, "I am sent by those who are assembled on high, among whom I am; I am sent as a messenger to tell you it hath been decided by the Spirits assembled that you remain among my people—that you become to them a priest and a minister to instruct them in the faith of Jesus, who sacrificed his life for that which he came to propagate—love among mankind."

When the old priest had thus spoken, the whole building seemed filled with harmonious praise, such as those rough but simple people had never heard before. It seemed to steal their senses away from earth and its concerns, and transport their souls to a heaven of bliss; and the feeling thus produced was not confined to the people inside the building, but it was shared by those who were standing outside.

When the heavenly choir ceased singing, our old friend Thort said, "Since it is the desire of the Spirits in Paradise, I will remain with you, and will try to be a faithful servant of our Father in Heaven. I will do all I can—even if it should be to lead you forth to battle against the invaders."

The following day was the day of the departure of the brethren. It was indeed a heart-rending scene, as the old Jailor parted from them, one by one. It seemed as if tearing him from them; but at length he was enabled to speak. "Here I will remain, beloved brethren, though it is hard to part from you; but I know that you will pray God to help me in the work I am undertaking among this people, who so anxiously desire to have me remain with them. I have already, with the help of Heaven, been of some service to them, and I am persuaded that the Great Spirit will yet enable me, humble as I am, to do greater service for our dear Lord and Master among this people; and, oh! brethren, why should I hold back? Alas! how long has my life been devoted to Rome's brutal pleasures in the Arena, where neither God nor man was honoured! No! Here, among this tribe of the far north, I will fight against all that opposeth the will of the God of Heaven and Earth!" He said no more, but as he embraced each of them he wept like a child.

Before parting from them, the Chief brought forth his daughter,

and, presenting her to our friend, said, "Since you are to stay with us, take one to be thy wife, so that Heaven may grant you sons to carry on the mission when you leave the earth." Some of the younger seamen had taken wives, and had resolved to cast in their lot with the people who had so kindly treated them.

Our friends set sail in the evening, with heavy hearts, from the spot where they had been so hospitably treated for so long a season, and where a way had been opened for them to proclaim the doctrines of the Prince—Jesus of Nazareth. They had enjoyed much happiness among the people, who, wild though they were, they found more advanced than those they had seen when travelling on the Continent. The Chief sent some of his trusty men to guide them through the Straits, and who would leave them when they got further on. So our friends were thus carefully provided with pilots along the coast.

We will leave them for a time to pursue their voyage, and continue with Thort, our old friend, left behind. He at once set about to reform their worship; and, in order to do this effectually, he assembled all the young Druid priests, who had been under the tuition of the old priest, and began to instruct them in the doctrines of the Nazarene, of which, as yet, they had learned little. He had himself drank in all he could from the lips of my two brethren, concerning Jesus and his doctrines, and though but a gladiator, and then a jailor, he was well acquainted with the literature of both Greece and Rome.

But, just about this time, an interruption occurred to his intended course with the young men. The Romans were making inroads into Caledonia, and marching northwards. The Chiefs were getting their forces ready, so as to keep the invaders off their territories. But they saw it was necessary, in order to do so, that they should combine,—to oppose the Romans by a united front. Messages were sent over all the country for this purpose. The Chief who had been so kind to our friends, was also consulted; but he refused to have anything to do with the repelling of the invaders, for, he said, having become an adherent of the doctrines of the Nazarene, he could not see it to be right to go to war with his fellow-men; that it was against the rule of Jesus to drive one back who came to rob; that he who smote you on the one side,

you were to turn to the smiter the other side. Our Old Gladiator could not go this length, though he was a thorough believer in all that the Master had taught. He thought the Chief was unduly applying the rule laid down by Jesus, our Lord. Thort maintained that he loved his enemies as he loved himself; but, if his enemy came and stole his wife, and stole his goods, would he stand quietly by and allow the outrage? or allow himself to be taken and sold as a slave? No; it was his duty to defend himself and all that belonged to him; and not only so, but to help those who were unable to defend themselves. Yet, he admitted, it was also his duty, if he took a prisoner in battle, to treat him well, and as a brother—not as an enemy.

The argument of our old friend prevailed with the Chief, and he called a meeting of the tribe, at which the matter was laid before them, and talked over, each one giving his opinion. The entire assembly agreed that they should remain in peace and quietness till the enemy came across the boundary line.

Our friend, Thort, who seemed to sniff the battle from afar, rose to his feet, and said—"My friends; look on me as one of yourselves. In my early youth I was carried off, along with my sister, from the south portion of this island, as captives, by Roman invaders, to Rome, where we were sold as slaves. My master employed me in the Arena, where I afterwards fought as a Gladiator. Thereafter I became a free citizen of Rome. I was then appointed the keeper of a prison in Greece, where at length the jailor became the prisoner of Him who now sits on the throne of Heaven—in the World of Spirits. His slave, or servant, am I, and I am here to do the work which He has set before me. Though a minister of Jesus—preaching the gospel of love to all—yet I cannot look upon you turning your backs, like cowards, on the invaders of the land. Let us buckle on our swords and go forth. Let us drive them back, so that our wives, our daughters, and our little ones, may not be taken and sold into slavery. Let us not be cowards! Doing right in defence of our wives, mothers, and sisters, we are doing righteously in the sight of God!"

He overcame their scruples. They went to their homes, and brought forth their arms. He caused every man among them to get their long swords cut shorter, the length of the Roman weapon,

which, though less in weight, was more effective. He pointed out to each what to do, training them exactly as the Roman soldiers were trained. Some did not want their long swords cut shorter, but he pointed out the advantage of the short sword. "If your weapons had been the same as those of the Romans, you would have overcome them when first they came to this land. I know by experience the disadvantage of the long sword, for I have wielded both." He then got them to make large shields, covering from the knee to the shoulder; these were made from hides of cattle, tanned in such a way that they swelled, and were even strong and hard as iron.

After he had seen the army thoroughly accoutered and drilled, he said to the chief—"Must I both be priest and leader to your army? Let me, I pray thee, be priest—be thou the leader, and I will be second in command."

"No," said Rudolf; "you seem to understand the Roman mode of warfare. You must lead, and I will be second in command."

They had been called to meet at a certain place, where the chiefs were to assemble with their forces, so as to march in combination against the Romans; so, after leaving a proper guard over the settlement for the protection of their families, they embarked on board of vessels, and shortly reached the meeting-place. The allied chiefs and their troops were there awaiting them. On landing, our old friend Thort formed the force in proper order; and when the allied chiefs, looking from a distant hill, beheld them, they were alarmed, and thought they were Romans, who would come down upon them with a swoop. But Rudolf, the Chief, thinking the other party might make that mistake, gave a certain signal, by which mistake would be prevented. On coming up to the place of meeting, the chiefs and their followers wondered to see them so armed, and exhibiting an appearance so like to that of the Romans.

The invading army, or rather a portion of that army, were not far to the south of them; and after some consultation, the chiefs resolved to march southwards, and endeavour to drive them back. Thort led the van of the native forces, and in a short time they came down on the enemy. Great was the surprise of the Romans when they first saw the opposing force; they did not expect to

see trained warriors. The general, or leader, maintained that they must have been trained by a Roman, and were led by one.

The Romans appeared to be confounded and troubled; and our Old Gladiator, who was possessed of sharp discernment, at once led on the attack. The nature of the ground favoured our friends, and very soon the heavily-armed soldiers of Rome found they could not cope with the agile and strong men of the land they sought to subdue. They (the natives) drove the Romans like sheep before wolves, and that part of the country was not troubled with them again for a long time.

According to all accounts the natives were stronger, hardier, and more active in their movements than were the Romans; for they lived on very simple food, and they drank no strong drink. The first wine some of them had seen was brought from the wreck of a vessel. There were, however, some native drinks, which were more or less used occasionally.

Twenty-fourth Sitting.

October 1st, 1884.

Tribal Condition of Scotland—Social Reform—Vestiges of a Better State—Thornt as a Mechanic—Evangelists sent out—Written Language—Historical Records—Roman Laws—Combined Tribes Defeated—Lamentation—Thornt lays down the sword.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—That which I spoke of at our last meeting occurred when as yet there was no written history of your country. The Romans had not succeeded in making the advance which they accomplished some years afterwards. Indeed, you might be apt to be led astray by the earlier and inaccurate portions of your history. At the time I am referring to, the whole of the country was broken up into tribes, or small kingdoms—each tribe having their own chief, or king. They were not united as were the Eastern nations, but when one common enemy appeared, as in the case of the Roman invasion, these separated tribes banded themselves together to repel them. The entire southern part of the Island had come under the sway of Rome, while the northern portion of the country they had never ventured to enter. About this time, however, they began

to cross your northern borders, and make incursions into the interior. It was one of these incursions I gave you an account of at our last meeting. The Roman legions had not only great distances to traverse, but the roads were few, and these of a very rude sort ; while the native tribes who opposed them made use of both land and water, and conveyed information to each tribe by means of hardy and agile runners over all Caledonia, from north to south and east to west, and that speedily.

It was many years after my old friend, Thort, had passed away before the invaders ventured so far to the north. Our old veteran could easily point out, on any chart, the direction they took. He, after returning from the engagement, in which the Romans were driven back, settled down to impart to those amongst whom his lot was cast, a knowledge of the useful arts they were as yet unacquainted with—though at the time we are speaking of, your ancestors were not rude barbarians, but somewhat advanced in civilisation ; for they had passed away from the savage condition of the flint and bronze ages, and were verging into the iron age. A nation that had gone thus far might be considered in a state of civilisation. The cultivation of crops, the use of wheeled carriages, with harness for horses, the weaving of cloth and linen, and the production of a number of other useful articles—all show that they were far beyond the savage state. We believe that even you northern people had once been in a much higher state of civilisation, but had gone back, and lost the cunning of the hand. So far, our friends say. When they fell in with these ancestors of yours, they found such things in existence that must have taken ages to bring to maturity ; that a knowledge of art must have passed away from among them, and but vestiges left of former skill.

Our friend Thort having been brought up in the Arena, had acquired some experience in the production of various articles ; and he at once set about to instruct them in the making of iron articles in a much easier way than that they were accustomed to, showing them how to construct furnaces for the smelting of iron from the ore, and thereby producing such implements as were useful to them. He was minister (or spiritual teacher), warrior, and mechanic. He likewise taught them how to build. They had buildings of a certain kind, but these were inferior to the

buildings in the East ; and in a short time several goodly, substantial houses were erected.

Many who afterwards travelled northwards, found to their great astonishment, a town with regular-built houses formed into streets, like the cities of the East, and having a fine house of worship in the midst of it ; while others who went into the wilderness some time afterwards to evangelise these rude people, on reaching this place in the North, were somewhat amazed to find others had been before them, and had established the faith they were endeavouring to proclaim.

[In reply to a question, Hafed said,—Those I refer to as coming afterwards, are with us now ; and it is from them I derive this information.]

Druidism had passed away in your island, except in the southern and middle districts ; in the latter it was carried on to a great extent. The young men, whom our old friend was instructing, went forth evangelising all round them, and as they carried on the good work, they had to put up with great hardships and sufferings. The difficulties were, however, overcome ; and the Druid faith speedily fell before them.

Now, those Druids were highly educated individuals, and to our friends' astonishment, when among them, they found they had a written language, which, if you have not now, must have been lost. They had a number of their poetical effusions written, with various other writings—though they never kept a strict history of the country, owing, no doubt, to the divisions and sub-divisions caused by the existence of tribes and small kingdoms ; for if one tribe kept a written history, the frequent quarrels gave but little security for its preservation ; and so with all nations composed of tribes. But when these get banded together, then comes the written history.

The Romans, who had been the scourge of many nations, when they fell in with peoples, or nations, who had no history, the learned leaders of their troops wrote an account of the people, or tribes, they were among for the time. If they often brought fire and desolation among the people they were subjugating, yet they had some good qualities among them. Wherever they settled down for a time, they were sure to lay down certain fixed laws—Roman laws—for the people's guidance. Our old friend, being a

Roman citizen, laid down several laws in accordance with Roman law, as a guide to the people in their dealings with one another ; and as they spread out from that inland sea where they were located, it is said—by some of those spirits who followed after my friends,—they became one of the most advanced tribes in all that part of the country.

Our friend Thort lived to a good old age ; for, when the Romans came upon them a second time, he it was who led the combined tribes to repel the invasion of their territories, and he was 112 years old at the time. The Romans on this second occasion proved too strong for the native forces, and they retreated.

He and his followers were very much disheartened. All the tribes around had so much faith in the prowess of the old veteran and his trained followers, that they chose him as their leader, and with him they thought they were sure to win the battle. He says if he had got these tribes under his training for a very short time, they would have driven back the Romans. But they would not give up the use of their long swords. The result was defeat. He led back the survivors. He had lost upwards of 100 men of his own followers, and the slaughter was also great among the other Caledonian tribes. That was the last time he fought. He laid aside all arms, and fought no more, but only in the spiritual battle of peace as waged by his Master, Jesus. Still he could not stand unmoved while these Romans desolated the happy homesteads of the people in whose welfare he felt so deep an interest. But he resolved to remain in peace and quietness the rest of his days.

After the Roman forces retired, Thort and a number of the native warriors went back to the field of battle and buried all their dead, giving them the burial of Brethren, for these men had all embraced the new faith. He believes that but for the Druid priests, who had given so many of their charms to the warriors of the outlying tribes, they might have become conquerors. Notwithstanding they had made him their leader, they had broken the rules he had laid down for their guidance—how each Chief was to lead forth his men, and take up certain positions against the invaders.

There arose great lamentation throughout the land as the remnant of the native army came back. Many a hearth had lost

its support—wives mourned for their husbands, aged fathers for their sons, and fair maidens for their lovers. Great, indeed, was the lamentation in Caledonia at this time; and our old friend, and others of the new faith, tried to give them comfort by descriptions of the Spirit-world, and the happy condition there of those who had died in defence of their country and their homes.

Though the Caledonians were idolaters, yet they (the Druids) believed, as you believe, in a life hereafter, and in a Great Supreme Deity—but they superstitiously brought in a number of other gods, which destroyed greatly the beauty of their faith.

The old veteran leader and minister, dealt with the bereaved of his own band as Christians, for they were all of the new faith. He assembled all in a great meeting for prayer to the Most High, asking that those brethren who had fallen in battle might be received into the paradise prepared for them by their Lord, in whom they believed. The old man thereon made a solemn oath, before the Great God, that he would no more draw the sword, nor muster the people and those who were young, to battle.

During his lifetime, they never were called out again. He lived till he was 120 years old, ministering to the people till the day of his departure to the better land. We will speak of that when next we meet.

Twenty-fifth Sitting.

October 8th, 1884.

Thort's Family—His Practical Reform—Death Drawing Nigh—The Spirit Choir—
 "A Cloud of Witnesses"—Thort's Last Words—The Risen Body—The Spirit
 of the Old Druid Priest—Burial—A Fitting Monument—The Voyage South-
 wards—A Cargo Wanted—Preaching to the Miners—Prediction—The Vessel
 Laden—Re-embarkation—Driven to the North—Landing—Druidical Worship
 —A Church Formed.

(*Controlled by HAFED*).—Last time I was with you, I spoke of the latter end of our old friend the jailor. He was gathered to his fathers at a good old age, and we may say he ended his earthly life in happiness and some measure of prosperity; for during his sojourn in this land of yours he had gathered round him a family, some of whom had reached nigh to manhood and womanhood.

He had been very careful in their education, taking advantage of all that the land afforded for that purpose. Besides their own language, he gave them instruction in the Latin and Greek, so that they might the more effectively become teachers of the people when he was gone. In this, he was falling in with what was the ordinary custom at that time—the sons following after the same occupation as that of their fathers, from generation to generation. Four of them followed after their father, and these had not only acquired a knowledge of things spiritual, but they also had been taught to use their hands in the construction of a number of useful articles. The youngest of his sons was about 15 years old when their father passed away, and the eldest about 26 years. He had three daughters, who were older than the sons.

During his sojourn with the people, or tribe, being well up in the various methods of producing iron and tin, he not only instructed his sons in this branch, but also a number of young men; and it was not long before the people reaped the advantage of the knowledge so gained: they indeed acknowledged that his coming amongst them had proved a great blessing. He had tried, as far as lay in his power, to make them a peaceful people—not by the old and foolish practice, when disputes arose between two tribes or their chiefs, of fighting,—but he showed them how all quarrels could be settled without taking up arms. He advised them to begin and trade with the other tribes around. This was done, and in a short time, so honest and upright were they in their dealings, they became esteemed very much by the neighbouring tribes, and even by some at a distance, who came with their goods in vessels to this inlet of the sea.

But, as I said before, he had come to that end which all flesh comes to on earth—the separation of body and spirit. When he felt death drawing nigh, he called his family together round the couch on which he had been lying for some days, and after prayer, he blessed them. He told them that he was about to leave them, and the exact time when he would depart; but he was desirous that the Chief and all the people should see how one who had fought the hard battle of life through, to such an old age, could lay life down in peace; and for that purpose he desired that they should carry him on his couch to the house of worship,

so that the assembled people might be witnesses to his translation from the body. Now this had never been seen by any among this people. They had seen the old Druid high priest after he had left the earth, but a translation from earth to Paradise was beyond all they knew of. They had been taught of an after life by their old Druid faith, but in that there were many stages to pass through before they could be admitted to Paradise, none being so good as to enter therein direct.

So, in compliance with our dear old friend's wish, they carried him to this house—where they met regularly, morning and evening, for prayer. On reaching the meeting-house, they were told to lay him down in the centre. The people were all assembled, as many as could find standing-room, while a circle was formed round his couch by the members of his family—his wife, sons, and daughters, all of whom wept sorely, as did also many of the people, because of that loss which was impending over them.

There were some there, however, who could not realise that death was so near, and tried to persuade the old man that he would not be taken from them ; but he told them that at the hour of midnight he would leave them. Just a little before midnight, he asked them to sing one of the anthems he had taught them to sing, and they sang, and as they sang, tears rolled down the cheeks of many of them. One of the assembly, who had been a priest of the Druid faith, while the anthem was being sung, played sweetly on the harp, and just as they were singing the last lines of the hymn, and as his fingers ran over the strings of the instrument, producing sweet sounds, a grand volume of music burst on the ears of the assembly from, as it seemed to them, the air above them. The people were amazed—they sung not—the heavenly choir completing the anthem which the assembly had begun. The people had all their eyes directed upwards, whence proceeded the harmonious notes of the celestial songsters, and as they looked and listened, the ravishing sounds died away, and the air appeared to become strewn by a thick luminous mist, while the lights of the house seemed to grow dim and at length to go out. Then followed a great luminous body, filling the whole building, and which seemed to the wondering beholders, as they gazed upwards, to be a great mass of beings—there were thus an assembly below, and an assembly above. Then from the midst of that

bright host of shining ones, there appeared their old Druid priest, who came out and stood beside the couch of our old friend Thort, who then raised himself up on his elbow, and looking around on the assembly, poured out on them his last blessing, and instructions for their guidance in the future—how they were to send forth the young men whom they were to teach in that house he had set up—to instruct them in the knowledge of Jesus their Lord, who suffered in Jerusalem that he might be an example to all, showing how to walk in the path which led to the Paradise above, and who sat there as Prince and King. He told them he was going away from earth; but he would come back and walk among them, and try, as far as possible, and be their guardian and guide. After speaking to them for a length of time, he appeared gradually to drop down on his couch, and then as they continued to look, with tears rolling down their cheeks, to see if he would again speak, there appeared another light, brighter than that which filled the house, which formed right above his couch; and as he slowly crossed his hands over his breast, and lay with a sweet smile on his rugged countenance, this light began to form itself into the shape of an individual, like to him that lay on the couch below. The scars disfiguring the face of the mortal body were gone on that of the risen body, and the aged man seemed to have regained his youthful appearance. Then they saw the same individual who had been so long among them now standing beside their old high priest, who had done his duty, so far as he knew it, when he was High Priest of the Druids. The wife of our old friend, on seeing the spirit-form of her husband, sprang up and would have taken hold of him round the knees, but the old Druid put forth his hand and beckoned her to keep back, seeing that he had but newly ascended from the body, and was not in that state that could be touched by one in mortal form. After that the forms of the Druid priest and our old friend gradually disappeared, and with them the glorious host of bright ones from the World of Spirits.

The lights, or torches, which lighted the house of worship, now began to burn and show their light, while the cast-off body of him who a short time before had spoken to them, lay like a lump of marble on the couch before them. So thus ended his work on earth—a man who had fought in the Arena—who had been a

stern jailor, who had as such tortured his prisoners—but, having been brought to see the error of his ways, had become a bold minister of the new faith, and had now gone to be with the Prince he loved and served so well during the latter end of his life.

They buried his body beneath the old altar of the Druids, which, they thought, would form a fitting monument to mark the place where lay his mortal remains; for he had been the means of converting them from the old faith of Druidism to the new faith of Jesus. The old customs had passed away, and new and better ones introduced among them—the habits and customs adopted by the people of this tribe had been productive of peace and quietness with their more barbarous neighbours, who looked on them as a people far superior to themselves.

I must now resume my account of my two brethren and Cofna. They sailed southwards in the vessel which had been given them by the Chief. They landed at various places on the coast, and found the people in a somewhat advanced state of civilization—people who had passed through the different “Ages,” and had come to what you would term “The Age of Iron”—using wigwams, or huts, and built-houses, and so might be reckoned by our friends as far beyond the ordinary savage condition.

The Romans, at that time, had not come so far to the West as to molest the people, and they went on in their own way. Our friends had, however, a considerable deal of opposition from the Priests, who, learning of the doctrines propagated by our friends, and how these doctrines struck at the root of their system, frequently got the people to drive them from the shore when they wished to land.

When they gained farther South, they found the Romans had settled in a number of places they touched at, and there they succeeded in doing a good work. They could speak freely to the natives, being, to a certain extent, under the protection of the Roman soldiery. They were not afraid, for they felt they were protected, as they had been all along, by guardians superior to any earthly protectors.

The captain having now a new vessel, and nearing the coast where he could get a cargo of the ore they sought after so much, proposed to load his vessel with tin and sail for home: so

that, notwithstanding all the troubles he and his crew had experienced, and the long time they had been on their voyage, it might yet prove to be a prosperous one for them. Accordingly, having gained the district where the ore could be obtained, the captain, with what he had saved from the wreck of his former vessel, and what he had subsequently got by exchange at various places on the coast, bartered his goods for a cargo of the ore from the natives who worked the mines in that place. While getting his vessel loaded, my two friends and the young man Cofna, got in contact with the natives, and laid before them the doctrines of the New Faith. And although the time they were on shore was but short, they succeeded in planting seed that, as they afterwards came to know, produced much fruit. In speaking to the people of the future, they told them that although they suffered much by the tyranny of the Romans, the day would come when their country would become one of the greatest on earth, and all the world would yet look up to her as a nation beyond all others.

The captain having got his vessel loaded, made sail, our friends sailing with him from the Islands—and made for the Continent. They were determined to pursue, if possible, a course, not exactly the same as that they had first taken, but a route more inland, so as to do some good work among the wild tribes in that direction.

After sailing for three days in very fair weather, the wind came on to blow stiffly against them, sending them back on the same course they had been driven when first they made for your island; but instead of blowing them on your coast, they were driven still more to the north, where they made a landing on one of a number of small islands. They found a few people on the island, who mostly lived by fishing and plunder; there they remained for a short time. Before leaving, they engaged one of the natives as a pilot to steer them across to the Continent. On landing, our three friends bade the captain farewell. He told them that he would carry home the news to all those who were interested in them—giving an account of their mission in the various places they had touched at on your island; and if it was God's will, they would all meet again—but that was not to be.

So our friends travelled homewards, and it being about the fall of the year, frost and snow set in. At length they reached a small

village, where they resolved to remain for the winter. They found the people kind and good, though not so high or advanced in civilization as those they met with in your island. They followed the Druid faith, and being a small community, they had but one priest, who acted like a father among them. He was an old man, and when he found that there were two of the visitors priests, though of a different religion, he made them welcome among his people. For a long time he tried to persuade them into his faith, but they rejected it. Our friends knowing much about that faith, they could talk with him on Druidism, and of the early days of that system, sympathising with him on some points to a certain extent. But they soon converted him to their way of thinking, and the ways they followed after; and so formed, in a short time, the first church in that part of the country.

[In reply to a remark as to the extraordinary vigour displayed by Thort—who, as stated by Hafed, was 105 years old when his youngest son was born, and 112 years when he led on the tribes against the Romans—Hafed said :—“Our old friend, from youth on to old age, had carefully abstained from all that tended to hurt his bodily frame. Even as a gladiator, he had steadily resisted the solicitations of his patrons and fellow-fighters in the Arena to partake of the wine-cup.”]

Twenty-sixth Sitting.

October 29th, 1884.

In Northern Europe—Semi-barbarians—Snowed-up—Dog Sledges—Jesus the Revealer of God—The People Inquiring—Clothed in Skins—Visit other Tribes—Summer—Their Work not Local, but General—Preparing the Way—Tribes Wild and Warlike—Priests encourage Robbery—A Witch Converted—Cofna Concerned—He Prays for Help—Disputings—The Chief and His Daughter—Cofna to the Rescue—His Guardian Spirit—Cofna sets out in Trance—Unseen Warriors—The Prison Door burst in—Fiery Swords—The Chains fall off—The Sea-shore—Ship manned by Spirits—Deliverance—Captives Free.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night, we told you how our three friends had landed once more on the Continent. They essayed to travel by land, as much as possible, on their way homewards. Now they were far to the North, and the summer was far advanced

and winter coming on. The people among whom they had landed, were a wild race, not much removed from savagery ; but at the same time they had that which you may term worship ; for they worshipped certain deities in all sincerity. They seemed to look on our friends with suspicion ; and that might be accounted for, inasmuch as they were entirely strange the one to the other. The people were not exactly savage, but somewhat advanced in civilisation. Like several other wild peoples or tribes, they had got a certain amount of education by coming in contact with the Romans ; and along with that they had imbibed some knowledge of Rome's idolatrous system of religion ; but they had never heard of the Living and True God—the Great Spirit, the Father of all.

At first our friends, when they gathered them together, tried to convince them that they were of a never-dying race. They had no idea of a hereafter. They thought that if they lived to a certain age, that was all they had to expect—that when they reached old age their children would supply them with the necessities and comforts of life. Our friends had come in contact with many people of various races, but this people they found to be among the lowest. A little of Druidism existed among them, but very little, having been visited at times by Druid priests. Our friends began to speak to them of the world hereafter—of the Great and Mighty Spirit, the Maker and Sustainer of all things, and tried to show that all things had come from Him, and that He gave to them that existence which they possessed on earth ; that they were the offspring of the Great Father and Creator—the Great Spirit Himself, by whom they (my friends) were commissioned to make known His character to all mankind.

The winter came on, and as the snow fell on every side, they found themselves snowed-up. Although they had passed through cold regions before, they had never experienced cold to the same extent. They were compelled to take shelter in huts, which were not much better than great holes dug in the ground, over which were laid rough wood and grass, and then covered with clay. But they found that the people were kind to them, and ready to do anything to make them comfortable. Thus confined as they were, they embraced every opportunity for imparting instruction to the poor natives among whom they had been cast. Our friends were afraid to venture much outside, on account of the

severe cold ; but the natives were not so deterred, for people who heard of them, came from great distances to listen to their instruction. Their mode of travelling was something new to my friends : they were drawn on sledges, by dogs, over the frozen snow ; and some were drawn by deer. For some time they could hardly tell night from day. The people meanwhile came to them, anxiously inquiring after the new faith ; and our friends gradually opened up the truths to the simple-minded people. As I have already said, they had told them of the Great Spirit—the Father of all mankind, and of His love for His children ; and now they showed these poor people that the Great God had sent His Messengers to Earth, so that mankind—His children—might be led to know Him, and to worship Him only—to abandon the worship of senseless gods, the creation of their own brains and hands. Then they told them of the coming of the Highest Messenger of all those who had gone before him—Jesus of Nazareth—the Revealer—the Best Representative of the Great God to men. Our friends, day by day, and night by night, told their listening hearers the story of our Prince—of his great work in Judea—his precious words, and of his good works among his own people ; how he had been spurned by the priests, and how at length, they had taken away his life by nailing him—the holy and sinless one—to a tree. Often as they spoke of the indignity and ill-treatment endured by Jesus, the people assembled became wroth, declaring that, “When the sun came out from his hiding place, they would go forth and chastise the people who had so ill-used this Divine One.” Many other indignant expressions were made by these simple people. They even said—“Had this Good One been sent to us, we would not have ill-treated him ; we would have gloried in him !” Others questioned “Why the Great God did not keep Jesus alive, so that he might continue his good work ?” But my friends pointed out to them that Jesus was a man, in all things like themselves ; that he was the Chosen One of the Highest to show not only what God was, but to get men to act as he acted towards their Father ; that all should follow him, even unto death itself ; that if they were compelled to give up life rather than truth and right, they should not hesitate to do so, and so doing they would be following the example Jesus had set them. Then they showed the poor people though Jesus had

died on the tree, he still lived—that he was the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and was as desirous as ever to do them good, and that he was still working to bring mankind home to God.

As these people had no priest—only some old men who officiated in that capacity—there was no opposition manifested to the teachings of our friends. The people had no written language. Things were handed down from generation to generation. The wonderful things that had happened among them—all such wonders were laid down to their gods.

After they had been with them all the winter, and spring coming on again and the sun showing his face, they began to go out. During their stay the good people had been very careful of them, having prepared clothing for them from the skins of animals. They felt somewhat amused as they looked on each other thus costumed—so different from their former clothing; while our young friend Cofna used to say they looked very like the animals themselves.

When the Spring was well advanced, and the sun shone for two or three hours every day, the hospitable people carried our friends away to see other tribes; but that which they had been teaching during the Winter had been, in some measure, carried on before them; so that there were gatherings from a distance to see and hear those strange men who had told of such wonderful things. I cannot say that the kind people, among whom they had been sojourning, followed out all that had been laid down to them by my friends, yet their teachings had had the effect of giving them truer ideas of the Great Spirit: how that He watched over them and cared for them; they now also believed in a world of spirits—that, after they passed away from the body, they would live in that spirit world—that there they would still be men and women, the same as they were in the body, though without material bodies; that the Great God would, according to the good things done by them on earth, reward them for so doing, and place them in a beautiful paradise, far surpassing anything it was possible for them to imagine (for these poor people had never seen anything of the grandeur of earth, or they might think that some of the sunnier spots of earth might be this paradise of God): that any one who did evil would be punished, even as a father would chastise his own children when they disobeyed.

Such were the ideas held by the people after our friends had been some time among them.

When summer came on, our friends prepared to set out on their journey, but had some difficulty in getting away from these simple people, who looked on them as beings sent from the Great Spirit in disguise, and wished that they should continue to stay with them. Our friends showed them it could not be: that they were but men like themselves, who, having been taught by the messengers from the Great Spirit, had been sent on a mission to all men on the face of the earth—that having completed their work there, they were bound to turn their faces homewards, or elsewhere, if God so willed it, but, should they never reach their own country, they were willing to lay down their lives on behalf of the work their beloved Master Jesus had given them to do. They said also that some of them were getting old and somewhat worn out in body, and had a desire to join their brethren who had already gone to that place prepared for them, and there take part in the same work, but under new conditions, to assist their brethren in the world of spirits—that is, to rescue them from the low state into which they had fallen.

Our friends were the more reconciled to parting with this simple tribe, inasmuch as during the Winter they had spent some time in the instruction of the children, teaching them how to read and write in their own language. Having thus taught them, they wrote out a number of lessons, in the form of epistles, which might be read to the grown-up members of the tribe. They also, with the same end in view, taught the children how to speak on the subjects treated of in these letter-lessons.

We heard afterwards that these youths fulfilled their mission to the uttermost. They had formed themselves into a band, and had travelled, spreading themselves over a great part of the North, and teaching and preaching among the different tribes. Thus was the good work, begun by our friends, carried on after they had left. My friends say they reaped more joy from that visit than from some others in more advantageous circumstances, where the people had gone back.

So, at length, they set out with their faces homewards. These people carried them over a great part of their way toward a great inland sea. On coming to that sea they travelled on its borders

till they came to the great ocean, and here they met in with different races of people. These were more warlike, and had their priests and services to their gods. They built ships and sailed forth on the waters, and had become a terror to the more peaceful inhabitants of the coast and the isles, and, indeed, to some others on the Continent. My friends tried to get an opening, but were driven away from several of the villages. Often their lives were threatened, and they made many marvellous escapes. They found them to be wild and warlike. Yet there were some who were kind—the old especially. When they came on a village, where the young were away on a raiding expedition, they could speak to the aged. They had a great deal to contend with from the priests, who as usual were jealous, fearing that any new doctrines introduced might injure their calling, never dreaming that they themselves might become converted to the new faith our friends taught, and even become ministers of it.

When at a village on the borders of the inland sea they had a meeting composed of old people and young. The latter had been away on one of their raiding voyages. Our friends had been trying to convert the people, but they never had been able to convince them that when they deprived their neighbours of their goods it was a great sin against the gods they worshipped; for when they saw the kind of people they had to deal with my friends used a great deal of the people's own religious ideas in their arguments so as to bring them round to what they believed to be right. The priests had always shown them that the more of spoil they acquired from their neighbours the better—the gods had sanctioned it. But as I have said, the old people were more open to the truth than were the younger portion of the community, who were under the influence of the priests, and stirred up these young men against my friends. They were robbers, stealing from the weak, who were unable to oppose them. They had also brought home many slaves they had captured.

An old female had been the only convert to our friends' teachings. She lived in a hut by herself, and was looked on as one who had dealings with the unseen world, and could call up the departed chiefs of the different tribes. Before going on any of their expeditions, they came to her to inquire whether they should go, and if they would be victorious;—whatever she said

they were guided by it. She was our friends' only convert, and she took them into her hut, which was but poorly furnished, yet they were glad of it. She had acquired so powerful an influence over the people that they dared not cross her threshold, for if they ventured, she said they would assuredly incur the vengeance of the spirits of the great chiefs. Our friends told her that, wherever they had been, travelling in strange lands and among strange peoples, there were always unseen ones present to watch over them. She said—"It is true; for I have seen your friends around you ready to protect you; but since you have come amongst us, your bright ones of the unseen world came and told me I was to protect you. I saw also those around with whom I had dealings, and they gnashed their teeth at me, and would have torn me limb from limb. Those bright ones I had never seen till you came here, I see now. Yours are good and mine are evil. I know the evil are stronger than the good who are here. If these evil ones overcome, I cannot protect you, and the good cannot. Evil will be put in the minds of the people, and they will rush on us, and will either cast you into the sea, or sacrifice you to their gods."

While seated with the old woman, my friends, Anah, Zitha, and Cofna, had their attention directed to a procession passing by. It was composed of the young warriors returning with the captives and spoil they had taken in their raid.

Now, our young friend, Cofna, when he looked on the captives as they passed by, saw one there among them whom he knew well. He seemed as if overcome, and quickly turned to go inside. There he sat down and shed tears. My two friends, with the old woman, went in again, and there they found Cofna rocking himself to and fro, while the tears rushed from his eyes, and he sobbed aloud. On seeing this, he was asked what ailed him. He said—"Ah! my good friends, did you not see one among them?" He hung his head, looking neither to the right or left, and appeared as if unable to speak, and, after a little continued—"Did you not observe his white beard? He who said to me, when I parted from him, he would give me his daughter? Oh! has she been slain? or is she among those captives?" When he ceased crying, he rose straight on his feet, and, standing erect, he lifted his eyes to Heaven—so fervently, his whole soul seemed to

rise up unto the heaven of heavens, as if he would have taken the Throne of the Eternal by storm, and pled with Him to give him strength, and make him the means of liberating those who had been torn from their homes and made slaves by cruel enemies—asking God to grant him an army to accomplish the work.

“You,” said Zitha, “pray heaven for an army to do battle with these people? They are not our enemies—we have no enemies.”

“They are our enemies,” cried Cofna. “They would slay us. They have torn and rent homes we have made happy. They have brought mourning and woe on a God-fearing tribe. They have desolated the homes of the happy, rending the hearts of fathers and mothers, whose sons and daughters they have carried into bondage. Are these men not our enemies? But, it may be, they have slain many who have gone from our sight on earth to that heaven of bliss.”

“Yes,” said our old friend, Anah, “they may have gone there; they may be torn away from the bodily eye, and be here hovering around us. They might be able to protect us. It may be the Great Spirit meant that such should be. We know that the people of this tribe, which hath suffered sorely, worship the true God, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, our Lord, may this suffering not be purposed by God, to scatter them among other peoples—to make His name known among those who know Him not?”

Our young friend, Cofna, however, could not see things in that light. He had travelled far, and been a faithful and useful servant of his beloved Master; yet was he looking forward to the day when he would again visit that tribe, settle among them, and become their minister. He had no desire to travel, or go further.

You will remember that our friend, Cofna, was on a former occasion requested by the chief of a tribe, who dwelt at some distance from the place where our friends were staying, to come and cure his daughter, who had been struck down by fever. The Chief, who had heard of the wonderful healing powers possessed by Cofna, and perceiving that the wise men of his own tribe could do nothing to raise up the maiden, sent off a pressing message to Cofna to help him in his sore trouble. There were some doubts entertained by my two friends whether he should go, but these were set aside by him, and he went off, and the daughter

of the Chief was cured. This was the maiden, on whose account he had felt so much uneasiness, and this was the war-like Chief of that day—now a peace-loving man, who had embraced the Nazarene faith, and was now a prisoner along with some of his people.

My two friends endeavoured to calm Cofna down, and, after a while, he said—“My beloved friends, I raise my head to Heaven, from whence cometh my help, and this night, I know, I shall see those poor captives. I will converse with them, even though they should be surrounded by the whole tribe.”

Here the old woman exclaimed—“Young man, young man, you know not what you say. It is almost impossible for you to go among my people. They would slay you before you could reach the captives. It is in that large prison-house in the centre of the village where they keep them—where they watch over them so strictly. By to-morrow, some of them will be sacrificed to their gods for the victory they have given them over their enemies.”

“Fear not for me,” said Cofna ; “you have kindly sheltered us, and given us food. The Great Spirit will pour down blessings on your head for your kindness. Those good and happy angels who are ever hovering around us, and been visitants of thy hut, will still protect thee from danger. Therefore, fear thou not. Now, let me tell you—the sun shall this night sink behind the Western hills, and before he again tints the tops of yon Eastern mountains, those captives shall be free, or I will be in the World of Spirits.”

She said—“Some evil demons must be whispering into your ear. I know my people better than you do.”

“I care not what your people are,” said Cofna. “There are those around and about me who know that I will walk unseen through the midst of their guards; be they ever so watchful; they will sleep. My Guardian tells me this, and that he will stand by me.”

So it was seen by them that it was of no use to oppose him further. My two friends knew well that when Cofna consulted that Guardian Spirit, and got his consent to any project, it was of no use for those in the body trying to prevent him. That Spirit had always done what he said he would do for him.

The tribe had great rejoicings when their young warriors returned. No doubt many of their warriors had been left behind.

Those who did return had some to welcome them whom they loved, and, consequently, there was a great amount of festivity and rejoicing.

As darkness began to creep over the earth, our young friend appeared to become more restless. He seemed like one demented, talking not to his friends beside him but to some others unseen. As night drew on, he became more restless, till, all at once, he turned to Anah and Zitha, and the aged woman, and taking my two brethren by their hands, he shook them, saying—"Meet me at the midnight hour by the water-side. Meet me there ; I rejoice to say that it will be a happy meeting." Then he addressed himself to the old female, and said,—“Wilt thou go with us, or wilt thou stay? Thy people will be wroth with thee. If you stay, by morning thy spirit will have taken its flight to another world.”

To this she said—"I think the Great Spirit brought you to this place for His own wise ends ; but now I am old and my race is nearly run, and I have no desire to live in this frail body, for I know that when I depart, I will join those bright and happy ones I have seen here. So, if they will, they may slay me : I will be a willing sacrifice for you, my friends. All these priests can do is to drag me forth and place me on their altar.”

Anah and Zitha had their doubts whether Cofna should be allowed to go to the prison ; yet they were sure his guardian had spoken to him, or it might be that some of the evil spirits had represented themselves to him as his guardian, to drag him on to destruction. A little before the midnight hour, Cofna walked calmly forth without arms of defence. His friends looked after him as far as they could see, and by this time all was quiet and silent as the grave. The only sounds heard by them were those of the young man's steps as he trod along the pathway. He walked on till he came to the prison-house. He found it well guarded by armed men who were placed in a ring round it, so close that they were able to touch each other. He walked right up, as he said afterwards ; he found he was not alone. After leaving the hut he had gone into one of those trances he had so often been in before. He said he found himself surrounded by the spirits of many of those belonging to the tribe, a portion of which were then captives in this prison. These spirit-warriors

appeared to him as wielding swords of fire, which, when flashed before the eyes of the guards, seemed to strike them to the ground. He walked right up to the building, when the door burst open, and fell to the ground. It seemed as if torn from its fastenings—rent asunder. He could hear, in the trance condition he was in; and he could also see the chains falling from the captives when he entered. The place seemed illumined by a bright light; and the poor prisoners, when they saw their own and their fellow-captives' bonds falling from them, wondered and were astonished, while the expectation of freedom gladdened every countenance. And there too was the Old Chief of the tribe, who had never raised his head since his capture. He had never been chained before. He appeared broken-down—his proud nature was crushed. Had it been in his younger days, they would never have managed to put chains on him and carry him captive from his home. He would have made slaves of them, not they of him. Such were the thoughts passing through the old man's mind as Cofna entered the prison, which had been so wonderfully thrown open. He looked up, and there Cofna stood before him! He was amazed! and at once embraced our young friend, falling on his neck and weeping. The warm tears of the Old Chief falling on the neck of the young man was the means of bringing him out of his trance.

“Art thou come to set us at liberty? I feel those irons have been burning into my flesh, into my very soul!” He had just said these words, when he again cried out—“They are falling off!” The chains dropped to the ground, and he walked.

Our friend Cofna having come to himself, began to be uneasy, and finding that the Chief's daughter was not among the captives, he said—“Let us go; we must fly from this place.” The moment he came into the open air, he again fell into the trance condition. Then he saw the guardian spirits, each protecting his man, while he at the head of the unbound captives, marched on, and passing the old woman's hut, went towards the water-side.

While Cofna was away, my two friends were warned to go to the shore. On arriving there they found a vessel lying ready for their embarkation. The vessel was manned, but the men seemed of a different race. All got on board, and they made off. They had not sailed far when the cry got up in the village, “Our

prisoners are gone!" and when the people looked over the waters, they saw the vessel, but it was so brightly illuminated that they became terror-stricken, and would not pursue them.

After our friends got out to sea, the strange seamen vanished. The Old Chief was much affected by all the wondrous things he had witnessed, and when Cofna sat down with him, and showed him how the liberation of the captives had been effected, the old man wept like a child. When Cofna asked after this one and that one whom he had known, the Old Chief shook his head, and said he could not tell. During the day, at the request of the old man, our friends assembled the liberated ones and gave them an account of their travels—where they had been, and what they had been doing.

Our friends did not wish to accompany the Chief and his people to their home. They, therefore, put them ashore at a convenient place, and bade them God-speed, while they themselves sailed a little further on, and then landed.

Twenty-seventh Sitting.

November 12th, 1884.

Journey Homewards—Pathless Forests—Evangelising on the Way—Healing the Sick—Results of Former Instruction—Union of Tribes—A Hearty Welcome—The Old Chief and His Daughter—Clairvoyance—Cofna gets a Wife—The Marriage Jaunt—Meeting with Cofna's Father—The Churches and Schools—Cofna's Epistles—His Mother in Spirit-form—Death-bed of the Old Governor—His Dying Words to Cofna and His Wife—Cofna Refuses the Succession—Return of Cofna and His Wife to Her Father—Churches and Schools Established—Cofna Refuses the Crown—Installed as Bishop—Anah and Zitha Depart for Persia—Arrested at Rome—Trial and Condemnation—Crucifixion—Their Welcome Home.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—When I last addressed you, my three friends had landed, and began their journey homeward across the country. They found difficulties in their way; without roads, they had to pass through pathless forests. To travel at night was dangerous, on account of wild animals and of men as savage as the wild beasts. I have more to do with my three friends than with those they had left in the vessel, who, after they landed, would have a good way to travel on land before reaching their homes.

My friends had a harder task before them. The country over

which they had to travel was not only covered with dense forests, but in many places it was marshy, and the inhabitants thin and scattered. The people were kind to them. Though differing in their religious ideas from my friends, they believed in one God ; and for a time my brethren were sorely puzzled how this came to be. They found that a number of the doctrines they themselves had taught were held by the people, but they had never heard of Jesus of Nazareth. On making further inquiry, they found that some of them had been carried into Rome as slaves, but had made their escape after being there for some time. These, while in Rome, had fallen in with Jewish Nazarenes and had imbibed their doctrines, and among others the practice of circumcision. On returning from Rome, they had tried hard to get the simple people to adopt this Jewish rite, but they would not stand it.

My friends spoke of the Nazarene, but they were told to hold their tongues and not speak of him ; their friends, they said, had been at Rome and had tried to introduce circumcision, but they would not have it. My friends told them that they also were strongly against the practice. But it was Jesus of Nazareth as the Great Guide of Mankind they desired to bring before them—not as a god, but as a man, who was full of the Divine Spirit— a Leader and Guide to all who desired to walk in the ways of righteousness and truth—those who yearned to enter into the Paradise of the good and true in the World of Spirits.

My friends found them to be simple, honest people, tillers of the ground, having also great herds of cattle. They stayed a short time in that quarter ; yet they left the impress of their footsteps wherever they went.

Anah and Zitha were beginning to experience, in this homeward journey, barriers to progress — one great hindrance was that they were getting old and stiff, and not so able now to put up with the inconveniences of the life they were leading. I have little doubt, had I been in the earth-body and with them in their labours, I would have been in the same infirm condition, and worse. But while they were thus toiling on Earth, I was enjoying the felicity of Heaven, which they also were soon to enjoy, and I to give them their welcome there.

My friends hurried on towards the district of country where they had been before. They made direct across the country, and

passed through many strange parts. They, in their journey, had a varied experience—at times repulsed; at other times made welcome; and again got every consideration, and even looked at, in their old and venerable appearance, as beings more than human—they being ever ready to put forth their hands and heal the sick, and give words of comfort to those in trouble.

In those days many of the tribes were warlike and often fighting with each other, and our friends took every opportunity to lay before them the doctrines of the Master—peace, brotherly-love, and all which was calculated to unite these wild tribes into one grand and powerful nation, so as to be able to withstand any invading host that sought to conquer them, and carry them away into bondage.

They began to draw nigh to a city—a place they had been at before. But now they saw there was a great difference in the surroundings of the city. Much wood had been cleared from the soil, while a great amount of work was going on in the way of agriculture. My friends, as they looked on the change, could not help rejoicing, while Anah said—“If we had done no other good work in this world than that, it might have been something laid to our account by our Prince, when we are ushered into his kingdom above; for here is a people who, when we first saw them, were barbarous and savage, caring little for tilling the ground, and as little for keeping flocks and herds—and now, what a different sight meets the eye! Formerly they lived on the plunder of their neighbours—now they live on the fruit of their own labour.”

As they drew near, it seemed to my friends to be a city rising in size. They observed gates, though the walls were still unfinished; but the people were hard at work building a strong wall encompassing the city, so as to repel invaders if they came on them again. Besides, they had received such a lesson when they were last carried away by an invading host, that they were now training men in the warlike tactics of the enemies that had come down on them. Formerly they had given up all idea of war, having thrown aside their weapons, and sought to live at peace with all men; but now they had come to see that it was necessary to be ready to drive off those who came against them—that it was right to resort to arms in defence of their homes and families, even to bloodshed.

My friends were seen by the sentinels as they approached, leaning heavily on their staves. As if by magic spell the gates of the city were lined by the people coming out to meet them. Cofna thought that they were a band of virgins coming forth to dance; while my aged brethren were doubtful—had they gone back to their old Druidic worship, and these maidens about to dance round the misletoe? No, they were coming forth with music and dancing to welcome our three friends to their city. They were still wondering what it all meant when a number of strong men came on them, and raising the wearied travellers to their shoulders, bore them off triumphantly to the city. Passing through the gateway, there stood the Old Chief, who welcomed them in. He looked on them with gratitude and love as his best friends. They had but to cast their eyes round about to see what they had done for him and his people! At his side stood a young maiden, who seemed afraid to look up, keeping her eyes on the ground. But on Cofna being let down from the shoulders of his stalwart bearers, he at once sprang towards her, and taking her by both hands, he gazed earnestly into her face. Well he remembered that face, and she had not forgotten him, as was seen in her smiling countenance, which seemed like that of one of Heaven's cherubs bringing down a blessing to mankind.

My young friend said—"You remember my words when we parted—that I would yet return to you, and here I am."

"I saw you and your friends on the way hither," she said. "I had been looking for you, day after day, until my eyes became opened to behold the unseen—till my vision was opened to the World of Spirits! Then could I see thy surroundings and the dangers that beset thee, while I was blest to perceive that over thee continually hovered those heavenly guardians, who, when evil threatened to fall on thee, seemed so watchful over thee that I even envied the office of the holy ones—for O how I longed to take their place—to watch over thee as they watched! That beautiful lady seems to smile on you so kindly now, and throws her arms round your neck."

He began to question her closely as to the appearance of this one she saw.

"Ida was her name," she said; and then he knew it was his mother.

He had seen his guardians in vision, but had never seen his mother. He wondered, and began to question regarding his father and other friends he had left behind, but could get no information.

They were now taken to the Chief's house, a stately building of stone. They were ushered into a grand hall. There they found a great feast prepared for them, and for the great men of the city and the lesser chiefs of the surrounding district, who were all now united as one nation. All came to this feast.

Before taking their place at the well-spread boards, they were led to another chamber, where there was water for washing their feet, etc. They were then taken back to the hall. Each chief as he passed bent his knee. On seeing this, my friends objected to such homage, as they were but men like themselves. "We look on you (was the response) not as Divine beings, but as men worthy of all honour, being Divinely appointed to go about doing good. The Romans swept over our country, and carried many of our people into slavery. Now, we think we are in such a condition that we are able to hold our own against them. They may call us barbarous, or savage, but we look on ourselves as equal to them. We are now fortifying this city against the assaults of the Romans or others, and also raising a standing army of warriors, ever ready to drive back the invader. From Greece and elsewhere, we have artificers in brass, iron, wood, and stone. It is now our desire to carry on trade with other nations. The Jew has found his way amongst us, and he is a worker in gold and silver, and an exchanger in the same metals. We are becoming a great people, but let us not be proud. We seek to follow after Jesus of Nazareth; and the Great Father above, may He approve of us in our struggles to obtain freedom from oppression, and at death, may we be called hence to the Mansions of Heaven! We look on you as our benefactors—the originators of the good that has been done. Therefore, we bend the knee to you."

My friends, in reply, said that they wished for no such homage. They themselves bent not the knee even to the Great God of Heaven, but stood up straight before Him. "No man is greater than his fellow-men. One may have received greater talents than another; but he who has received the one talent is, in the eyes of the Great and Mighty Spirit, as much esteemed as he who has

received from Him ten talents—both are commanded to put these talents to use for the good of all mankind.”

Great were the feasting and rejoicings ; but amidst it all, my young friend Cofna was much troubled about his mother—not that she had entered into the heavenly life ; but he had long cherished the idea that he would see her once more before being separated by death. She had ever been kind to him according to the light she had ; and now he knew that she must have had more light before she left the earth. He wished much to know how his old father was, and though the distance was great, he was determined to set out on a long journey to see the old man, from whom he had been so long separated. As my two brethren needed rest for a time, they could remain where they were till he returned.

But when the maiden, the daughter of the Chief (who was now looked on as a King, being the chosen head of the united tribes) heard of my young friend's determination, she became very despondent, and left the feast. Her father loved her as the apple of his eye, and seeing her so distressed he went after her and brought her back. He then, before the assembled chiefs and great men, said—“It has long been the custom among us that no chief's daughter be given in marriage without the consent of the whole tribe. I wish to give my daughter to this young man in marriage. I look on him as one superior to many—one who was the means of restoring her to health and who also restored me to life and liberty, and I vowed that when I got back to my own people I would give him my beloved daughter in marriage.” The assembly of chiefs signified their consent.

My young friend Cofna was astonished, and yet glad in heart, on hearing these words of the Chief. He did not expect that her father would treat him so graciously in giving over to him one whom he had so long loved.—He rose and went forward to the Chief and said—“Before I knew of this your kind purpose, I had firmly resolved to go and see my father before he quitted the earth. Will you therefore wait till I come back—for I will assuredly come back?”

The Chief at once said—“No, my friend : my daughter wishes, as your wife, to go with you to see your father also : for he will also be her father when she is joined to you.”

My two friends officiated in the ceremony of uniting the young folks as man and wife in the Christian fashion, which had never been performed in the tribe before. The night was spent in feasting, and every one appeared to be happy. There was no intoxicating drink used on such occasions: the principal beverages were the juice of the grape as it was squeezed into the cup, and pure water. While in a barbarous state, this people had used intoxicating liquors; but in their new code of laws which had been adopted, the making of such drinks was strictly prohibited. A body of men had been chosen to put these laws in force, and these also sat as a court for the settlement of disputes which might take place among the inhabitants of the city and districts around.

The following morning, shortly after the rising of the sun, my young friend was up and preparing for his journey, and his young wife was also making ready to set out with him. Her father selected twelve stalwart warriors to escort and watch over them.

After some very hard travelling, they arrived at his father's place, and found the old Chief in good health, but his mother had gone to the World of Spirits.

The old man felt great joy in seeing his son, and when Cofna presented his wife, his father wept as he tenderly embraced her. He then asked for my two brethren, and Cofna told him how and where he had left them, and that he had bound himself to return to them. But he found that he had to remain longer than he had intended. He found things had gone on well. His father had acted as judge. The Church was regularly attended. They had a pastor and schools, rearing up young pastors and missionaries to go forth into the country districts to propagate the doctrines expounded to them. In many places, however, their missionaries received great opposition, and some of them had not the power such as the first missionaries had, and so they, on that account, laboured under greater difficulties.

My two old friends, while Cofna was absent from them, began to weary—wishing to get home; yet they did not care to leave till he returned. They knew, now that he was united with this tribe, he was likely to settle among them; and they wished that one who had so much of the gift of the Spirit to be with the people, who seemed so desirous to rise to the level of civilised nations,

such as Greece and Rome. In fact, all began to weary for the return of my young friend. The distance was great, and as it was no easy thing to get messages conveyed in those days, they had just to wait patiently his return.

Cofna had stayed during the winter with his father—his wife suffering much from the cold and inclement weather, and they wished to return in the spring of the year; but he found his father very unwilling to part with him, always saying—“stay a little longer,—a little longer!” The old man’s sight was growing dim before Cofna’s arrival, and he had begun to put his house in order before he should be called on to leave the world. He kept up a good deal of the old customs, and in accordance with these, he desired earnestly that Cofna should stay and take his place as ruler over the people. To this proposal Cofna could not agree. He said to his father—“I promised to return to my friends, and I dare not do otherwise, but faithfully fulfil what I promised. But why ask me to take your place? I have gone out to the world as the servant of my Master, to proclaim his truth to mankind—and, father, I love the work which the Lord Jesus has given me to do. I have a younger brother, let him take the place.” This younger brother also wished him to accept his father’s offer, but Cofna would not consent.

His wife was a great favourite amongst the people. She was a seer and could tell them such wondrous things. She assisted him also when he went out to heal the sick. All the people wished him to remain with them, for they greatly loved him. From the time he had come amongst them the morning of every day had been set apart for worship, and their business matters were laid aside. And there he was, in the assembly of the worshippers, to speak to them—to tell them of the journeys which he and my two brethren had made, of the people they had been amongst, and the good they had been enabled to do in many distant places.

He had been about twelve months with his people when he began to write out a number of epistles, or addresses, to be read to the people when he was not there to speak to them; or, as he said—“I am now about to leave you, but you will still have in these epistles something to speak to you in my stead.”

One day while busy writing out these addresses, his young wife,

who was sitting beside him, said—"Our mother now stands beside you. She wishes to speak to you." He looked up, and for the first time saw her in spirit form. She appeared so real that he rose up to clasp her in his embrace, but his hands seemed to go through her form. She beckoned to him not to touch her. His wife went into the trance condition, and then the form appeared to gather strength, and fell on his neck, and they kissed each other. She said,—“I ask you not to leave your father for a time—it is but for a short time, for he is now about to be taken away from the earth. He has an impression that it will not be long. That is why he wishes you to stay. I was often with thee in thy work as a servant and messenger of Jesus of Nazareth,—drawn to thee partly by thyself, and partly by her who is now thy wife, and I have loved her. I could have loved her if I had been still on earth. Be ever loving to her, my son, as thy father was to me. She will prove a great helpmeet to thee in the good work thou hast undertaken. Thy name will be handed down from generation to generation. I must leave thee now ; but I will always be nigh thee, and by and by thy father will be with me, too.”

Having thus spoken, the spirit-form faded from my young friend's vision, and his wife came out of trance. Things went on for some weeks longer, till one morning, even before the sun had risen, his father called him to his bedside and said,—“My son, I am going to leave the world, but not to leave thee. A little ago, while I slept, I saw thy mother.” (They had never told him they had seen her.) “She told me she had been watching over you, and was the means of bringing you so quickly here. It is well that you came for I have been blessed during the short time thou hast been with us. O, how it has gladdened my old eyes to look on thy face ! When thou didst go forth on thy mission I thought my eyes looked on thee for the last time. But, thanks to the Great Spirit who hath, through so many dangers, brought thee back to bless the heart of an old man ! I remember the night when thy dear mother left the earth, how she longed to behold thy face. Had it been permitted, she would have been content ; but she had this consolation, when she went to the land beyond the river, that she would see thee again, and she has seen thee ; and now, my dear son, she told me she was but

waiting to take me over the river—she would be my guide herself. How sweet is it, my son, to know all this—that even when we have thrown off the mortal body we can, in a more enduring body, rejoin those loved ones with whom we have lived on earth, and whom we will continue to love throughout eternal ages ! What a dismal, dark future would have been mine but for the light brought to me and mine by those noble servants of the Lord Jesus, who were brought to us as slaves, but who came to give us freedom ! If thou wilt, my son—(I look on thy young wife as an angel of light)—bring her to my side.” She had been waiting, and came forth and knelt by the couch of the old man, who, barely observing the kneeling form beside him, rubbed his dim eyes ; then he placed his arms round her neck and fervently kissed her, and also kissed his son. “ My son and daughter, may the blessing of an old man rest upon you while you live on the earth ! May you become fruitful on earth ! May you have such pleasure as I have had ! And when either of you come to cast off the mortal body, and ascend to the mansions above, may the one be ready to welcome the other to eternal bliss ! May the Great and Mighty Spirit be ever nigh to you, my son and daughter ! May the sweet lessons of Jesus, our brother and friend, be ever remembered by you, so that you may be ready to lend a helping hand to the poor and distressed—not forgetting that even the giving of a cup of cold water will not go unrewarded when you come to appear before the Great Judge—Jesus of Nazareth ! He must have been a saintly soul, my dear children. His glorious truths have done so much for me and mine ! My age is nigh one hundred years, and could I live another hundred, I would willingly go forth and devote that time to the preaching of his truths among my fellowmen. Call all my household before me, so that I may bless them all.”

The household were called ; and they stood round the couch of their old master while he gave them his blessing, admonishing them to stand fast in the faith of Jesus. He then said, “ I come—I come ! ” and closing his eyes, he slept the sleep of death—not of the spirit but of the body. My young friend looked up and saw his mother smiling over those assembled, and they (father and mother) both went away together.

When things were put in order, and the body of the Old Chief

was entombed in the rock, where lay the remains of his fathers, Cofna and his wife set forth on their journey towards home. They were escorted over the mountain path towards the sea-shore, where they found a vessel, by which a goodly portion of the journey was accomplished, and after some toilsome travelling they reached home, and were made welcome by the people.

Shortly after Cofna's return, my two brethren wished to go on their way towards Persia, desiring to lay their bones in their native soil. They knew the time was drawing nigh when they would leave the earth. They wished to cross to Italy—to Rome, and thence to Palestine and Persia. They bade farewell to all who had been so kind and friendly to them. Had they not been so bent on seeing their native land once more, they felt they could well have remained and laid their bones in the soil of the place they had come to love so much. They saw their young friend installed as bishop of a church. There were a few churches, each village having a small church and its own pastor, and my young friend was made the bishop over all these smaller churches. A school for the education of children and for the training of young men as ministers, was instituted.

The people wished Cofna to take the place of the Old Chief who was their chosen King—who was not so able as he had once been in the managing of affairs, which had grown so much heavier to manage. They therefore besought him to take the position of King. The Old Chief also pressed on him to take it. But Cofna would not have it. He thought the office of Bishop of all the Churches far greater than that of King.

My two brethren then bade him farewell; but his love was so great for them that he quite broke down. He had laid in his lot with this people, but could not bear to part with those two old men to whom he owed so much, and yet he was conscious of the great good that might still be accomplished in this field of labour. My two brethren, however, admonished him on no account to leave the people who had so very quickly advanced in civilisation. Gradually he became reconciled to the course they set before him.

My two friends Anah and Zitha were escorted all the way to the sea. They set out for Rome—not knowing that a persecution was going on against the Nazarenes; and before they had been

one day on Roman soil, they were arrested, and carried as prisoners to Rome. They wondered why they should have been so treated; but one had seen them who knew them—he was a Persian—and he had given information that they went about propagating the doctrines of the Nazarene, stirring up tribes to defend themselves, and turn away from Rome; that they were greater than the ordinary class of Nazarenes; and so my two friends were at once, being priests, brought up before a court and tried on the charges made. They were condemned to be crucified. They had heard that Paul had been crucified and many others cast to the beasts in the Arena; they knew also that I had been cast to the beasts; and now when they heard the sentence of crucifixion pronounced on them, they glorified God that they were to leave the earth as Jesus their Lord had left it.

My two old friends were crucified along with a great many more. Their sufferings were not prolonged; they seemed so much worn out by time and travel, that when but a short time on the cross, their spirits took their flight. We were ready to welcome them both—and gave them such a welcome! Here they met with many who had left the Earth from Persia. Indeed, they hardly realised the parting from Earth-life and the entrance into Spirit-life. Cofna's father and mother were there also, ready to give them welcome—though they hung back as if afraid to come among us. They looked on us as greater than they were. My two friends hardly knew of their departure. If they had not met myself and others who they knew had actually left the earth, they would not have known where they were. And now we are all here together! We thank you for your attention. Amen!

UNRECORDED INCIDENTS

IN THE

LIFE OF JESUS.

UNRECORDED

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

First Sitting.

November 1st, 1882.

Hafed Specifies his Future Communications—Life of Jesus—Introductory—The Advent—The Wretched State of Judea.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—I promised to address you on three different subjects—a continuation of the History of Persia ; the continuation of the Narrative of my two Brethren, Anah and Zitha ; and to give you a few hitherto unrecorded incidents in the Earth-life of Jesus, our Prince. These will be taken up consecutively, night after night, beginning with the latter subject—Incidents in the Earth-life of Jesus.

You may take what I say to-night as a kind of introduction. For a good part of what I will lay before you, I will be indebted to others who attended on Jesus, our Prince, while he ministered to his countrymen.

I look on his ministry as beginning at his birth. He was heralded into the world by those of the Spirit-world, who taught us what we knew not before—who showed to us the wonders of the Most High—even from the Flame came forth the command to take our way to the birth-place of the infant Prince, carrying with us those gifted treasures* destined for presentation to the Child of Promise—treasures far beyond what we, though rich, were able to bestow on Him who came as the very Gem from the Most High to the sons of men—the Leading and Guiding Star to the Nations of Earth ; that they, by following him, step by

* See *Hafed Prince of Persia*, page 97.

step, might at last obtain the glorious crown which awaits every servant of the Divine Spirit.

We who served him on the Earth were ushered into this world of glory and light, heralded by ten thousand trumpets. We left the world and came to this happy place, not having to go through the dark regions of Hades to undergo punishment; for we had passed through the world, following him closely.

This same Prince—for I always look on him as second to none—entered the world below in the form of man—as a little child—and when we, the appointed Three, travelled from our Grove to Bethlehem, and there found him whom we sought for, we bent the knee before him, and I blessed the mighty God of Heaven and Earth who had granted our eyes to light on the Blessed Child—permitted us to look on that little one in swaddling bands, whom we in Persia had long looked forward to as the one who would redeem our own nation. We, though mistaken in that, were not jealous of the Hebrews. He could not have come among any people in greater need of him. They had sunk to the lowest grade. Step by step had these Hebrews fallen from their high position. Notwithstanding all that had been done for them by God, they forsook him; they had become as robbers banded together. There is some honour among thieves and robbers, but there was none among them. It was dangerous to walk the streets of holy Jerusalem because of the assassin's knife. That was the state of Judea when the Promised One appeared. These Jews looked on the nations around them as barbarians; but some of these stood higher in morality, and in the service of God, than they, though serving him under another name. The God of the Flame was the same Jehovah these Hebrews worshipped. What was the difference between them and us? Did our altars ever cease to burn before the shrine of the Most High? Was the Flame ever allowed to dwindle down and go out? These Jews kept it burning, and so did we. We saw what (symbolically), would purify all things—what gives light and heat to the whole creation—the Sun, in his chariot of fire, as he ran his daily course from East to West; and we saw in that emblem the Great Jehovah.

The Star of Bethlehem came to shed his Light, not on Judea only, but on the whole world. And when we three came and bent

the knee before him, I did not think I was to become a teacher of his doctrines. I was not fit to be so—I whose hands were stained with the blood of my fellowmen—who had taken away life, the gift of the Most High, sending men into the World of Spirits before their time; and yet I was permitted to proclaim the doctrines of Jesus my Lord and Prince.

The greater part of the Earth-life of Jesus you have already got, that which came under my own notice, and under that of Hermes. Putting both together, you will find a true account of that which took place in early childhood. When I do begin, I will begin at his early ministry, and look at the line he sprang from. I may differ a little from what is already given by Hebrew writers. I will give what I know myself, and that which I receive from others here; for I have little doubt that I will have to inquire of his disciples here. Hermes knows a great deal of his early ministry, and saw much that took place, which has been omitted in that which has been written of him already. I may thus be able to fill in that which has been left out as we go along. What I have said now is merely introductory.*

Second Sitting.

November 8th, 1882.

Degraded State of the Jews—John the Baptist—Description of his Character—Stern Denunciations—Becomes Fashionable to hear him—Jesus Baptised—"Bright as the face of an Angel"—Jesus subject to Temptation—An Early Disciple of Jesus—"Laying on of Hands"—A Cripple Cured—The Jewish Synagogue—Jesus in the Synagogue—He expounds the Scriptures—Melchizedek's Gift—The Sent of God—Neither Jew nor Gentile—All alike loved by God—The Rabbi displeased—The People impressed—Healing the Sick—Scribes and Pharisees Question—"I am the Way, I am the Light."

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—Last night, I merely alluded to what I had already given you concerning the life on earth of Jesus our Prince. To-night, I will begin at that time when he went on what you term his public ministry, or when he first went out among his own countrymen.

The first part of his life he had spent not among his own people, but in travelling with me seeking for experience and knowledge of peoples and countries.

* See various passages in *Hermes*.

I have no doubt many will object to what I would say in regard to him ; but I think no one has more true reverence for Jesus than I have, I having been so much with him, and witnessed the wonderful works he did while with me. After leaving me, he remained some time with his parents in Nazareth ; and there he set about preparing himself for that mission he had been so long looking forward to—to lead his own people into the paths of righteousness and truth—the people that had been so highly favoured by the Most High. But this nation, who had received so many communications from the Spirit-world, was at this time the most wicked on the face of the earth, deeply sunk in iniquity, far beneath the surrounding nations. Those they looked on as Gentiles or barbarians were far better than they. Rapine, murder, and crime of every kind raged among them.

Such was the field that lay before him who came to save his people from their sins—a barren wilderness, in which there was neither light nor heat : yet the small spark was about to be blown into a great fire that would purge the atmosphere of its impurity, superstition, and wickedness.

One had gone before him, and had done his part in preparing the way. I speak now of John the Baptist, who was nearly related to Jesus. I had never seen John, though I had often heard of him. He was looked on in his youth as eccentric—a little deranged—or, what some would call, a religious fanatic. This was the opinion of the Masters of Israel, who said he was one not worth heeding. But there were many who did heed him, as he went on denouncing these masters and rulers, as men who had strayed from the paths of righteousness—hypocrites, who set the laws of Moses at naught themselves, and yet laid them down for the people to observe with scrupulous care.

When John came to manhood, he attracted more attention. Many of the people gathered around him, and some became his fast friends and followers. Those who had formerly thought him not worth heeding, now began to take some interest in him, yet they could not stand the rebukes he launched at them. The priests might be seen slinking into a corner, or stopping their ears, while he poured forth his scathing denunciations of their unholy deeds. He did not pretend to do any wonderful works ; but he had the gift of speech, and was bold and thorough-going ; always

spiritually-minded, and, with all his roughness, he showed love for those who flocked around him, as he pointed the way to the heavenly Paradise above.

John was not one who cared for fine things in either food or raiment, but was content with the simplest fare. Sitting by the waters of the Jordan, the pure water of life was poured down on him by the ministering Spirits that always attended on him.

People from the city, and from all the country round about, came to hear him, and it soon came to be fashionable amongst the higher class to go and listen to John. The result of this was, in many cases, confession of wickedness, and, thereafter, baptism. They went down with him into Jordan, where he poured water on them—signifying the cleansing of evil from those who had confessed.

It was at this time that Jesus went out on his mission; and one day, when John was baptising at the Jordan, Jesus went up to him as a stranger, for they had not met for a long time, Jesus having been so long away from the country. But as soon as John set his eyes on Jesus, he proclaimed him as the Messiah of the Hebrews, and the Desire of all the Nations. He also went down into the water to be baptised by John, not that he required to do so, but as an example to those who were about him.

I, not being an eye-witness of those things, I require to speak to you from the lips of another, who was an eye-witness, one named *James*, who had for some time been a follower of John. He says the day that Jesus came down to the waters of the Jordan, where John, his master, stood, no one would have known him from any of those who formed the crowd there assembled. But the moment John set his eyes on him, he pronounced him to be the One that was to come—He who was to reign in the hearts of the people as a Spiritual King—not as a temporal one. Many of the Jews and great men wondered at John's saying, and some of them who professed to follow him, rebuked John for this saying.

I am told by James that on coming up out of the water, the countenance of Jesus was changed, and he became bright, as if light were thrown out from him—that his face became as the face of an angel—as the Hebrews expressed it. I can understand that, for I have seen the same thing take place more than once when he was in my company. When we were travelling in the

desert towards India—when the caravan was famishing for want of water—I knew he would take water from the ground to supply both animals and men; and then it was I saw this luminous appearance encircling him.

John said he saw the power of the Most High descending on him. He was now entering on a great mission among his fellow-men, and he needed all spiritual help in that mission to sustain him, for he was just like ourselves; though sent by the Great Spirit, he might have fallen before the temptations of the world. How many men have come forth to do great things, but, giving heed to the flattery of others, have become proud and vain, and fallen lower than ever they had risen!

If ever the Great and Mighty One threw temptation in the way of an individual, it was thrown in the way of Jesus. He required all the aid that Heaven could give him. Had he accepted the people's offer, he might have sat on the throne of his forefathers, and given judgment as King to the Hebrew nation. But no; he knew that his mission was not that of an earthly monarch.

He who gives me this information, says he could not withstand the temptation of following him. "Though," he says, "it still lay in my heart to remain with John my master—having heard so many good things come from his lips—yet my heart yearned to follow this Jesus. As I debated the question with myself, John said to me—'Go you with him. I will be but a short time now on the earth. He will tell thee that which thou must teach to others. Follow him, for I am not worthy to touch the ground whereon he treads.'" He (James) says that when John had said this, he took his hand and put it to his lips and kissed it, saying—"Master, since thou hast said Go, I will go; but yet I could wish to stay with thee." John said—"Better for thee to go than to stay with me and sin, for thy heart would be with him."

This James followed Jesus, but was not one of the Twelve, but one of those sent out by him to places round about. He was not always in the company of Jesus, but was coming and going. He was a dresser of leather; and travelling from place to place in the pursuit of his trade—buying skins, dressing them, and selling them—he was able to support himself, and at the same time to do the work the Master called him to do. When Hermes was with them, he went forth with him on the way toward Egypt.

Jesus (he says) seemed to know what had passed, for when he went up to him, he said—"Why hast thou left thy master to follow me?"

"He has given me liberty to go; and I trust thou wilt not cast me off. If but to wash thy feet, I am ready."

Jesus said—"I have other work for thee to do. Look around and see thy brothers and sisters, how far they have strayed from the Great Father. Bring back these wandering sheep. Had not our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob flocks and herds? Did they not succour them from the wolves. Where are the shepherds of Israel now? What are they doing? They are eating and drinking, while ravenous beasts are ready to tear the flock to pieces. Go forth therefore as my shepherd, and bring back the wandering sheep."

"Then," he says, "Jesus laid his hands on my head, and my whole body became agitated, and I felt as if filled with a strange influence I had never experienced before; and after doing this, he said to me—'Lay thy hands on the sick, and they shall be healed.'"

As they went up on their way from the banks of the river, "We came (says James) upon a poor maimed woman, begging for alms. Now, John taught us, when we saw the poor in need, or the beggar by the wayside, not to pass them by, but to drop even our very last piece of money into their hands: whether they asked for it or not, to withhold it not. 'If they are unworthy, it is the worse for them; but it will stand to the credit of the giver at the great judgment bar.' So, as we were passing, I put my hand in my pouch, and was about to drop the coin into the outstretched hand of the poor woman, when Jesus said, 'Hold thy hand; thou wilt require thy money. I will give her that for which she will bless us all, and give thanks to the Great God.' He then put forth his hand, and taking the woman gently by her hand, he said, 'Sister, arise.' She sprang up, and stood on those legs which had never before borne her body, and cried, 'Glory be to God, who hath sent such a prophet to us!' Those who knew her said that she had sat there for years, getting alms from people who passed on their way to bathe in the waters of Jordan. Having gained the use of her limbs, the woman ran off towards the village before Jesus and his company, telling every one of the

wonderful thing that had been done to her. The Rabbi came out to the door of the synagogue, and knowing the woman, he asked how she had been cured. She said—pointing to Jesus, who was approaching—‘There, master, is the man who did this to me. He said he would give me what was better than silver or gold, and at a word he made me whole, so that now, as you see, I can walk and run, and I praise the God of Heaven for it.’”

On Jesus coming forward to the synagogue, he was invited to enter. He went in, and walked right up to the altar, on which the sacred books lay, and unrolling the scrolls, he read to the people from them, expounding the various passages in such a way that the people said they had never heard it done so well before.

He then addressed them, showing how they looked on themselves as a special people, chosen of God from among the nations of the earth, and had been the receivers of many blessings; and for all that the Great God had done for them, they had returned wickedness. He went back to their father Abraham’s time, when he fed his flocks on the plains of Mamre—of their fathers Isaac and Jacob—of Joseph and their sojourn in Egypt—of Moses and their deliverance from bondage—of their wanderings in the desert, and their entrance into the land promised to Abraham.

I may here mention, as you may not be aware of it, that the Hebrews had a special right to the land they took possession of, because, after Abraham had become strong and powerful, and had helped the King of Salem in his wars against some of the Canaanites, and Salem being the principal part of the land, Melchisedek made it over, by bond, as a gift to the descendants of the Patriarch. So that the Hebrews cannot be said to have stolen the land. They had a right to it because of this gift of Melchisedek; besides, part of it was bought by Jacob, and another part was not connected with the land of Canaan. This arrangement between Abraham and Melchisedek is known in our Persian history; for such transactions were never done in secret. Other nations had to be brought forward as witnesses to the deed; and Abraham accordingly had his witnesses from Media. This is how I know of the transaction taking place between the Patriarch and the King of Salem.

Jesus in the course of his address referred to the forbearance and goodness the Great Father had shown to them from their

foundation as a nation to the time when he now spoke to them. He commented on the characters of their kings or rulers, and how, notwithstanding all that had been done for them, they had forsaken truth and righteousness, and had indulged in all manner of sin. While sanctimoniously refusing to eat or drink with individuals of Gentile nations, for fear of defilement, they had carried on business with them—not only taking their goods in traffic, but taking their daughters in marriage. He spoke to them from the writings of the prophets, concerning the promised Messiah, and in such a way as they could not doubt for a moment he spoke of himself. He came among them, he said, as one sent by God, to break down the barriers which separated Gentile from Jew; that those who accepted his teachings would see that all nations were equal before God the Father—that each individual of the race was loved by God. “Doth not the rain falling from the heavens,” he said, “fall on all, alike on good and bad? Doth not the wicked man’s vineyard prosper as well as the good man’s? Doth not the sun shine in the heavens on the one as well as the other? He sends his gifts to all. The Great Father and Lord of all loves all alike. But he that is wicked is called to-day from his wickedness. Return to the Great Father and serve Him as your fathers Isaac and Jacob served Him. Love your brother as you love yourself. He that sinneth, let him cast aside his sins, and he shall be forgiven. Repent of past wickedness, and ye shall be received into the fold of God.”

Thus spoke Jesus to the people in the synagogue, but his words displeased the Rabbi. If he could, he would have cast him out, but he dared not, for fear of the people, who were so astonished at the words of Jesus that they could not stir from the spot.

The woman, who had been made whole, meanwhile cried out,—“Hosanna! He but puts forth his finger, and raises the lame one from the ground!”

They brought many sick persons to him and he cured them, and great joy was expressed by the people.

But some of the Scribes and Pharisees, who had come to listen to him, began to question his sayings, and one asked,—“Who gave thee authority to speak thus?” Jesus answered,—“Master, I ask not authority from thee to speak in this way:

I have the authority of Him who whispereth to me the words I speak to you. If thou art righteous thou wilt know thyself; but, in thy bosom, thou knowest thou art wicked. I am the way, and I am the light. I go hence, and ye shall not know whence I go. Many will seek for me and will not find me, and some who sought not for me shall find me."

The woman who was cured became afterwards one of the most devoted servants of the Master, and before he left that village many of the people became his disciples.

Third Sitting.

December 13th, 1882.

The Sea of Galilee—"To the Poor the Gospel is Preached"—The Chosen of God—"Not many wise men"—Jacob's Ladder—Salvator Mundi—The New Commandment—The Fishermen—Their Status in Judea—"Follow Me!"—Attractive Power—Among the People—Help of the Spirits—Judea torn by Factions—Wonderful Works—Mean Accusers—Attempts to Entrap—A Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Lad Cured—Jesus speaks to the People—Sensations of the Cured One—The Cure ascribed to Satan.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—The last time I spoke to you on the life of Jesus, it was regarding what took place when he left the banks of the Jordan, and entered one of the synagogues. After that a great many people began to follow after him. He went down to the borders of the Sea of Galilee, and there he spoke to the people who flocked from great distances to hear him. There had been no great one risen in Israel for a long time; and great was the desire to hear him.

This was about the first time he had spoken in public in his own country; he had done so repeatedly in other countries when with myself. But he had now started on that mission on which he had been sent, and which he knew he must fulfil. He sought not for the rich and the dwellers in palaces, but for the poor and needy ones amongst his own people. It was from the humblest class he chose those who would become his helpers in the great and good work which lay before him—these were the men whom he desired to instruct. By such men as his disciples, he would show to the learned Masters of Israel, that when truth was to be taught, the Great Father went not to the priests and learned doctors of the law for His Messengers, but to the poor fishermen

of the lake. These, having faith in God, unlearned though they were, would become the leaders of men. Pharisee and Sadducee alike stood aloof; while the Scribes were continually on the alert to entrap him. But what cared he for all they could do against him? They had all along kept the minds of the people in bondage; and he came to break the bonds which had held them down so long—to show that the laws of Moses had served their day, and now the time had come when they must be guided by the principles of Love. A greater than Moses had come—one different in every respect. His heart was larger—ah, how much more loving! He knew their wants. He could read their thoughts. He saw what they were seeking after—thirsting for. They were seeking for liberty of conscience that they might serve the Father—no longer to be bound in their service by the stringent laws of Moses, so strictly enforced by the priestcraft of Judea. The Great Messenger chose those humble men, whom he knew would fall in with his way of thinking—who would gladly accept his teachings. Had he called on the doctors of the law to become his disciples, would they have obeyed the call? They would have argued, and tried to show him he was wrong. They might have been heard saying, “Where was this man taught? He was not taught by us. Cast him out! If he has such knowledge and power, it must be from a wrong source. Let us stand true to the law of Moses. If this man be allowed to go to the people with such doctrines it will soon upheave the present system. Let us beware of him!”

No, these learned men would not for a moment have listened to him. They would not put him in the place of Moses. Yet he was greater than the great Hebrew lawgiver. He came to lay down the great law of Love—the law of the Great Father—to his brethren on the earth—not to his own countrymen only, but to mankind. When men met together in olden times, in simplicity and truth, then had they divine inspiration from the Holy Spirits. When Jacob lay down, with a stone for his pillow, he dreamed of the ladder which reached from the earth to the very gate of heaven, and the holy ones ascending and descending on it. But Jacob might have seen more than one gate to the realms of the blessed, and also a continual ascent and descent from and to the various places of the habitable earth. These Jewish doctors

looked on that dream of their forefather as something confined to their nation alone. They saw not that it was significant of the free intercourse which should always exist between mankind and those who have passed away from the earth. Those who worshipped in the field and in the groves had communion with the holy ones—men and women who had been once dwellers on the earth. Jacob may have taken them for superhuman beings, but we know that the angels he saw in his dream or vision, had bodies like that which he himself had.

Jesus has now attained to manhood. He has come to shed blessings on every human being, whether Jew, Gentile, or barbarian, for they were all alike to him. He makes no distinction between Jew, Persian, or Egyptian—all were his brethren. These Jews were taught to have no dealings with Gentiles—not even to eat with them—to wash their very hands when they happened to touch the clothes of a Gentile. But all this bigoted exclusiveness Jesus came to abolish. He came to add one command to those they had received through Moses—that was, that man should love his neighbour man, even as he loved himself—should love every one, even his enemies. (You will find that very question put to me to-night as to the saying of Jesus—“He who taketh thy coat from thee, let him have thy cloak also,” is just an illustration of the working of this great commandment of Love. Those who raise their hand or tongue against you—who steal from you, give them that love: for these, evil though their deeds be, are still your brethren—offspring of the same Father as yourself. It matters not what evil has been done to you, remember to keep the law of love; try and restore all such to the paths of virtue.)

As I have said, Jesus went down by the Sea or Lake of Galilee. There he found fishermen plying their occupation on the waters, catching the finny tribe, so as to make a living. Fishermen, as a class, were looked down upon as the lowest in the land. The merchant was something; the doctor of the law was something; the tradesman or artificer was something; but the poor fisherman was accounted nothing but the offscourings of society. Yet, if they had but thought of it, the fisherman is one who risks his life on the unstable waters to bring food to the tables of the people. Why should they have placed him lower than the tiller of the soil who, without risk, brings his grain to market for food?—fish is as

much the food of man as grain. But the toilers on the waters were looked down upon. Yet, it was to these men my Prince turned when he wanted disciples.

"Come with me," said Jesus, "and I will make you fishers of men." He meant them to learn of him, and go out to the world, carrying the great truths he was proclaiming among his own countrymen, and give them to all men. They at once threw up their occupation and followed him, not knowing exactly the power by which they were drawn. They were drawn to him by a power which none on earth could withstand. That power was possessed by him—a power possessed by some great ones who were before him, though not to the same great extent. Many have had that magnetic power, and many have it still, but know not well how to use it in its proper place. Jesus had this gift in full, and knew how to use it. He was taught how to do so, not by men in the body, but by those out of the body.

About this time, when nigh to Galilee, a great many gathered round him to hear what he had to say. Many were led by curiosity; others considered him a lunatic. He never said he had great power, or that he was anything more than themselves. He never said he was anything but a brother man, inasmuch as they had all sprung from the same Father—the Great Father of Spirits. Yet, doubtless, he was conscious of that power within him. He had the assistance of disembodied spirits. In our wanderings, he was visited by these holy ones. I knew they were ever nigh to him. The very thought arising in his mind, drew them to him. When there was any good to be done, he was ready to put forth his hand, but never without asking his Father's help. I never knew him do anything in his own name, but always in the name of the Great Father. Even when he knew not what he said, he asked for the blessing of God on all his works.

Among those who flocked to see him were many of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Some of these laughed and jeered at his sayings; while others listened to him, and believed on him. He seemed to give them new life. When he went forth on his ministry, the nation was sunk low indeed. The holy city, Jerusalem, that was esteemed by the Jews as the very gate of heaven, had also sunk very low. It had become the abode of robbers and murderers; its temple, a den of thieves, and of all evil. One

party fought against another as to which should have the power. The whole land was racked and torn to pieces, while sin and vice reigned supreme in every corner.

It was in Galilee that Jesus did many of his wonderful works in the way of curing the sick, making the lame to walk, opening the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf. He tarried by the sea-shore, and many came and joined themselves to him, acknowledging him as Master, so that they might follow him wherever he went, drinking in the words that fell from his mouth; many were the words of truth and wisdom he uttered in the hearing of both the great and the humble.

There were some who came for the purpose of finding something in his words whereby to accuse him. They tried hard, but found it impossible. He was always ready with his answer, and that answer a right one. Even the learned doctors could get no advantage over him. He was ready at once, if they put a question regarding the law, to answer them according to the law; if they asked him what was best for the land, and how it ought to be ruled, he answered in such a way that they could not find fault: they were unable to entrap him. Had they had knowledge of him whom they sought to find fault with, they would not have so acted. But they knew not that he could read their very thoughts before they gave utterance to them in words, and was therefore prepared for them.

At that time there was brought to him a poor lad, who was deaf, and being deaf was dumb; and he was also blind. The only sounds that came from him were like those that would come from some of the lower animals. Being destitute of hearing, sight, and speech, the poor lad was in a worse condition than an animal. Yet when they brought the poor helpless sufferer into the presence of Jesus, he who hardly knew anything except by the sense of touch, evidently felt he was coming nigh to some great being who could benefit him, for the power which issued from Jesus affected him in such a way that he held out both his hands in the right direction towards the Master, as if imploring his help. He who informs me, says—"From the time he began his ministry, he was often seen to shed tears, but never to smile. He seemed to carry sadness within him, but that only added to the beauty of his countenance, as it often does in the case of both men and women.

When the Master saw the lad in that sad state, tears of pity rolled down his cheeks. There were some close by, and those that had been following him for some time, who thought that all this must have come upon the lad through the sins of his parents. But Jesus turned to them and said—‘Why should he suffer for the sins of others?—Why should he bear the punishment others should have borne?—but that the Great God might be glorified this day in him. Ye who stand around, hear and see and praise the Father for all his gifts, but this poor lad knows nothing of the bounties of the Great Father. He hath not seen those beautiful fields, nor cool refreshing waters, which you now see. He feels the sweet scent of the grass which grows by the wayside, and of the flowers that deck the bank, but he cannot tell what it is or whence it comes. He may feel the flower, but he has not seen the beauty in it. Yet hath God seen something in this poor helpless one; and he whom you look on as in a worse plight than the dumb animal, shall be made to see and hear and praise the Father—that which many of you have not done. Ye have had the use of your senses from your birth until now; you see the little wave that breaks on the pebbly shore—you hear the little bird praising the Creator for its daily food—you see all nature around you by day, and when darkness comes on, you see the sparkling heavens above—but he cannot see, he cannot hear; and yet you have enjoyed these gifts your life long, and have not thanked the Great Giver for one of them. The earth is made beautiful for you to enjoy yourselves on it, yet you have never thanked God for it.’

“While Jesus spoke these words to those who stood around, he made his hands pass gently over the lad’s head, and as this was done, he gradually began to move, and then he sprang from his knees to his feet. Jesus thereupon breathed on his face, when his eyes seemed to receive the light and lustre of an eye that can perceive objects. For a time he seemed bewildered—his ears heard and his eyes saw—and he appeared amazed at these new sensations; but at length his soul seemed to be stirred within him, and, with uplifted hands to Heaven, his lips seemed to mutter thanks to God for what had been done. He would have fallen down at the feet of the Prince, but he would not permit him. He must worship God only; and that young man did

afterwards learn to thank God in words that came from a grateful soul."

The people who stood around were amazed at the wonderful work they had seen done, and many from that day became his true followers ; but there were also some who went away and said that he did this work by the power of the evil one. (At times it matters not what we do—when we speak to you, many say it is the devil. If Satan fight against his own kingdom, what is to become of it? But this Satan, this evil one, is but a creation of the fancy, manufactured in the brain of mortals.)

I will leave you there to-night.

Fourth Sitting.

January 17th, 1883.

"Astonished at his words"—Turbulent Jews—From Galilee to Jerusalem—His Power Growing—Jealousy of the Priests—"Son of a Carpenter!"—Orthodox Judaism—Malice of the Upper Class—Laws of Moses and Laws of Nature—A Case of Leprosy—"The Man is Mad!"—A Follower of Jesus—Gift of Healing—The Twelve—Spirit of the Flame—Satan the Healer!—The Temptation—Origin of the Devil—The Temptation Explained—Flesh *v.* Spirit—The Priests Plotting—Previous Existence yet to be Revealed.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—When I last spoke to you, Jesus was in Galilee, where much had been done amongst the people by his wonderful words and works. The people were astonished at his words, while the priests and masters in Israel were wroth against him, because he did not uphold the things which they said and did, and which they maintained to be the laws Moses had given to their fathers. But Jesus was not afraid of what men could say or do. He knew he had a mission to fulfil on earth—not a work from man, but from the Great Spirit. He had begun that work, and he must end it. Neither was he afraid to lift up his voice against the prevailing sins of the people. He was as a traveller amid thorns and briars, torn and hindered on his way. The wickedness in Judea was great, and he might say it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the judgment than for the Jews. There were divisions amongst them. Party had risen against party ; and one had led people into the wilderness, crying—We are of Heaven : listen to us ! and tried to stir up

rebellion against the Romans, as oppressors — forgetting that they were oppressing themselves more than did the Romans. If they had but listened to the voice of Jesus, they might have been raised to their former greatness.

From Galilee to Jerusalem, he was followed by a number of people who heard him by the way ; and when he arrived, many who had heard of him and of his wonderful works, gathered about him. At that time there was a considerable stir amongst the people, who went hither and thither to hear something new—one might have looked on them as awakening to something better, by the words of Jesus, who never opened his mouth without giving consolation to the poor in spirit. He brought heaven within the grasp of those that listened to the words of wisdom and truth that fell from his lips, and was ever ready to lay his hands on those who were afflicted by disease, or to impart strength to the limbs of the maimed and lame.

The people cried, "We have not seen such a prophet in Israel!" —but the doctors and priests reproved them. They saw that if he got leave to go on in the way he was going, soon all the people would follow him. Therefore, they began to put their heads together how to crush him. So has it ever been in the world. Those who have tried to benefit their fellow-men, have always had to encounter opposition to the truths they advanced.

Had Jesus sprung from among the great, these doctors and priests would have gathered about him and listened to his sayings —but who was this son of a carpenter, that they should give ear to him ! And yet some of them did listen to him. Afraid, however, to make themselves known, they came by stealth to him, even in the night time, to discuss with him on things belonging to the hereafter. Many in his day did not believe in a hereafter ; yet, strange to say, they believed in a God, who made all things, who had created them in His own image ; and, though part and parcel of Himself, when they died they were for ever gone. Whether their idea was that the spirit-part drifted away into that from whence it came, or into space, and all spirit got mixed up, I know not. I know, when I myself was in Judea, I met with some of these men, and discussed that doctrine with them. They professed to be watched over by the Great Jehovah, yet they had no idea of a hereafter ! They looked on the Persians, who

believed in the Great Spirit and the World of Spirits, as heathens and idolaters !

On reaching Jerusalem, he went, as was his wont, to the temple, and going to the place where lay the books of the Prophets, he would take a scroll and read the prophecies pertaining to themselves, which foreshadowed what would come on them if they would not give heed to the words spoken by the prophet from God ; and also showed that he himself had come as predicted, and warned them to flee from the wrath that was sure to come on them if they did not return, like strayed sheep, to the fold. His words were received by many, and the number of his followers increased. But this only added to the hatred manifested to him in the breasts of the higher classes. Oh, it was sad to witness the malice and scowling scorn on the faces of these men when they passed by the meek and lowly Nazarene, as one beneath their notice ! And even when some of these learned doctors did deign to mingle with the people around him, it was but to put puzzling questions to him. They little knew the One whom they despised. They knew not that he had been schooled in the best of all schools—that he had acquired that which Jerusalem, with all its store of learning, could not have given him. He had not been educated in the laws of Moses, like these men ; but he had studied the laws of Nature, as he saw them in man and the lower creations, while travelling in other lands. He knew more of the manners and customs of the great nations of the world than these learned doctors of Judea. And when they tried to shut his mouth, they were confounded by the wisdom which he showed in his replies to their crafty questions. They had no idea that he was surrounded by protectors, who were able to give him such answers as were required. The very prophets and sages in whose writings they believed, were beside him in spirit to explain their own writings through him.

One day when he was in the midst of his work of healing the diseased, and the people around were much excited on beholding the good that was done to the lame and blind and deaf, a poor female came and threw herself at his feet, crying, "Master, master, have pity on thy handmaiden !" He looked down on her compassionately, and asked what she would have of him—but knowing at the same time what she would say, in the same breath he con-

tinued—"I know that thy husband hath been driven out into the wilderness." Leprosy had been seen on him, and he had been driven out.

She cried,—“Master, have pity on me and my poor little children!” He looked down on her, and said—“I have pity on thee, daughter, arise; as thou hast faith, I can heal thy husband. Go thou out into the wilderness and call him home again. His leprosy is, even now, stayed—the scales are now falling away, and his skin will become pure. Go, bring him home.”

When some of the chief priests heard what he said, they cried out, “The man is mad! Who ever heard of such a thing? Will he call back leprosy? It will spread, and thousands will have to be driven forth in the same way. He ought to accept what God hath done, and not complain; for what God hath ordered must be.”

“Go, woman, go,” said Jesus; “thy husband now cometh to meet thee, and thou wilt receive him at the gates of the city.”

Before he left the temple, the woman and her husband laid themselves at his feet, and would have worshipped him.

“Son and daughter, arise; give the honour to the Great Spirit, to whom honour is due; for I am also a man—thy brother; we are all children of the Great Father.”

The man who was thus cured of leprosy, became one of his followers. Though not one of those who were his immediate disciples, he followed the Master well. He went out to other cities and told what Jesus had done and said; and when in after years he was called to lay down his life for the truth, for he was one of the first who suffered, he joyfully submitted to death, remembering what Jesus had done for him.

It was through the teachings of Jesus that this man, and many others, became useful in spreading abroad the truths they had received. He also gave many of them power to heal the sick and to do other wonderful works; for, having an eye that could discern the latent power in individuals, he laid his hands on such to develop that power, and thereby enable them to have intercourse with the Spirit-world. A great many of those who had been cured of disease by him became his most faithful workers.

He had chosen Twelve as his more immediate followers, and who afterwards became the great teachers in other lands. But

even the Twelve, while he was with them, had not the same power as those who had been sent forth to proclaim the truth. It was not till after he left them, that they received the Spirit which descended on them like tongues of fire. The Spirit of the Flame came down on them. None believed in that more than we Persians. It was not fire such as we burned on our altars, but the magnetic link binding together body and spirit.

Notwithstanding that the Master bade the man and his wife to give the glory to God, and forbade them to do homage to him for that which had been done, the opposers of the truth, not daring to lay hands on him, said that the cure had been done, not by the power of God, but by the power of the Evil One. Some even said that Satan, or Beelzebub, had come up and was walking the earth to deceive people. They had deceived themselves and others long enough, and no evil one was required to walk the earth and deceive men.

In some of the records which were left by his disciples, it is said that Satan tempted him for forty days in the wilderness. They had put it in that way, the Jews believing so much in this Satan. Let me here explain. In the early days of the Hebrews—even when they were in the land of Goshen, among the Egyptians, they knew nothing of Satan. It was not till they, in bondage, came in contact with the Babylonians and Persians that they learned of the Great Spirit of Evil. The Persians had different deities, who had their locations in various planets; and one of these was so often thrown into shade, or darkness, it was concluded by the ancient astrologers that it must be the abode of something evil—that it was not properly developed, and therefore it was assigned as the dwelling-place of the Evil One and his legions. This notion had been introduced into our Sacred Writings at a time when the Chaldeans practised idolatry; but when idol-worship was overturned, that which had been inscribed in our sacred records was spiritualised into Satan—the Evil One—the Opposer of Good. Indeed, in my day, the Persians looked on the old notion (which some still clung to) as a myth. The Hebrew captives received it, and they stuck by it. But so blindly prejudiced were these opposers of Jesus, that they failed to see the simple truth, that if this mythical being—so great and powerful for evil, was lending his power for the healing of the sick and the

other wondrous works done for man's good, he was no longer a god of evil, but a source of goodness! But I am wandering from my subject.

It is written that he was led into the wilderness, and was there, for 40 days, tempted of the devil. The temptation is all right: but it is man himself you must look at in this way. He who was so strong, that withstood so much of worldly temptation—might he not yield just a little, and thereby rise to power amongst his countrymen—rise to a kingdom? The laws of Nature were obedient to him; life and death were at his command; during the short time he had been with them, what wonderful power had he displayed; he might show them how they were held down beneath the Roman yoke; how they were held down by self-seeking priests. He could raise them up against all opposing power. With him at their head, to direct and guide them, what might not be done! In time, they might be able to set their feet on even the neck of Rome! A weakness within the man Jesus. He was in the wilderness, and the battle went on—the Flesh against the Spirit. The one suggesting; the other standing up for truth, and protesting. Choose this, and you will be by far the greatest of earthly monarchs, said the Man. The Spirit said, No; remember your kingdom must be an everlasting kingdom. Earthly kingdoms pass away; would you give up your Spiritual kingdom that endureth, and lose your throne in the Heavens? The Spirit prevailed, and Jesus became himself again.

The writers looked on the 40 years in the Wilderness, caused through sin on the part of the Children of Israel, a time of trial—and they make this temptation of Jesus to last for 40 days in the wilderness.

Those who are giving me this narrative mention no definite time, but that he withdrew for some days, and came back again to the Temple. While fasting, he was in a better condition to struggle with temptation—the Spirit had more power over the Flesh.

After this season of temptation, he became more alive to the work before him. He went from place to place, always doing good; yet there was Caiaphas the High Priest, and others, plotting for his destruction. Little did they think that, till the Spirit-world permitted it to be—till they saw that his work was done—

they had no power to touch him. He had no champion to stand by him. It was dangerous for those in high office to acknowledge him. They brought many false accusations against him. Some said he professed to be a god. He spoke the truth when he said he was the Messiah. He was the only Representative of the Divine Spirit then on the earth. He is higher than us, but he takes no credit on that account, for we are all sons of God: yet has he a knowledge of his previous existence in the Spirit-world, far beyond us. We do not know the position we held before; better, perhaps, that we should not. I have often thought of putting that question to him, but it seems to go away. I think the day will come when we will all know. It has often crossed my mind—when all the world comes to acknowledge the Father as the Mighty Spirit of all—when all have been raised from misery to glory and happiness—when all nations shall raise their voice to the Great Jehovah, then shall we know what really we have been before, and the relation in which we stood to God. Even in our Spirit condition, it fades away; yet have I this given to me by Him, or by some High Being, that keeps me from searching into it till it be revealed to us all.

Fifth Sitting.

February 21st, 1883.

The Gospels—Spirit Guides of Jesus—The Great Work—His Sore Trials—His Bitter Enemies—Downcast—"The Joy Set before Him"—The Blind Boy—Great Brotherhood of Love—Another Wonder—A Roman Centurion—Jesus sups with him—Jewish Objections—Jesus Kissed by a Little Child—"As Little Children"—Murmurings—The Centurion in after-life.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—In the books which you call Gospels, there is a good deal of the words and works of Jesus recorded, so I learn from my friend. I know not exactly all that has been put down, but I have no doubt a great deal of that which you have is truth, if it be not all truth. Meanwhile, I wish to give you what is not already given.

At our last meeting, we left Jesus in Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives, over against the city, was one of his favourite places for prayer and quiet meditation; and it was there, too, he often con-

sulted with those of the Spirit-world, especially those who were his immediate Spirit-guides. There were always two or three attending Spirits seen and known by some of those with him. Two of these Spirits had been his guides from childhood upwards. These holy ones upheld him many a time when downcast in spirit; for, from the time he began his public ministry, he seemed to have greatly changed; he appeared to feel as one who was responsible for the redemption of the whole nation. I speak as to how he felt for his brethren of Judea; but his love for all mankind was equally the same. Beginning his great public work in his own country, and knowing well it would end there, he saw that it was necessary to prepare his ministers, whom he would send out into the world, to proclaim the great truths which should bind up in one grand whole all that had been before spoken by the prophets and sages of all nations. He was the key-stone to bind all together. His doctrine was that which combined all the truths that had come from the good, the wise, and the holy, till his own day.

The one who is my informant says,—“He often wrestled on the Mount—wrestling with the temptations of the world. He, like other men, might have fallen; yet, having the fulness of the Spirit, he was able, more than any other man, to battle against temptation. The battle was often sore. When left for a time, meditating in solitude, he could look around and see that his labours did not bring forth what he anticipated they might have done. Those who stood high amongst the people as leaders and teachers, opposed him; and those who ministered in the temple, and he who entered within the holy of holies, were his bitterest enemies. While he reflected on these aspects of his mission, he became downcast in spirit; and, indeed, at this period of his life, seldom was a smile seen on his countenance. It was different when the good and holy ones prevailed, and administered comfort to his soul—lifting him from earth to heaven, and foreshadowing the day when all this labour would issue in glory to God and good to man—the day when once more he would ascend his throne in the Land of Spirits, and smile benignantly, when he saw all the nations of earth gathered to the Father and at peace with Him and with one another.”

Coming down one day from the Mount, he met a poor woman

leading her son who was blind. The moment she saw him, she cried out, "Master, have pity on me!"

He said, "Woman, what wilt thou have of me? Pray to the Father, and all the ill that hath befallen thee shall pass from thee."

"Nay, Master, I am not worthy to lift up my eyes to Heaven, or bend the knee before the Father's throne. But, O Good Master, raise thou thine eyes to Heaven, and place thy hand over the eyes of my child, and give him to see the light of day."

"O woman, great is thy faith! The power is in the Father, not in me; but he heareth me always. May the eyes of thy son be opened!"

The eyes of the boy were immediately opened, and he praised God for the glorious light. He had been born blind, and had never looked on the world so bright and fair: and when he cast his eyes around, he appeared to be lost in wonder and amazement. He seemed led by instinct to recognise his mother, on whom his eyes looked now for the first time. But soon the lad turned to Jesus, and cried, "Lord, Lord, receive me—take me! for thou hast given me new life and light," and forthwith he threw himself at the feet of Jesus; but he bent down and raised him up, saying—"Rise up, young man. The servant is not greater than his master, or he that is sent than He that sendeth him. Thank God, by whose power thine eyes have been opened."

That youth became an ardent follower of Jesus, and went into the world and proclaimed the glory of Jesus his Master, ending his course as a martyr for the truth at Rome.

At the place where this wonderful work was done a great many had been gathered together, and, though it was not the first instance of Jesus restoring sight to the blind, his fame was much spread abroad by what had been done; the people who flocked about him saying—"Never hath such a prophet appeared amongst us! Elijah and Elisha were not greater than this Jesus of Nazareth."

Seeing the disposition of the people around him, he took the opportunity of addressing them. Raising himself on the steps of a stair, for this purpose, he spoke to them in such language as they had never listened to before, beginning with Moses and the Prophets, and coming down through many generations to his own day, showing that all these looked forward to the coming of the

Deliverer, whose birth was heralded by the angels of Heaven, proclaiming peace on earth and good-will towards men. "I may raise up strife in the household—one may rise against another; yet will the time come when all will be united in One Grand Brotherhood of Love—if not on earth, yet in the land which lies beyond—that paradise to which all mankind must go at some time or other. Then will the rule of the Father be established in the hearts of His children."

After speaking for two hours, the people still crowded round him, so that he could not get away; and his immediate attendants seeing this, began to open up the crowd gradually, so as to make way for him; but to their astonishment and that of those who were around, he seemed to be carried out from their midst, as if walking on the air. All who saw it wondered at that which was done; for his feet was not seen to touch the ground.

Jesus was borne away by his Spirit-friends to a place where he would find quietness and solitude—where he would again commune with the holy ones, who were ever ready to help and strengthen him. It was on occasions such as those referred to, when left weakened by the power passing from him, that his Spirit-friends came and strengthened him for the work lying before him.

After a season of communion, he was carried down to the Sea. There he met with the Disciples who had gone before him. While there he met with one—a Roman Centurion—who invited him to his house. This Centurion was a just man; and having got tired of the religious ceremonies of his own people, he desired to become acquainted with the God of the Hebrews. He had heard of Jesus, for his fame had gone over the whole land; and now that he had the opportunity of seeing him, he invited him to his house to sup with him.

Some of the followers of Jesus murmured because he, a Jew, should consent to sup with a Gentile. But Jesus perceiving this, turned on them, and reminded them of what he had taught them, that all men were equal in the sight of the Great Father; and as he had eaten with many of other nations, he was ready to go wherever he could do good.

When he went into the house of the Centurion, he found there assembled, besides his family and servants, several of the officers

of the Roman band. When they sat down to meat, Jesus blessed the food they were about to partake of, and that blessing was one of the finest discourses he ever delivered. In it he showed that all people should be bound together, throwing aside their national peculiarities, for that mankind were the children of the One Great Father.

While they were still sitting round the table, a little child, the daughter of the Centurion, came and threw her arms around the neck of Jesus and kissed his cheek, while he looked lovingly on her and blessed her.

Looking round on those assembled, he said—"Ye must all become as this little one, before ye can enter the kingdom of heaven, the paradise prepared for such by the Great Father."

He then went on to discourse on the innocence and purity of the child, but had not said many words, when some of those present murmured at his sayings, for he had gone against what had been written in the Psalms concerning infants, where they are spoken of as conceived in sin and born in iniquity—and every Jew looked on these Psalms as truth.

When Jesus heard them murmuring at his words, he looked down at the little child, and said—"Look ye at this innocent creature! Which of you can lay anything to her charge? She knows nothing of the iniquity of the world. She came into the world pure and spotless from Him who is the fountain of holiness. The spirit entered into the tiny body, pure as the Great Father is pure. Why then talk of being conceived in sin? She may be hedged in by wickedness at present, but her spirit is pure; and I tell you that this little one shall yet stand before mankind as a great monument of virtue—she will become a blessing to her parents and to mankind."

While he thus spoke, the child's face appeared like that of a glorified angel, while tears of joy flowed down the cheeks of her parents. Then, unable to restrain himself longer, the father cried out,—“Have mercy on me, a sinner, for thou must be a god, or a son of the gods!”

“No, brother,” said Jesus, “I am no god, yet am I a son of the Great Father, and so art thou. We are all his sons and daughters. Cry to Him and He will hear thee. There are always present those who are the servants of the Highest, ever

ready to help the sinner that turneth from his evil ways. Thou must turn away from the things of the world, and let thine eyes be fixed on heavenly things, even as this little one looketh on them—she, with the mind of a child, but thou, with the mind of a man. Look how those bright angelic ones stand round her to protect her! Thy child shall yet show you the way to Heaven.”

Then he went forth to the people, and again he spoke to them. Being invited to stay with the Centurion that night, he and his disciples went back to the house, after speaking to the people. When all were assembled, the Centurion and all his family declared that henceforth they would have no more to do with the deities of Rome, but believe and trust in the true God—serving Him, who though unseen by the bodily eye, was felt in the soul.

This Centurion proved a true friend to the last. Jesus when he went to or passed that place, was always welcomed to his house. Before our Prince was suspended on the tree, the Centurion had left Judea, and gone back to Rome. He felt that day, it is said, that his Master had passed away to Heaven, for he had seen him in vision.

Sixth Sitting.

March 14th, 1883.

Hermes joins the Disciples—Romans Friendly to Jesus—The Yoke of Rome—One Heavier—False Accusations—“He seldom Smiled”—Some Honest Men—“The Desire of all Nations”—Fatherhood and Brotherhood—A Case of Possession—The Evil Ones Rebuked—In the Wilderness—John the Baptist Beheaded—The Second Great One—Jesus Rejected—The Jews Scattered.

(*Controlled by HAFED.*)—It was about this time our friend *Hermes* joined the company of the disciples, and met with our Prince. I need not go over what he has already related to you. He was but a short time with him, when he was sent out on a mission.

At this time Jesus was in Galilee, and as usual doing many wonderful things for the poor and afflicted ones that were brought to him to be cured of their illnesses. But wherever he went, there also were the spies of the High Priest sent to entrap him—watching eagerly for some words they might lay hold of whereby to accuse him. He took care, however, to give cause neither to the Jews nor to the Romans. Many of high authority amongst the Romans it was known were well disposed towards him—some

of the very highest indeed. They came often secretly to him, and all but proclaimed their adherence to him. At that time for any Roman in high place to have done so, he would have been reported to Rome, and deprived of his office. It was said that the High Priest scrupled not to accuse Romans of rank to the Emperor, who were taken back to Rome and deprived of their position, or condemned to fight in the Arena. And so many of these men, anxious to learn of Jesus, found themselves compelled to go to him secretly.

But he was in nowise concerned whether such inquirers were men high in station, or beggars from the wayside. He sought not for earthly power; he sought not the freedom of his countrymen from the yoke of Rome; he sought to deliver them from a heavier yoke, even from the slavery of sin. He had come to these Hebrews as it were in the very nick of time, when they had sunk deep in wickedness, as I have often told you; when assassination was common on the streets of Jerusalem in broad daylight. They had departed from that God whom they looked on as their Father, who had been their Guiding Star through all their wanderings, down to the time I speak of. They held that they were favoured by God above all other nations; that other nations around them worshipped the gods made by their own hands! Such was the idea prevalent amongst them; but these nations whom they despised were at the time far better, far happier, and more godly in their lives than were these Jews. Their Temple was but a house kept up to shelter a band of priestly robbers, a meeting-place for factions, plotting day by day the one against the other.

But in the midst of all this, Jesus continued on his course of love. They accused him of leading the people astray, of attempting to raise rebellion; while he, by word and deed, tried to make them a peace-loving people. He was a humble Essenian. He, unlike many of the Pharisees, made no long prayers, going about among the people with a long and serious face—there was no hypocrisy in him, though he was serious enough. From the time he went on his mission till he was nailed to the tree, he seldom smiled. When he looked abroad and saw the misery and wretchedness that prevailed, he was often seen to shed tears. In his silent, quiet moods, while in retirement, he was often found lamenting over the degraded state of his countrymen.

But there were some honest men amongst those Pharisaic rulers, who boldly stood up, while these vile accusations were made, and defended him. They said they could see no fault in him. But no sooner was one accuser silenced than another would start up, saying—"This man is a blasphemer, for he claims to be the Son of God." Then the High Priest would launch forth his maledictions on the innocent Jesus, for speaking of God as his Father—never thinking for a moment that all men had God for their Father. He thought that the Messiah was to come to them as their special Deliverer—that he would establish them as a nation, and all other nations were to bow the knee to them, and acknowledge them as supreme over all the peoples of the earth. But he was mistaken.

Jesus was indeed the One whose coming had been long looked forward to. He had been looked for by other nations of the earth: Moabites, Persians, and Egyptians had looked for his appearing. Proud may Egypt be, and Persia too, for they were not only the protectors, but they had the schooling of the Promised Prince. Born in Judea, the babe found no shelter there, but was taken to Egypt, and thence to Persia, where he was instructed in knowledge. India and other nations had also contributed to educate him for his three years' work. He knew the manners and customs, and the religions of these nations, who were looked upon by the Jews as idolaters. The children of Abraham could not eat salt with them. But Jesus was the brother of every man; savage or civilised, all were alike to him; they were his sisters and brothers, and God was their Father.

And for teaching this doctrine, he was accused of blasphemy! He, unlike those who accused him, shrank not from contact with sinners, for it was to the poor and the spiritually diseased he was sent. But this also was made a charge against him. They sought out for certain of those who had been cured of their ailments and endeavoured, by threats and bribes, to get them to confess that they had been playing a part, but not one of them could be won over from the truth. One of them who had been blind, boldly faced these rulers, and said—"Whatever you think of this man, I know that he has opened my eyes to the blessed light of day, and I praise God for what He has done, through him, for me." Then another would tell the tale how he lay sick and nigh unto death, when Jesus of Nazareth laid his hands on him, and he rose from

his couch, restored to perfect health. "I look on him as more than man, as the Messiah who was to come, the Deliverer of this people." The lame, who had aforesaid lain about the porches of the Temple, were now to be seen walking about like themselves, and magnifying and praising God, because of this man's wonderful works. No, not one would listen to them; their golden bribes were spurned by the poorest, once-crippled beggar at the gates; their threats were despised, for greater was the power of the Highest than that of man. Such was the faith they had in Jesus that nothing could frighten them into compliance with the wishes of his enemies.

Shortly after our friend Hermes and those with him had left to go on their mission, Jesus was journeying through Galilee, and as he was passing along, a madman, as you would say, but as Easterns would say, one possessed by devils, came after him, crying out—"Stop him! Allow him not to go—he is the Son of God!" And because of these words of the poor deranged man, some of the enemies of Jesus began to say that he was in league with Beelzebub the prince of these devils; but Jesus turned about and rebuked the evil spirits in the man; or, in other words, he brought his own spirit into requisition, and the man was cured from that day henceforth. The man, restored to his senses, would have fallen down and worshipped him, but Jesus said—"Do it not; give the glory to God for what is done, for it is through His power that this hath been done for thee."

This man followed him most faithfully, and when others fled, he did not desert him even when he was nailed on the cross, and continued waiting till the body was taken down. He afterwards became a most effective worker in the mission-fields of the heathen nations.

After that miracle—if you choose to so call it, but we do not call it a miracle—Jesus went out into the wilderness, when there came together a great crowd of individuals from the surrounding districts to hear him. Many of them wished to be baptized by him—he would not do it; but told them to go to John's disciples, for his mission was not to baptize with water. Though many of John's disciples became followers of Jesus, and some of them his immediate attendants, there were still a great number of these who continued to proclaim the same truths, and baptized with

water all who followed after them. They looked on John as their Master and Teacher ; and what John had said concerning Jesus they held as truth—that Jesus was sent direct from Heaven to men on Earth.

John, by this time, had been sacrificed, because he denounced a woman's sinful conduct. He had lost his head, but, like many other great reformers, he gained a crown. He was a martyr for the truth—for the bold utterance of the truth as in the sight of God and man. Few men or women can bear to be told of their faults, and John was sacrificed for telling the truth. Jesus lamented his death, saying—"As God permitteth, so let it be! The time soon cometh when I also must be offered up. It is not one, but the whole house of Israel is up in arms against me."

I have often thought had he been in my native land of Persia, he would have been treated better. He would have been admitted to the Magian Order.

The day will come when Persia and the whole known world will acknowledge his teachings. That is what we of the Spirit-world are now attempting. When the Second Great One comes he will find the earth in a better condition to receive him. The First Great One found it the very reverse of that. We really look on Jews as a peculiar people. He was promised to Abraham, who, if not a Persian, was a Chaldean. He came in due time. Surrounding nations were far higher in their morals than the Hebrews, and to them he came, so that if possible he might redeem them—give them a last chance before the great fiat went out that they should be scattered among all the nations of the earth. "Will you accept him? Will you leave your evil ways, and be as the God of heaven desires all to be?" They would not accept him, but cast him out as an evil-doer, and tried to trample on those who accepted his teachings. They would not have him, and the result was—the Jewish nation was broken up and scattered over the face of the earth ; while other nations existing at the time are still kept together. These things are so. I do not say that it is by God that it is done. It is men's own doings. He has forewarned them through His Spirit-messengers what will be the result of certain evil courses : punishment is sure to follow on individuals and also on nations. Look at Nineveh, Tyre, and Sidon, Eastern nations, great and mighty. Look at the

great cities in my own country, when they stood in all their glory, with their massive buildings of marble. Where are they now? In the dust. If my own people had stood true even to the teachings of Zoroaster, she might yet have held her head high. She might have beat back the conquering power which overran the East—those who came with religion in the one hand and sword and fire in the other: when the remnant had to fly to India, and take refuge with another nation, while the few who stood by their altars became martyrs to their ancient faith.

Seventh Sitting.

May 9th, 1883.

Hafed consults with Paul—Rulers and Priests at Work—How Jesus Argued—The Council—"Weighed in their Balances"—Caiaphas—Pharisees and Sadducees Dispute—Gamaliel and Nicodemus—A Bold Defence—Nicodemus afraid, but at length speaks out—Denunciation—Jesus Condemned—Judas.

(*Controlled by HAFED*).—There is very little more I can add to what I have already given in regard to Jesus our Prince. You have received long ago my account of his early infancy to the time of his ministry, and part of that is what I have already given you; and by these, and what you have received from his immediate followers, which, as far as I can learn from those I have met in our assembly, is pretty correct, you will be able, with a little revisal, to give a narrative of his earth-life that may be of service.

Since last I spoke on the subject, I have consulted with Paul and others regarding some things which concerned the Prince, and which I did not know of myself, even although I had a deal of intercourse with him; for there were always caravans passing between the two countries—after he had gone forth to proclaim the truth to his own people.

What I have principally to deal with to-night are things concerning the assembly of the rulers and priests of Judea, who sat in judgment on the Man who was not then before them. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem enraged them. No king could have had a greater—a more honourable welcome than he had, when the people cried out, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" This enraged the priests and the masters of Israel; for they looked on him as a

sedition person, and as one who was undermining their system. The doctrines he taught overthrew the priestly system of Judaism. If we think for a moment—men living in affluence, and every one looking up to them as the highest in the land—if they were to be thrown from the highest seats, they would rise in rebellion, not against a general with a mighty army at his back, but against a single man—a single reed which bent hither and thither, as the waters rushed on it. They were bringing their forces together to crush him. Caiaphas the High Priest plotted his downfall—Sadducee as he was—he was determined to crush him. We may imagine him as he lay tossing on his bed, trying if possible to hatch falsehoods that might condemn Jesus as a blasphemer against the Most High, and as one who had trodden the law beneath his feet. And this of one who had never given offence to a single individual. We passed through different countries in the course of our travels in the East, and I never yet heard him say that this or that was wrong. When he spoke on certain points of doctrine, which could be shown to be wrong on reference to their sacred books, he never said, "You are wrong." He saw they were right so far—inasmuch as, being convinced of its truth, it was right to them till they saw it to be wrong. Those brought up in any doctrine were brought up in it from their youth. It was no use fighting against the teachings they believed in. By gentle persuasion you might show them the falsity of a doctrine ; but if you argue and fight, they will kick against you. When he spoke of the prophets of the Hebrews—of Moses—he spoke gently and lovingly, with charity. He would say, "Man is but man, and his indignation may rise even in a righteous cause," referring to Moses when he struck the rock in anger, or when he dashed the tablets written by the hand of the Spirit—of his presumption when he asked to see the Almighty, whom no one can see. Yet Moses, notwithstanding his high position, was placed in a crevice of the rock when the Spirit passed by, and his face had to be veiled, for the light might have blinded him.

And it was this One—this unoffending Jesus, these Jews found fault with. The High Priest plotted against the innocent one, who had never yet done evil to him or to any one. Where do you find him courting the rich or great? Had he done so, he might have received honours and dignities ; they might have

placed him on the throne of Israel. But he wished not that. He was greater than their kings. He courted the poor fishermen of Galilee, the beggar by the wayside, or the despised tax gatherer. Such were the companions he esteemed. In them he found simplicity, which he found not among the bigotted masters of Israel.

Caiaphas in the morning called together the council of the priests and rulers of Israel. The assembly met in the great hall of Solomon. Many an assembly had been gathered in that hall, but none such as gathered in it on this occasion. They met to crush out a humble individual, yet was he the very Star, the very Light of Israel, who would render to every man according to that which is just. Was he to receive justice? No. They weighed him in *their* balance, and he was found wanting, inasmuch as he did not coincide with their idea of things. He preached against their altar sacrifices; he showed them the sacrifices with which God was pleased, opening up to them the true view of love and charity—but they would not listen to him.

They were all assembled—these dignitaries, when the High Priest, in his sacred robes, with breast-plate of burnished stones, rose and told them that in a vision he had seen Aaron, the great founder of the priesthood, who had come and railed on him for permitting such a man as Jesus to seduce the people, and lead them away from the old faith. As he harangued them, and showed that Jesus was worthy of death, there arose a division in the midst of the priests, for among them were both Pharisees and Sadducees. Caiaphas, a Sadducee, spoke of the spirit of Aaron coming back to him!

There were, however, two of the masters of Israel in that assembly who cherished in their bosoms love for the Nazarene. Gamaliel sat still till he could no longer sit, but rose and avowed himself a follower of Jesus. He said he could see no fault in him, and many wondered how he could defy the masters of Israel, but he boldly defended him whom he esteemed as the Great Master. He denounced Caiaphas as one who had perjured himself before the God of Israel, inasmuch as he had said that he was not afraid of any, when they all passed away from the earth. Jesus of Nazareth would rise up over the whole world; he would be as a beacon-light on the way to the Father; and many would be

brought back to Him who had guided them in their wanderings in the Desert and set them within Salem, their own city. Jesus was the Bright and Morning Star, and more, he was the Light of the World.

While he thus went on defending him whom he loved, Nicodemus sat with his hands clasped over his face, when something within him seemed to say—"What a coward I have been—I sought him first in the darkness of night, and now I fear to lift my voice to defend the absent one! O that I had the fortitude of Gamaliel, that I might address the assembly, and proclaim myself a follower of Jesus!"

Such were the thoughts of Nicodemus, as his friend defended boldly the character of his Lord and Master, and when at length Gamaliel sat down, he rose, and with bent head and eyes set on the ground, he said—"Glory to the Most High! Glory to the Almighty!—I, like Gamaliel, proclaim myself a follower of the Good Nazarene." Then did Nicodemus become one of the most ardent and valiant warriors in behalf of the cause of Truth. He contended with the enemies of Jesus at every point. He showed them how that the blind had received sight—the lame had been made to walk—devils had been cast out of the raving maniac—the sick had been restored to health, and even the dead had been brought back to life.

They said it was all a lie; the people were deceived. "It is ye yourselves that are deceived! Why do you shut your eyes to the great Light of Heaven, so that ye cannot see the truth? Are there not in Jerusalem to-day those who have had such wonders wrought on them?—One of these who sat on the steps of the Temple and begged for alms, and went in and out here, ye know to have had his eyes opened by the Nazarene, and yet ye say he is a deceiver, and seek to destroy him! When he stood by the porch of the Temple, why did ye not lay hands on him? And now ye unlawfully sit in judgment on a man who is not here to defend himself. But I will defend him, as Gamaliel has already done, for I am also a follower of Jesus, and I love him. His doctrines will sweep away all your doctrines. The day is not far distant when the Veil of the Temple will be rent—when the Roman eagle will be borne aloft on its walls, and our nation be for ever laid low. If ye would listen to the voice of this

humble Nazarene, ye would prosper as a nation ; but ye will not. Therefore, Heaven's fiat has gone forth to scatter you over the whole earth. I leave you now. My hands are clean. I have said all I can for my Master—I did not believe I was able to open my mouth on his behalf,—but I thank God I have been able now, and trust I will always be able, to raise my voice in defence of Jesus my Master. But I know your evil designs—you will sacrifice him. Woe, woe to ye, Masters of Israel, that judge a man before ye have heard his defence !” Nicodemus having so said, rose up, and with indignant steps left the assembly.

Caiaphas thereupon told how he had bargained with Judas to betray Jesus.

So he was betrayed and brought before them, but no one stood up to defend him ; neither defended he himself—he knew his work was done. Yet they could not pass sentence of death on him. They knew they had Pilate, the Roman Governor, who would do it for them, and they condemned him.

But woe unto Judas !—woe unto him, poor man ! after selling his best friend and receiving the paltry reward of treachery ! His conscience—the Divinity within spoke to him. He saw what he had done : he had sold the Light of the world for these few coins. He thereupon became a robber of the Almighty ; he took away the life that was not his own, and which was merely lent him for a time on earth. He had to repent in the dark caverns of Hades. Thanks to the Most High, he, like all others as bad, has come to the Father. Like the prodigal, he has returned to the Father ; he has joined the assembly with whom he mingled while on earth, and is now one of the most loving friends of his Lord and Master—Jesus. The Master knew who was to betray him, and he showed no ill-will towards Judas. He had no malice within his bosom—nothing but love found entrance there : and when the wretched wanderer returned, Jesus was ready to embrace him.

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HAFED PRINCE OF PERSIA:

HIS EXPERIENCES

IN

EARTH-LIFE AND SPIRIT-LIFE,

Being Spirit Communications received through Mr. DAVID DUGUID,
the Glasgow Trance-Painting Medium.

With an Appendix,

CONTAINING COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SPIRIT ARTISTS,
RUISDAL AND STEEN.

FOURTH EDITION.

GLASGOW: HAY NISBET & Co., 25 Jamaica Street
LONDON: E. W. ALLEN, 4 Ave Maria Lane, Paternoster Row.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

(From the Spiritual Magazine for February, 1876.)

THE Experiences of Hafed, Prince of Persia, as given through the mediumship of David Duguid, of Glasgow, better known as the Painting Medium, is one of the most extraordinary works that has appeared in connection with Spiritualism. The communications are of a most marvellous character, and, if accepted as genuine, throw a flood of light upon a period of history of which we know little, and to which more interest attaches than to any other. The medium through whom these communications have been made is well known, at least by name, wherever Spiritualism has gained a footing, mainly for the

extraordinary pictures which he has painted while in a state of trance. He is an ordinary uneducated, intelligent, simple-minded, plain working man, with not the slightest pretension to any knowledge of ancient history, or of the subjects generally treated of in this volume. Even if he were ever so well informed, it is very doubtful indeed whether he could have answered off-hand many of the questions put to him at the sésances which this book chronicles, referring as they do to matters of ancient history, geography, ethnology, &c.—subjects upon which information can be obtained only with great difficulty and is possessed therefore by a very few—and with no opportunity on the occasions in question presenting itself for consulting books or authorities before the answer was given. We know something of the subjects treated of in this volume, and we know personally David Duguid; and of this fact we are certain, that, unaided by any power outside his own mind, he could no more have answered the questions put to him in the form in which they are answered in this volume than he could have written Bacon's *Organon*, Newton's *Principia*, or Shakespeare's Plays. Even had he at his command large libraries of books, with some experienced scholar to point out to him the volumes that he required to consult, it would still be a matter of impossibility that he could have stored his mind sufficiently with facts to enable him to respond to the questions detailed in these pages. For such a state of culture would require certain preliminary training, an intelligence above the average certainly of working men, and a considerable amount of time in which to pursue the application—none of which advantages have been possessed by David Duguid, who is a simple mechanic, earning his livelihood by working throughout the day, and with neither time nor inclination nor capacity for profound study.

David Duguid, as we have already observed, is best known to the world as a trance-painting medium. This power seems to have become developed in him about the year 1865, and is of a very marvellous character. A prepared canvas is placed upon an ordinary painter's easel, which canvas is allowed to be marked by any one of the sitters, to prevent the possibility of its being afterwards changed. The medium passes into a trance, the light is turned out, and in the darkness he arranges his brushes, sorts his colours, and proceeds with the work of painting. At irregular intervals during the sésance, a light is obtained, when it is found that the picture is in a certain state of progress, showing clearly what has been done in the darkness. By and by the picture is finished, and is found to consist of a painting such as, to say the least of it, the medium in his normal condition would have been incompetent to produce. A great number of the pictures thus obtained are in existence, and some of them will probably be familiar to our readers. These paintings are professedly done, through the medium, by the spirit of Jacob Ruissdal—commonly spelt Ruysdael—and Jan Steen, a celebrated Dutch painter. In addition to this phase of mediumship, where the hands of the medium were employed in the work of painting, a great number of direct spirit-pictures have been obtained in his presence, many of which are engraved as illustrations to the volume under consideration. Direct writing on cards is also frequently given, generally in four or five different languages. Cases of this kind happening at sésances at which we were present we have elsewhere described. * * *

Hafed, the Prince of Persia, professes to have been one of the ancient Magi, and a personal companion of Christ, during the whole of that period of His life of which we learn so little in the Gospels, before the commencement of His ministry. What he has to say, therefore, must be looked upon as of the greatest possible importance. If it be true, it has an interest for us greater than the contents of any other book outside the Holy Scriptures. In the volume there is a full account given of a hundred different sittings, the topics treated of in which are divided as follow:—*First Period—The Warrior-Prince*. Seven sittings. This contains an account of the birth, early life, and adventures of Hafed in connection with the country to which he belonged. *Second Period—The Archmagus*. Thirty-two sittings. This division comprises communications of the greatest possible interest to students in archæology and religion, respecting the theology of the Egyptians, the doctrines of the Sabæans, the teachings of Zoroaster, the laws of Lycur

Grecian mythology, the Tower of Babel, the early life of Jesus, and hundreds of other interesting topics. *Third Period—The Christian Evangelist.* Seven sittings, detailing mainly the life of Hafed as a preacher of Christianity. This forms the first division of the book. The second portion is devoted principally to questions respecting the life in the spirit-world, and principles and doctrines as they are understood in the spheres. At the seventy-sixth sitting Hafed introduced Hermes the Egyptian, who gave important communications through the medium at more than twenty following sances. The volume forms a thick book of 580 pages, illustrated by a large number of engravings from direct spirit-drawings, and is full of information of startling interest and momentous importance, such as is to be found nowhere else. * * * *

That this book will have a large sale we have no doubt whatever. Every spiritualist who can afford it ought certainly to purchase a copy, since a perusal of its pages cannot but tend to improve and cultivate the mind. The volume is especially valuable just now, when it is continually being brought as a charge against us that Spiritualism has nothing new to say upon the great questions which agitate men's minds, but consists mainly in table-tilting, rope-tying, and other frivolities too contemptible to occupy the attention of intelligent men.

From the Glasgow Christian News, February 19, 1876.)

In penning a notice of this book, we are safe enough to say in the outset it is a remarkable production. No one who reads it attentively will dispute this opinion. Whatever view one may take of its reliability, all will admit that it is a phenomenon to be accounted for. We risk nothing in predicting that, whatever view may be taken of the origin or authority of the book, it will have a future *history* involving wide notoriety. The fields of thought traversed are wide and varied. The themes are intensely interesting. The ideas presented to the reader on many a page are thrilling and startling. The title tells us that the volume is what may be called a "spiritualistic" production. The term spiritualistic will repel many and awaken suspicion in others. With this we need not quarrel. It is, at the present date, a matter of course. But as we live outside the spiritualistic circle, we claim to have read the book without prejudice for or against, and it is those who occupy a similar position, but have not seen the book, that we chiefly wish to interest. Every such individual whom we can induce to study the book will give us their best thanks when they have gone over it.

Were we inclined to "fall foul" of the volume as an undoubted imposture, the difficulty of accounting for its existence would remain a "hard nut to crack." The parties who give their names to the public as responsible for the work are well known to many. That they should have *unaided* written such a book is out of the question. Had they been closeted with John Bunyan for many months, and had he and they done their best to make up such a volume, with the intention of palming it off on the public as a *bona fide* narrative of what had been revealed to them, we should still have been left in perplexity. The tone of the book would have been a puzzle on the supposition of imposture. There is an air of candour and straightforwardness about the work which it would be most difficult to simulate. The problem to solve is, *how came the book to exist?* It is a fact to be accounted for. But we are forgetting that those who have not seen it may be impatient to be told something of "what it is all about." "Hafed" is introduced to us as a Prince of Persia who lived at the commencement of the Christian era. His own life story is deeply interesting. Much professedly authentic information is given regarding the state of the nations of the East as they were in his day; but the grand feature of the Communications is what he has to tell about the middle life of Jesus Christ. Hafed claims to have been one of the wise men that came from the East to Judea guided by the star. Jesus is said to have spent years with him in Persia when growing up a young man, to have studied in Persia, and travelled in India, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Space will not allow us to give details. The history embraces most of the time between the Saviour's boy-

hood and the period when his public ministry commenced. The impression which perusal of the narrative will leave upon the mind of a reader who is a lover of the Saviour will be such, if we mistake not, as to lead him to wish that he could regard it as authentic. A considerable part of the book is occupied with an account of the labours and sufferings of Hafed and others in the service of Christ, after he had given commandment to go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Photographs are given of various specimens of handwriting and drawing, the originals of which are said to have been executed by no mortal hands. This raises a question of evidence on which we have had no opportunity of entering.

As for Hafed's account of his experience in spirit life, and his description of things as they are there, we need only say they are enrapturing. Even were we to regard them as such dreaming as John Bunyan records when he tells us of the land of Beulah and the Celestial City, no mind could contemplate them without being elevated and delighted beyond measure, and led to think with intense joy of the *possibilities of existence*. He would be led to say—If heaven be not *this*, it will be as *good as this*, and that is all that heart can wish. We have heard of a devout student of the New Testament who says that, next to that priceless volume, "Hafed" is the book he delights to read, and we do not much wonder at the statement.

All Christian ministers should make themselves fully acquainted with "Hafed," that they might be able to deal suitably with it as occasion may arise. Multitudes of the young, and not a few of the old, in Christian congregations will, as time rolls on, come to hear of "Hafed" and to read it, and its influence on their minds will not be slight. All who assume to lead need the qualification which only the study of the book in question can supply. While we have pleasure in predicting that the work will be extensively read, it does not follow that we are prepared to assent to all the doctrinal views held by Hafed and others who give like communications. We think it would be no difficult matter to establish a probability that those who leave earth for heaven should for a time retain mistaken ideas on some points. But space forbids.

(From a Review by HUDSON TUTTLE in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*,
Chicago, March 4, 1876.)

THIS work is unique in literature. There is none other with which to compare it, and the ordinary rules of criticism are useless in measuring its value.

For sometime the English Spiritual periodicals have contained accounts of the wonderful mediumship of David Duguid, a Scottish cabinet-maker, who with the most ordinary education and without any culture or opportunities, while in a trance-state, not only executed beautiful paintings and drawings, but also gave startling communications from ancient spirits, and often they executed both drawings and writings in his presence without the aid of mortal hands. * * * He paints as well in the dark as in the light, and the direct drawings, such as are copied into this book, are executed in the dark, with the medium secured under strictly test conditions. The writings are in various languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, and English, signed in many instances by what is said to be a name in Persian. On one card was written a beautiful series of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

At length Mr. Duguid became controlled by a spirit professing to be a Persian, who had lived in the earthly body 1900 years ago. He was then a Persian chief or prince, and afterwards head of the Magi, and in his old age a follower of Christ, for whom he suffered martyrdom. He said his name was Hafed, and his narrative, beginning at his birth, is as interesting as a novel, and replete with historical information.

In the progress of the narrative the medium experienced the difficulties which always accompany the transmission of dates and names, and these were afterwards supplied by the spirits writing them in, direct. Mr. Nisbet mentions and finely explains this difficulty, which really grows out of the fact that ideas and words flow into the mind of the medium.

"In the case of the Persian and the other spirits communicating through Mr. Duguid, it will be readily understood that the words spoken are not those of the unseen intelligence, but an interpretation of the ideas of the spirit into the

language of the medium. * * * Again, a spirit perceives through his medium, and if at the time there is a lack of proper conditions in the medium, both question and answer will suffer in transmission. From all these it will be seen that errors and mistakes are likely to be produced. How often do we hear the observation made, when something silly or crude has been uttered by a trance-speaker under the control of a spirit ranking high amongst the learned of earth, 'Oh, that is a lying spirit! So and so knew better than that when here, and he surely hasn't gone back in knowledge.' No, he hasn't gone back; but can we tell the difficulties that hamper the spirit who wants to convey a message to those whom he has left behind? Suppose a Bacon desires to send a message—to communicate with mortals. He finds a medium well adapted in many respects, but far behind in education. He begins to operate on this medium; but, like a master in music playing on a bad instrument, the effect produced is altogether beneath that which is expected. Why not select an educated medium? says one. It may be the very fact of being educated constitutes the unfitness for mediumship. Be that as it may, for the worthless or erroneous statements, which crop up now and again in trance addresses, neither spirit nor medium is to blame."

This must be borne in mind by the reader of "Hafed," for the garb of his ideas is supplied by the mind of David Duguid, the uneducated Scottish cabinet-maker. The sceptic may smile at the incongruity now and then apparent, but the student of the great science of Spiritualism will be deeply interested in observing the varying shades of impressibility occasionally sweeping away entirely the medium's personality, and almost seizing the idiomatic form of thought characteristic of the controlling spirit, again ebbing until the reefs and ledges of the medium's individuality crop out clear and distinct. We learn that a communication should not be judged by the letter of its phraseology, but by the spirit of its thought. We should read the pages of "Hafed" not as his own language, but as a translation, honestly made, but bearing the disadvantages which always attend translations.

Hafed commences his narrative which reflects the condition of Persia 1900 years ago with an account of his birth-place and his parents. He assumes at an early age the command of the army, and beats back to the desert the hordes of Arabia. For seven chapters he details his martial exploits. His language is strange for a spirit who has cultivated love and wisdom for almost 2000 years, yet perhaps he offers a complete explanation when he says that, on his gaining such direct contact with earth as he is compelled to do, the old feelings and thoughts long dormant are revived. Page 134—"It appears to me that some of my earth passions revive when coming in contact with the mortal body thus: I get angry at the unheard-of cruelties to which we were subjected for our adherence to what we believed to be true."

The second period of the narrative begins at the time he became weary of war, and became a Magian; and in search after knowledge visited Egypt, Sparta, Corinth, Athens, Tyre, Jerusalem, and narrates what he saw and heard. The history of Persia, their religion, the Tower of Babel, and other interesting subjects enough to fill a page if only mentioned, are treated in the manner of an eye-witness.

Then he tells the wonderful story of his travels to Judea, seeking for the child Jesus, and the adventures on his return by way of the Red Sea to Persia. An aged priest takes charge of Jesus in Egypt, from whence, after a time, they go to Persia, and Jesus begins to study under Hafed. His youthful character and adventures are described; his admission into the ranks of the Magi; and the journey of the master and pupil to Judea by way of Greece, Rome, and Egypt. Jesus visits Persia the second time, and with Hafed journeys in the East.

The third period embraces the full acceptance of the doctrines of Jesus. The master becomes a pupil and goes forth as an Evangelist; he visits Spain, Africa, and Persia, and terminates his career as a martyr thrown to wild beasts. Then follows his life of 1800 years in the Spirit-world. Viewed simply as a work of the imagination, literature has nothing equal to this marvellous narrative. It does not impress one as a creation of fancy, but as a truthful record of personal observation and experience.

Hermes, the Egyptian, communicates on a great diversity of subjects, in a happy manner, but our space will not admit of an extended analysis. The Appendix is by no means the least interesting portion of the book. * * *

There are many things which will perplex even a spiritualist in these pages. Hafed has not outgrown the oriental imagery in his depiction of the Spirit-world, nor belief in the miraculous conception of the "Virgin Mother." His description of the "Great Temple" on page 225, reads like a tale in the "Arabian Nights," and probably has equally solid foundation. These blemishes mar the book, but they by no means invalidate its claims. Science of spirit communion is yet to be made known, and until that happy event we must accept or reject by special application of our reason.

"Hafed" is a book that will excite severe criticism and receive great praise. It furnishes intensely interesting reading, and at the same time requires patient and cultured study for its complete understanding. The sceptic will find it a weird and strange story; the spiritualist will be charmed with its facts and philosophy.

The publishers have rightly concluded that it merited an unexceptional dress of type, paper, and binding.

(From the *Banner of Light*, Boston, March 11, 1876.)

This strange book lies altogether outside of the ordinary rules of criticism. It can be outlined to the general reader only by offering selections from it. The medium, David Duguid, a Scotch cabinetmaker, has for some time past attracted special attention to himself for his remarkable powers; and this stout volume is the result of the service to which the spirits have put him, containing as it does the most striking communications from ancient spirits, who made paintings and drawings in his presence without the help of human hands. These pictures illustrate the communications, which are historical in the most genuine sense. We can only say that they are wonderful for their simplicity, their beauty, and their direct power. * * * The changing phases of mediumship in this uneducated Scotch mechanic are most interesting, as the spirit seeks to obtain and keep control of him. The experience of this ancient spirit is as varied and startling as that of a romance. He follows a round of avocations in the course of his earth career, and in returning to earth again to narrate them after so long an absence his descriptions are so new and profound as to engross the mind of the reader. There are directly opposite qualities to this book, some of which will gratify Spiritualists, and some will cause free criticism. It must be read with studious care in order for its understanding; but when once in the heart of it, the reader will discover, along with its romance of narrative, a philosophy that will richly repay his close attention.

(From the *London Correspondent of the Chicago Times*, Jan. 29, 1876.)

As is well known, in the four gospels there is no account of Jesus from His infancy till His 30th year. In this narrative the gap is filled up. The story is too long to summarise, even in the limits of a letter. * * * The history the Persian gives of himself as a warrior is tragic and exciting. The whole work—and it is immense—is stirring, romantic, alive, and fascinating in a way, whether it be pretentious history, romance, or genuine truth. A young person attached to the literary guild picked up this voluminous work from my table, and after a glance at it, said, "What intolerable stuff! It makes one sick of heaven: weary of the thought of going there!" But this is unwarrantable. We must not forget that in Shakespeare's writings there is a good deal of bad grammar, and some things in many good books that we do not read aloud. We can afford to look at the spirit and not the form.

(From a *Correspondent in "The Medium"* of June 23, and July 7, 1876.)

MEYERBEER HALL, LIVERPOOL.—The Sunday lectures at this new Home for Spiritualists, in the second town or city of Great Britain, continue very attractive and interesting, alike to friends and strangers. On June 18th, Dr. William Hitchman lectured on "Princes and People." * * * The evening oration was entitled, "What is Death?" given by Mrs. Nosworthy in that literary, poetical, and dramatic style which has long made her one of the most famous elocutionists in the kingdom; and the various quotations from "Hafed," on that important subject, proved a source of intense delight to the audience, as well as

demonstrating that beautiful and charming work to be one of the greatest treasures yet vouchsafed to humanity.

The subject-matter of Mrs. Nosworthy's lectures on Spiritualism is both original and select. Especially attractive are the quotations from "Hafed." In fact she has done much to make this truly charming book a universal favourite in Liverpool, Birkenhead, Rochdale, Southport, and other towns, from whence visitors have come to hear its beautiful teaching, elegant composition, and spiritual dignity publicly set forth with historical grace and dramatic splendour.

(From the *St. James' Magazine* for September 1876.)

After an interesting synopsis, in a review of 18 pages in length, the writer proceeds to "examine the book's claims to authority and to credence," as follows:—"Now, if this narrative should be a truth, the volume we review to-day is the most valuable of literary productions. If it should be a fiction, it is at least a charming one. "Believe me for my works' sake," is an appeal with which all followers of Jesus are familiar; and we are bound to say that the tender affection for Jesus Christ, the love for mankind at large, and the general purity and loftiness of the ethics unfolded, whether directly or incidentally, command our highest esteem.

"Assuming the book to be a fiction, it is no unhallowed volume, fraught with pernicious teaching or insidious and demoralising suggestions. It is full of pure thought, of lofty motive, and suggestive only of universal goodness. If not literally true, it suggests so much that is sweet and lovely to the imagination of the pious soul, that it may under any circumstances be made a profitable study. It may here and there offend a rigid orthodoxy; but the genuine humility and the goodness of heart which it suggests on every page furnish ample atonement. No one will read its pages and become misanthropic and impure. There is a heavenly-mindedness about it that is peculiarly winning. It is deemed allowable to press the painter's art into our service when we seek to depict the incidents of the life of Christ; and the Church in all ages of the Christian era has been proud so to consecrate art to the higher teaching of her disciples. On the hypothesis that this is all a fiction, the novelist—whose art in modern times has been elevated to great perfection—has essayed the self-same task, and has signally succeeded. Never had the novelist a grander theme. . . .

"We can well imagine that those who hold with a tenacious grasp to orthodoxy will spurn this pretended revelation as coming at least from uncircumcised Philistines, if not through Satanic agency. We must confess that, as earnest inquirers after truth, from whatever quarter it may come, we do not envy either the prejudices or the feelings of such hasty and partial readers; and we will say that if their prejudices should seal the book against their perusal, they will be shut out from an uncommon and delightful treat. They might revel in this book, though they knew it were pure fiction from beginning to end. . . .

"Our final remark is, that whatever the source from which the book has come, its thoughts are so pure, its incidents are so thrilling, that all may read it with delight, and with a profitable stimulation of the highest emotions. But if, as we are asked to believe, the real actors who have projected these lovely pictures of the life and times of the Man Christ Jesus on the brain of the Glasgow carpenter were indeed contemporaries and companions of Christ,—*then this book is a priceless gem!*"

PRIVATE OPINION.

H. NISBET is permitted by Mr. S. C. HALL, F.S.A., whose name stands so high not only in the Spiritual movement, but in the world of Art and Literature, to publish the following eulogistic letter:—

"Dear Mr. Nisbet,—You have sent me a most wonderful book. It has given me intense delight. I cannot exaggerate if I say I have never yet read a book that has given me such deep and delicious joy—with only *one* exception, *The Book*, which this book so thoroughly upholds. Surely it will be so with all who believe in and love the Lord Christ. . . . Blessed be the God of love and mercy, who sent him (Hafed) to reveal and to elucidate the great truths of the gospel. Mrs. Hall is reading it now. But I must read it again, and yet again. It will companion the New Testament that stands at my bed-head, and in which I read a chapter every night. Send me two more copies. . . . Burns says it is cheap: it is worth its weight in diamonds."

The following expressions of opinion are taken from letters of Subscribers:—

“The narrative of Hafed’s journeys on Earth and Heaven, blended with the Drawings by the two Ghost Painters, and the Appendix Narrative, make the book the most remarkable one of the age, and therefore places it in front of all books issued, whether materialistic, psychological, or spiritualistic.”

“‘Hafed’ is truly a most wonderful spirit communication and new revelation in the life of Jesus Christ that was wanting in the Gospels. . . . I expect a world-wide success to ‘Hafed.’”

“Countess of C—— has just received the book, which she has not yet perused, but hears most highly spoken of on all sides.”

A Clergyman of the English Church thus writes: “Permit me to say that I have never read a volume with such absorbed interest, so deeply suggestive, and fertile in good thoughts; but the surprising point to me was to find at least six things, including the description of the Great Temple, which have been revealed to me also during the past three years, and which I have read to various friends in MS.”

“Many thanks, dear Mr. Nisbet, for ‘Hafed.’ . . . I have had but a slight glance at it; . . . but I much liked the tone of what I did read.”

“Agreeably surprised to receive ‘Hafed’ last night. It will be a great treat for Christmas.”

“An enchanting volume. I hear its praise sounded on all hands as being a most delightful Spiritual work. . . . You must send me other five copies.”

“The work does infinite credit to yourself and the cause of Spiritualism. Mr. Duguid’s mediumship is an occasion for great rejoicing to all who sympathise with us.”

“I enclose cheque for the (10) books I have just received. As much as I have seen of it, ‘Hafed’ seems highly interesting. I was told 15 or 16 years ago, by spirits in Paris, that one day much light would be thrown upon the early life of Jesus; that it would be proved that he had been in India; and that he was instructed by the Magi, and other great philosophers of India (I use the general name). This book seems to be the key of this knowledge. I shall read it with great attention.”

“It is a splendid volume.”

“I enclose you cheque for copies of ‘Hafed.’ . . . I like the book very much, and hope it will meet with the reception it deserves. I think I shall require a few more copies.”

“You have been the means of putting into the hands of poor humanity such a treasure—a book so much to enlighten, so much to instruct, and so much to cheer I will do all I can to induce others to read ‘Hafed.’”

“I received your beautiful book. . . . I am delighted with it, and can’t help thinking it a very good omen that we should receive it at this season of the year (Christmas).”

“‘Hafed’ is a miracle. I have never done admiring it, or dear David, the medium.”

“I got ‘Hafed,’ and have read it with the deepest interest.”

“Many thanks for ‘Hafed,’ which I received on Saturday. I sat down to read it in the course of that evening, and continued reading it all Sunday. It is wonderfully interesting, and will, I trust, be very useful.”

“I never read a book on Spiritualism half so interesting and calculated to do good as ‘Hafed’ is. It is a book that can be put into the hands of the greatest bigot.”

