

FORGOTTEN FANTASY

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WHEN THE GODS SLEPT

A WEIRD FANTASY

by LORD DUNSANY



FORGOTTEN Fantasy

CLASSICS OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

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EDITORIAL*EXCAVATIONS*

IT is — as Commander Whitehead puts it — curiously refreshing to discover, in this time of many groups devoted to protest, dissent, and violence, an organization concerned with the positive values of man's inner consciousness and mythic awareness. Although protest

and dissent are the right and indeed, the duty of those living in a democratic society, violence is not. It is inevitably self-defeating and breeds only more violence and change for the worse. It is the recourse of those who are impoverished in body, mind and spirit, who have reached the limit of their frustrations and allow their egos to excuse them from their responsibilities to themselves and their fellow men. It is the weapon of those who strike out in paranoiac frenzy at all who oppose or disagree with them. We see these people daily in ghettos and governments, from the lowest to the highest positions in the land, in nations throughout the world. Surely, if we are ever to achieve a realization of our common unity as human beings, it will not be through revolutions, or politics, or organized religions; it will be through attitudes and approaches to man's common mythic consciousness such as are expressed in the philosophies of the Mythopoeic Society.

"Mythopoeic" means "myth-making" or "myth-maker," and the main purpose of the Society is to study the fictional and mythic writings of three men who have authored some of the most literate and enthralling fantasy ever written: J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. The Mythopoeic Society was founded in the San Gabriel area of Southern California in October, 1967, by a pleasantly earnest young man named Glen GoodKnight, who also edits the Society's excellent quarterly journal, MYTHLORE. The Society has rapidly expanded, until today there are twelve chapters, eleven of them in the Southern California area, and one newly formed in Arizona, thus beginning an inter-state spread which shows every sign of increasing. More and more people are attracted to the sensible, intellectually stimulating atmosphere of the Society, brought together by a common love for fantasy and mythology in general and the works of Tolkien, Williams and Lewis — as well as other mythic authors —

in particular. They respond to the feeling of joy and optimism in the works of these men; they appreciate the light-heartedness and fun that accompany the serious discussions at chapter meetings; and they revel in the chance to express their deepest feelings about myth and fantasy and in the realization that many others share these feelings also. Although most of the membership is composed of young people, there is no generation gap in the Society. It is gratifying to see high school and college students mingling with professors and other "over-thirty" Establishment types, united by a common interest, all labels put aside for the moment.

As this is being written, the Mythopoeic Society is preparing for its first conference, Mythcon I, to be held September 4-7 at Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, California. For the first time, members of different branches will have a chance to meet and exchange ideas and opinions, which should be a healthy, strengthening force for the Society. And the Mythopoeic Society — and others like it — can only be a healthy, strengthening force for all of us, as more and more people, young and old, liberal and conservative, discover in fantasy not an unhealthy escape route from grim reality, but a means to delve into the most basic reality of all — the awareness of our common unity of mind and spirit as human beings; the awareness of what we really are, have been . . . and can become. Without this awareness, we have no choice, we are merely machines of flesh amid machines of steel and glass, hurtling on helplessly to oblivion. Perhaps fantasy and myth can help us reach *inside* and achieve this awareness before the Shadow reaches out from Middle Earth and we fall final victims to the Rings of Power which daily we so blindly misuse.

Further information about the Mythopoeic Society and its journal MYTHLORE can be obtained from Glen GoodKnight, 6117 Woodward Avenue, Maywood, California, 90270.

DM



G. Barr - 1970



WHEN THE GODS SLEPT

by Lord Dunsany

Illustrated by George Barr

*LORD DUNSANY (1878 - 1957) is thought by many to be the greatest fantasy writer who ever lived. Born in London with the family name of Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, the eighteenth Baron Dunsany was a truly amazing man. He was educated at Eton and served in both the Boer War and World War I, sustaining a serious wound in the latter conflict. He loved to hunt and roam the outdoors, and traveled extensively around the world. He became famous through his plays, first produced by W. B. Yeats at Dublin's Abbey Theatre, then all over the world, but it is with his early tales of strange gods and men who inhabit a wondrous, dreamlike world of his own invention, that Lord Dunsany's greatness as a fantasy writer rests. Such early collections as *TIME AND THE GODS* (1906), *THE GODS OF PEGANA* (1911), and *THE BOOK OF WONDER* (1912), deeply influenced such masters of the fantastic as James Branch Cabell, H. P. Lovecraft, and Clark Ashton Smith. Here is a tale from *TIME AND THE GODS* which aptly demonstrates Lord Dunsany's gifts for imagery and sardonic humor.*

ALL the gods were sitting in Pegana, and Their slave Time, lay idle at Pegana's gate with nothing to destroy, when They thought of worlds large and round and gleaming, and little silver moons. Then (who knoweth when?), as the gods raised Their hands making the sign of the gods, the thoughts of the gods became worlds and silver moons. And the worlds swam by Pegana's gate to take their places in the sky, to ride at anchor for ever, each where the gods had bidden. And because they were round and big and gleamed all over the sky, the gods laughed and shouted and all clapped Their hands. Then upon

earth the gods played out the game of the gods, the game of life and death, and on the other worlds They did a secret thing, playing a game that is hidden.

At last They mocked no more at life and laughed at death no more, and cried aloud in Pegana: "Will no new thing be? Must those four march for ever round the world till our eyes are wearied with the treading of all feet of the Seasons that will not cease, while Night and Day and Death drearily rise and fall?"

And as a child stares at the bare walls of a narrow hut, so the gods looked all listlessly upon the worlds, saying:

"Will no new thing be?"

And in Their weariness the gods said: "Ah! to be young again. Ah! to be fresh once more from the brain of Mana Yood Sushai."

And They turned away Their eyes in weariness from all the gleaming worlds and laid them down upon Pegana's floor, for They said:

"It may be that the worlds shall pass and we would fain forget them."

Then the gods slept. Then did the comet break loose from his moorings and the eclipse roamed about the sky, and down on the earth did Death's three children — Famine, Pestilence, and Drought — come out to feed. The eyes of the Famine were green, and the eyes of the Drought were red, but the Pestilence was blind and smote about all round him with his claws and among the cities.

But as the gods slept, there came from beyond the Rim, out of the dark, and unknown, three Yozis, spirits of ill, that sailed up the river of Silence in galleons with silver sails. Far away they had seen Yum and Gothum, the stars that stand sentinel over Pegana's gate, blinking and falling asleep, and as they neared Pegana they found a hush wherein the gods slept heavily. Ya, Ha, and Snyrg were these three Yozis, the lords of evil, madness, and of spite. When they crept from their galleons and stole over Pegana's silent threshold it boded ill for the gods. There in Pegana lay the gods asleep, and in a corner lay the Power of the gods alone upon the floor, a thing wrought of black rock and four words graven upon it, whereof I might not give thee any clue, if even I should find it — four words of which none knoweth. Some say they tell of the opening of a flower toward dawn, and other say they concern earthquakes

among hills, and others that they tell of the death of fishes, and others that the words be these: Power, Knowledge, Forgetting, and another word that not the gods themselves may ever guess. These words the Yozis read, and sped away in dread lest the gods should wake, and going aboard their galleons, bade the rowers haste. Thus the Yozis became gods, having the power of gods, and they sailed away to the earth, and came to a mountainous island in the sea. There they sat down upon the rocks, sitting as the gods sit, with their right hands uplifted, and having the power of gods, only none came to worship. Thither came no ships nigh them, nor ever at evening came the prayers of men, nor smell of incense, nor screams from the sacrifice. Then said the Yozis:

“Of what avail is it that we be gods if no one worship us nor give us sacrifice?”

And Ya, Ha, and Snyrg set sail in their silver galleons, and went looming down the sea to come to the shores of men. And first they came to an island where were fisher folk; and the folk of the island, running down to the shore, cried out to them:

“Who be ye?”

And the Yozis answered:

“We be three gods, and we would have your worship.”

But the fisher folk answered:

“Here we worship Rahm, the Thunder, and have no worship nor sacrifice for other gods.”

Then the Yozis snarled with anger and sailed away, and sailed till they came to another shore, sandy and low and forsaken. And at last they found an old man upon the shore, and they cried out to him:

“Old man upon the shore! We be three gods that it were well to worship, gods of great power and apt in the granting of prayer.”

The old man answered:

“We worship Pegana’s gods, who have a fondness for our incense and the sound of our sacrifice when it squeals upon the altar.”

Then answered Snyrg:

“Asleep are Pegana’s gods, nor will They wake for the humming of thy prayers which lie in the dust upon Pegana’s floor, and over Them Sniracte, the spider of the worlds, hath woven a web of mist. And the squealing of the sacrifice maketh no music in ears that are closed in sleep.”

The old man answered, standing upon the shore:

"Though all the gods of old shall answer our prayers no longer, yet still to the gods of old shall all men pray here in Syrinais."

But the Yozis turned their ships about and angrily sailed away, all cursing Syrinais and Syrinais's gods, but most especially the old man that stood upon the shore.

Still the three Yozis lusted for the worship of men, and came, on the third night of their sailing, to a city's lights; and nearing the shore they found it a city of song wherein all folks rejoiced. Then sat each Yozi on his galleon's prow, and leered with his eyes upon the city, so that the music stopped and the dancing eased, and all looked out to sea at the strange shapes of the Yozis beneath their silver sails. Then Snyrg demanded their worship, promising increase of joys, and swearing by the light of his eyes that he would send little flames to leap over the grass, to pursue the enemies of that city and to chase them about the world.

But the people answered that in that city men worshipped Agrodaun, the mountain standing alone, and might not worship other gods even though they came in galleons with silver sails, sailing from over the sea. But Snyrg answered:

"Certainly Agrodaun is only a mountain, and in no manner a god."

But the priests of Agrodaun sang answer from the shore:

"If the sacrifice of men make not Agrodaun a god, nor blood still young on his rocks, nor the little fluttering prayers of ten thousand hearts, nor two thousand years of worship and all the hopes of the people and the whole of the strength of our race, then are there no gods and ye be common sailors, sailing from over the sea."

Then said the Yozis:

Hath Agrodaun answered prayer?" And the people heard the words that the Yozis said.

Then went the priests of Agrodaun away from the shore and up the steep streets of the city, the people following, and over the moor beyond it to the foot of Agrodaun, and then said:

"Agrodaun, if thou art not our god, go back and herd with yonder common hills, and put a cap of snow upon thy head and crouch far off as they do beneath the sky; but if we have given thee divinity in two thousand years, if our hopes are all about thee like a cloak, then stand and look upon thy

worshippers from over our city for ever." And the smoke that ascended from his feet stood still and there fell a hush over great Agrodaun; and the priests went back to the sea and said to the three Yozis:

"New gods shall have our worship when Agrodaun grows weary of being our god, or when in some nighttime he shall stride away, leaving us nought to gaze at that is higher than our city."

And the Yozis sailed away and cursed towards Agrodaun, but could not hurt him, for he was but a mountain.

And the Yozis sailed along the coast till they came to a river running to the sea, and they sailed up the river till they came to a people at work, who furrowed the soil and sowed, and strove against the forest. Then the Yozis called to the people as they worked in the fields:

"Give us your worship and ye shall have many joys."

But the people answered:

"We may not worship you."

Then answered Snyrg:

"Ye also, have ye a god?"

And the people answered:

"We worship the years to come, and we set the world in order for their coming, as one layeth raiment on the road before the advent of a King. And when those years shall come, they shall accept the worship of a race they knew not, and their people shall make their sacrifice to the years that follow them, who, in their turn, shall minister to the END."

Then answered Snyrg:

"Gods that shall recompense you not. Rather give us your prayers and have our pleasures, the pleasures that we shall give you, and when your gods shall come, let them be wroth — they cannot punish you."

But the people continued to sacrifice their labour to their gods, the years to come, making the world a place for gods to dwell in, and the Yozis cursed those gods and sailed away. And Ya, the Lord of malice, swore that when those years should come, they should see whether it were well for them to have snatched away the worship from three Yozis.

And still the Yozis sailed, for they said:

"It were better to be birds and have no air to fly in, than to be gods having neither prayers nor worship."

But where sky met with ocean, the Yozis saw land again, and thither sailed; and there the Yozis saw men in strange old garments performing ancient rites in a land of many temples. And the Yozis called to the men as they performed their ancient rites and said:

"We be three gods well versed in the needs of men, to worship whom were to obtain instant joy."

But the men said:

"We have already gods."

And Snyrg replied:

"Ye, too?"

The men answered:

"For we worship the things that have been and all the years that were. Divinely have they helped us, therefore we give them worship that is their due."

And the Yozis answered the people:

"We be gods of the present and return good things for worship."

But the people answered, saying from the shore:

"Our gods have given us already the good things, and we return Them the worship that is Their due."

And the Yozis set their faces to landward, and cursed all things that had been and all the years that were, and sailed in their galleons away.

A rocky shore in an inhuman land stood up against the sea. Thither the Yozis came and found no man, but out of the dark from inland towards evening came a herd of great baboons and chattered greatly when they saw the ships.

Then spake Snyrg to them:

"Have ye, too, a god?"

And the baboons spat.

Then said the Yozis:

"We be seductive gods, having a particular remembrance for little prayers."

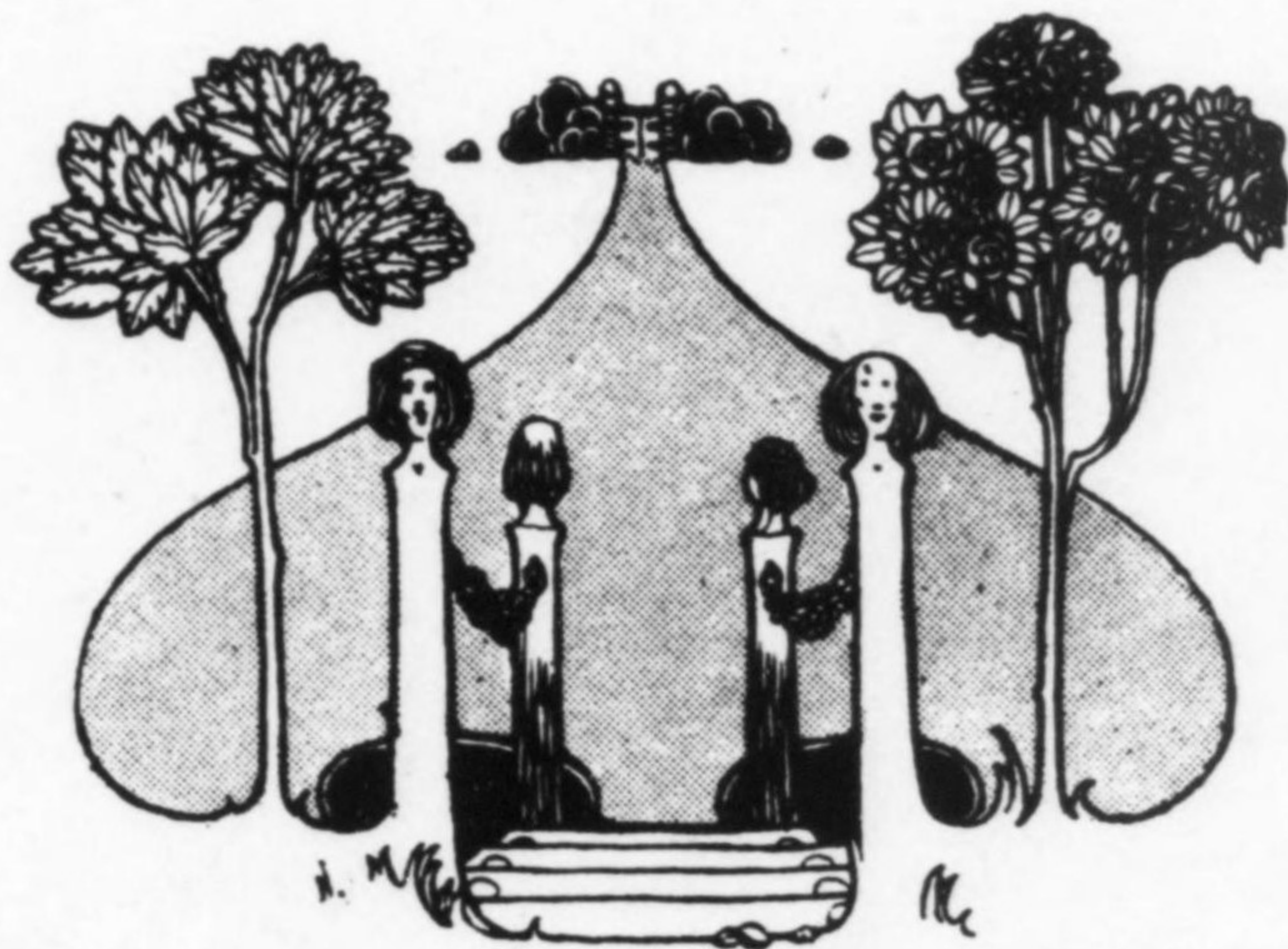
But the baboons leered fiercely at the Yozis and would have none of them for gods.

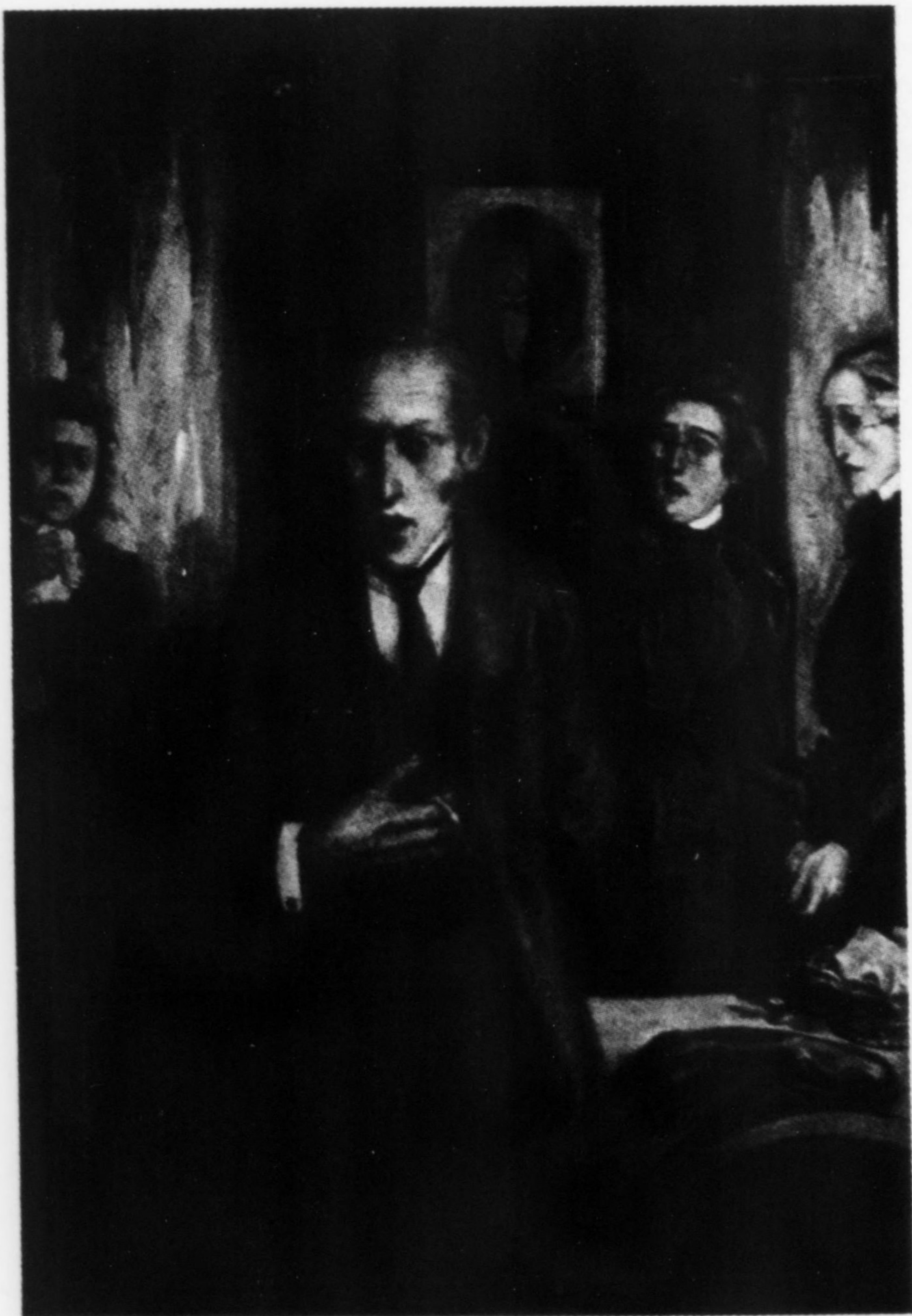
One said that prayers hindered the eating of nuts. But Snyrg leaned forward and whispered, and the baboons went down upon their knees and clasped their hands as men clasp, and chattered prayer and said to one another that these were the gods of old, and gave the Yozis their worship — for Snyrg

whispered in their ears that, if they would worship the Yozis, he would make them men. And the baboons arose from worshipping, smoother about the face and a little shorter in the arms, and went away and hid their bodies in clothing and afterwards galloped away from the rocky shore and went and herded with men. And men could not discern what they were, for their bodies were bodies of men, though their souls were still the souls of beasts and their worship went to the Yozis, spirits of ill.

And the lords of malice, hatred and madness sailed back to their island in the sea and sat upon the shore as gods sit, with right hand uplifted; and at evening foul prayers from the baboons gathered about them and infested the rocks.

But in Pegana the gods awoke with a start.





“ ‘What is that?’ he demanded in a strange voice.”

THE SHADOWS ON THE WALL

by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

Illustrated by Peter Newell

MARY ELEANOR WILKINS FREEMAN (1851 — 1930) was born and raised in New England, where illness prevented her from attending school regularly, but she read so widely during her confinement that she soon made up for her lack of formal education. In her teens she contributed poetry to *ST. NICHOLAS* and other magazines, and published her first book, a volume of verse called *DECORATIVE PLAQUES*, in 1883. Later, she tried her hand at fiction, and soon became one of the most popular magazine fiction writers in America. She wrote mostly about women, for women: intimate character studies and psychological portraits, set against a New England background. In 1902, at the age of 49, Miss Wilkins married Dr. Charles M. Freeman, and in 1925 she received the William Dean Howells Medal from the Academy of Arts and Letters. The following year she was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, one of the first women to achieve this honor. But of all her work, virtually nothing is remembered today, except for several of her stories of the supernatural. "The Shadows on the Wall" is one of the weirdest of the tales to be found in Mrs. Freeman's 1903 collection, *THE WIND IN THE ROSE—BUSH AND OTHER STORIES OF THE SUPERNATURAL*. This volume was illustrated by the popular author-illustrator of such experimental children's books as *THE HOLE BOOK*, *THE SLANT BOOK*, and *TOPSYS & TURVYS*, many of which are still in print today.

HENRY had words with Edward in the study the night before Edward died," said Caroline Glynn.

She was elderly, tall, and harshly thin, with a hard colourlessness of face. She spoke not with acrimony, but with grave severity. Rebecca Ann Glynn, younger, stouter and rosy of face between her crinkling puffs of gray hair, gasped, by way of assent. She sat in a wide flounce of black silk in the corner of the sofa, and rolled terrified eyes from her sister Caroline to her sister Mrs. Stephen Brigham, who had been Emma Glynn, the one beauty of the family. She was beautiful still, with a large, splendid, full-blown beauty; she filled a great rocking-chair with her superb bulk of femininity, and swayed gently back and forth, her black silks whispering and her black frills fluttering. Even the shock of death (for her brother Edward lay dead in the house), could not disturb her outward serenity of demeanour. She was grieved over the loss of her brother: he had been the youngest, and she had been fond of him, but never had Emma Brigham lost sight of her own importance amidst the waters of tribulation. She was always awake to the consciousness of her own stability in the midst of vicissitudes and the splendour of her permanent bearing.

But even her expression of masterly placidity changed before her sister Caroline's announcement and her sister Rebecca Ann's gasp of terror and distress in response.

"I think Henry might have controlled his temper, when poor Edward was so near his end," said she with an asperity which disturbed slightly the roseate curves of her beautiful mouth.

"Of course he did not *know*," murmured Rebecca Ann in a faint tone strangely out of keeping with her appearance.

One involuntarily looked again to be sure that such a feeble pipe came from that full-swelling chest.

"Of course he did not know it," said Caroline quickly. She turned on her sister with a strange sharp look of suspicion. "How could he have known it?" said she. Then she shrank as if from the other's possible answer. "Of course you and I both know he could not," said she conclusively, but her pale face was paler than it had been before.

Rebecca gasped again. The married sister, Mrs. Emma Brigham, was now sitting up straight in her chair; she had ceased rocking, and was eyeing them both intently with a sudden

accentuation of family likeness in her face. Given one common intensity of emotion and similar lines showed forth, and the three sisters of one race were evident.

"What do you mean?" said she impartially to them both. Then she, too, seemed to shrink before a possible answer. She even laughed an evasive sort of laugh. "I guess you don't mean anything," said she, but her face wore still the expression of shrinking horror.

"Nobody means anything," said Caroline firmly. She rose and crossed the room toward the door with grim decisiveness.

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Brigham.

"I have something to see to," replied Caroline, and the others at once knew by her tone that she had some solemn and sad duty to perform in the chamber of death.

"Oh," said Mrs. Brigham.

After the door had closed behind Caroline, she turned to Rebecca.

"Did Henry have many words with him?" she asked.

"They were talking very loud," replied Rebecca evasively, yet with an answering gleam of ready response to the other's curiosity in the quick lift of her soft blue eyes.

Mrs. Brigham looked at her. She had not resumed rocking. She still sat up straight with a slight knitting of intensity on her fair forehead, between the pretty rippling curves of her auburn hair.

"Did you — hear anything?" she asked in a low voice with a glance toward the door.

"I was just across the hall in the south parlour, and that door was open and this door ajar," replied Rebecca with a slight flush.

"Then you must have —"

"I couldn't help it."

"Everything?"

"Most of it."

"What was it?"

"The old story."

"I suppose Henry was mad, as he always was, because Edward was living on here for nothing, when he had wasted all the money father left him."

Rebecca nodded with a fearful glance at the door.

When Emma spoke again her voice was still more hushed. "I

know how he felt," said she. "He had always been so prudent himself, and worked hard at his profession, and there Edward had never done anything but spend, and it must have looked to him as if Edward was living at his expense, but he wasn't."

"No, he wasn't."

"It was the way father left the property — that all the children should have a home here — and he left money enough to buy the food and all if we had all come home."

"Yes."

"And Edward had a right here according to the terms of father's will, and Henry ought to have remembered it."

"Yes, he ought."

"Did he say hard things?"

"Pretty hard from what I heard."

"What?"

"I heard him tell Edward that he had no business here at all, and he thought he had better go away."

"What did Edward say?"

"That he would stay here as long as he lived and afterward, too, if he was a mind to, and he would like to see Henry get him out; and then —"

"What?"

"Then he laughed."

"What did Henry say?"

"I didn't hear him say anything, but —"

"But what?"

"I saw him when he came out of this room."

"He looked mad?"

"You've seen him when he looked so."

Emma nodded; the expression of horror on her face had deepened.

"Do you remember that time he killed the cat because she had scratched him?"

"Yes. Don't!"

Then Caroline reentered the room. She went up to the stove in which a wood fire was burning — it was a cold, gloomy day of fall — and she warmed her hands, which were reddened from recent washing in cold water.

Mrs. Brigham looked at her and hesitated. She glanced at the door, which was still ajar, as it did not easily shut, being still swollen with the damp weather of the summer. She rose and

pushed it together with a sharp thud which jarred the house. Rebecca started painfully with a half exclamation. Caroline looked at her disapprovingly.

"It is time you controlled your nerves, Rebecca," said she.

"I can't help it," replied Rebecca with almost a wail. "I am nervous. There's enough to make me so, the Lord knows."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Caroline with her old air of sharp suspicion, and something between challenge and dread of its being met.

Rebecca shrank.

"Nothing," said she.

"Then I wouldn't keep speaking in such a fashion."

Emma, returning from the closed door, said imperiously that it ought to be fixed, it shut so hard.

"It will shrink enough after we have had the fire a few days," replied Caroline. "If anything is done to it it will be too small; there will be a crack at the sill."

"I think Henry ought to be ashamed of himself for talking as he did to Edward," said Mrs. Brigham abruptly, but in an almost inaudible voice.

"Hush!" said Caroline, with a glance of actual fear at the closed door.

"Nobody can hear with the door shut."

"He must have heard it shut, and —"

"Well, I can say what I want to before he comes down, and I am not afraid of him."

"I don't know who is afraid of him! What reason is there for anybody to be afraid of Henry?" demanded Caroline.

Mrs. Brigham trembled before her sister's look. Rebecca gasped again. "There isn't any reason, of course. Why should there be?"

"I wouldn't speak so, then. Somebody might overhear you and think it was queer. Miranda Joy is in the south parlour sewing, you know."

"I thought she went upstairs to stitch on the machine."

"She did, but she has come down again."

"Well, she can't hear."

"I say again I think Henry ought to be ashamed of himself. I shouldn't think he'd ever get over it, having words with poor Edward the very night before he died. Edward was enough sight better disposition than Henry, with all his faults. I always

thought a great deal of poor Edward, myself."

Mrs. Brigham passed a large fluff of handkerchief across her eyes; Rebecca sobbed outright.

"Rebecca," said Caroline admonishingly, keeping her mouth stiff and swallowing determinately.

"I never heard him speak a cross word, unless he spoke cross to Henry that last night. I don't know, but he did from what Rebecca overheard," said Emma.

"Not so much cross as sort of soft, and sweet, and aggravating," sniffled Rebecca.

"He never raised his voice," said Caroline; "but he had his way."

"He had a right to in this case."

"Yes, he did."

"He had as much of a right here as Henry," sobbed Rebecca, "and now he's gone, and he will never be in this home that poor father left him and the rest of us again."

"What do you really think ailed Edward?" asked Emma in hardly more than a whisper. She did not look at her sister.

Caroline sat down in a nearby armchair, and clutched the arms convulsively until her thin knuckles whitened.

"I told you," said she.

Rebecca held her handkerchief over her mouth, and looked at them above it with terrified, streaming eyes.

"I know you said that he had terrible pains in his stomach, and had spasms, but what do you think made him have them?"

"Henry called it gastric trouble. You know Edward has always had dyspepsia."

Mrs. Brigham hesitated a moment. "Was there any talk of an — examination?" said she.

Then Caroline turned on her fiercely.

"No," said she in a terrible voice. "No."

The three sisters' souls seemed to meet on one common ground of terrified understanding through their eyes. The old-fashioned latch of the door was heard to rattle, and push from without made the door shake ineffectually. "It's Henry," Rebecca sighed rather than whispered. Mrs. Brigham settled herself after a noiseless rush across the floor into her rocking-chair again, and was swaying back and forth with her head comfortably leaning back, when the door at last yielded and Henry Glynn entered. He cast a covertly sharp,

comprehensive glance at Mrs. Brigham with her elaborate calm; at Rebecca quietly huddled in the corner of the sofa with her handkerchief to her face and only one small reddened ear as attentive as a dog's uncovered and revealing her alertness for his presence; at Caroline sitting with a strained composure in her armchair by the stove. She met his eyes quite firmly with a look of inscrutable fear, and defiance of the fear and of him.

Henry Glynn looked more like this sister than the others. Both had the same hard delicacy of form and feature, both were tall and almost emaciated, both had a sparse growth of gray blond hair far back from high intellectual foreheads, both had an almost noble aquilinity of feature. They confronted each other with the pitiless immovability of two statues in whose marble lineaments emotions were fixed for all eternity.

Then Henry Glynn smiled and the smile transformed his face. He looked suddenly years younger, and an almost boyish recklessness and irresolution appeared in his face. He flung himself into a chair with a gesture which was bewildering from its incongruity with his general appearance. He leaned his head back, flung one leg over the other, and looked laughingly at Mrs. Brigham.

"I declare, Emma, you grow younger every year," he said.

She flushed a little, and her placid mouth widened at the corners. She was susceptible to praise.

"Our thoughts to-day ought to belong to the one of us who will *never* grow older," said Caroline in a hard voice.

Henry looked at her, still smiling. "Of course, we none of us forget that," said he, in a deep, gentle voice, "but we have to speak to the living, Caroline, and I have not seen Emma for a long time, and the living are as dear as the dead."

"Not to me," said Caroline.

She rose, and went abruptly out of the room again. Rebecca also rose and hurried after her, sobbing loudly.

Henry looked slowly after them.

"Caroline is completely unstrung," said he.

Mrs. Brigham rocked. A confidence in him inspired by his manner was stealing over her. Out of that confidence she spoke quite easily and naturally.

"His death was very sudden," said she.

Henry's eyelids quivered slightly but his gaze was unswerving.

"Yes," said he; "it was very sudden. He was sick only a few

hours."

"What did you call it?"

"Gastric."

"You did not think of an examination?"

"There was no need. I am perfectly certain as to the cause of his death."

Suddenly Mrs. Brigham felt a creep as of some live horror over her very soul. Her flesh prickled with cold, before an inflection of his voice. She rose, tottering on weak knees.

"Where are you going?" asked Henry in a strange, breathless voice.

Mrs. Brigham said something incoherent about some sewing which she had to do, some black for the funeral, and was out of the room. She went up to the front chamber which she occupied. Caroline was there. She went close to her and took her hands, and the two sisters looked at each other.

"Don't speak, don't, I won't have it!" said Caroline finally in an awful whisper.

"I won't," replied Emma.

That afternoon the three sisters were in the study, the large front room on the ground floor across the hall from the south parlour, when the dusk deepened.

Mrs. Brigham was hemming some black material. She sat close to the west window for the waning light. At last she laid her work on her lap.

"It's no use, I cannot see to sew another stitch until we have a light," said she.

Caroline, who was writing some letters at the table, turned to Rebecca, in her usual place on the sofa.

"Rebecca, you had better get a lamp," she said.

Rebecca started up; even in the dusk her face showed her agitation.

"It doesn't seem to me that we need a lamp quite yet," she said in a piteous, pleading voice like a child's.

"Yes, we do," returned Mrs. Brigham peremptorily. "We must have a light. I must finish this to-night or I can't go to the funeral, and I can't see to sew another stitch."

"Caroline can see to write letters, and she is farther from the window than you are," said Rebecca.

"Are you trying to save kerosene or are you lazy, Rebecca Glynn?" cried Mrs. Brigham. "I can go and get the light myself,

but I have this work all in my lap."

Caroline's pen stopped scratching.

"Rebecca, we must have the light," said she.

"Had we better have it in here?" asked Rebecca weakly.

"Of course! Why not?" cried Caroline sternly.

"I am sure I don't want to take my sewing into the other room, when it is all cleaned up for to-morrow," said Mrs. Brigham.

"Why, I never heard such a to-do about lighting a lamp."

Rebecca rose and left the room. Presently she entered with a lamp — a large one with a white porcelain shade. She set it on a table, an old-fashioned car-table which was placed against the opposite wall from the window. That wall was clear of bookcases and books, which were only on three sides of the room. That opposite wall was taken up with three doors, the one small space being occupied by the table. Above the table on the old-fashioned paper, of a white satin gloss, traversed by an indeterminate green scroll, hung quite high a small gilt and black-framed ivory miniature taken in her girlhood of the mother of the family. When the lamp was set on the table beneath it, the tiny pretty face painted on the ivory seemed to gleam out with a look of intelligence.

"What have you put that lamp over there for?" asked Mrs. Brigham, with more of impatience than her voice usually revealed. "Why didn't you set it in the hall and have done with it. Neither Caroline nor I can see if it is on that table."

"I thought perhaps you would move," replied Rebecca hoarsely.

"If I do move, we can't both sit at that table. Caroline has her paper all spread around. Why don't you set the lamp on the study table in the middle of the room, then we can both see?"

Rebecca hesitated. Her face was very pale. She looked with an appeal that was fairly agonizing at her sister Caroline.

"Why don't you put the lamp on this table, as she says?" asked Caroline, almost fiercely. "Why do you act so, Rebecca?"

"I should think you *would* ask her that," said Mrs. Brigham. "She doesn't act like herself at all."

Rebecca took the lamp and set it on the table in the middle of the room without another word. Then she turned her back upon it quickly and seated herself on the sofa, and placed a hand over her eyes as if to shade them, and remained so.

"Does the light hurt your eyes, and is that the reason why you didn't want the lamp?" asked Mrs. Brigham kindly.

"I always like to sit in the dark," replied Rebecca chokingly. Then she snatched her handkerchief hastily from her pocket and began to weep. Caroline continued to write, Mrs. Brigham to sew.

Suddenly Mrs. Brigham as she sewed glanced at the opposite wall. The blance became a steady stare. She looked intently, her work suspended in her hands. Then she looked away again and took a few more stitches, then she looked again, and again turned to her task. At last she laid her work in her lap and stared concentratedly. She looked from the wall around the room, taking note of the various objects; she looked at the wall long and intently. Then she turned to her sisters.

"What is that?" said she.

"What?" asked Caroline harshly; her pen scratched loudly across the paper.

Rebecca gave one of her convulsive gasps.

"That strange shadow on the wall," replied Mrs. Brigham.

Rebecca sat with her face hidden: Caroline dipped her pen in the inkstand.

"Why don't you turn around and look?" asked Mrs. Brigham in a wondering and somewhat aggrieved way.

"I am in a hurry to finish this letter, if Mrs. Wilson Ebbitt is going to get word in time to come to the funeral," replied Caroline shortly.

Mrs. Brigham rose, her work slipping to the floor, and she began walking around the room, moving various articles of furniture, with her eyes on the shadow.

Then suddenly she shrieked out:

"Look at this awful shadow! What is it? Caroline, look, look! Rebecca, look! *What is it?*"

All Mrs. Brigham's triumphant placidity was gone. Her handsome face was livid with horror. She stood stiffly pointing at the shadow.

"Look!" said she, pointing her finger at it. "Look! What is it?"

Then Rebecca burst out in a wild wail after a shuddering glance at the wall:

"Oh, Caroline, there it is again! There it is again!"

"Caroline Glynn, you look!" said Mrs. Brigham. "Look!

What is that dreadful shadow?"

Caroline rose, turned, and stood confronting the wall.

"How should I know?" she said.

"It has been there every night since he died," cried Rebecca.

"Every night?"

"Yes. He died Thursday and this is Saturday; that makes three nights," said Caroline rigidly. She stood as if holding herself calm with a vise of concentrated will.

"It — it looks like — like —" stammered Mrs. Brigham in a tone of intense horror.

"I know what it looks like well enough," said Caroline. "I've got eyes in my head."

"It looks like Edward," burst out Rebecca in a sort of frenzy of fear. "Only—"

"Yes, it does," assented Mrs. Brigham, whose horror-stricken tone matched her sister's, "only — Oh, it is awful! What is it, Caroline?"

"I ask you again, how should I know?" replied Caroline. "I see it there like you. How should I know any more than you?"

"It *must* be something in the room," said Mrs. Brigham, staring wildly around.

"We moved everything in the room the first night it came," said Rebecca; "it is not anything in the room."

Caroline turned upon her with a sort of fury. "Of course it is something in the room," said she. "How you act! What do you mean by talking so? Of course it is something in the room."

"Of course, it is," agreed Mrs. Brigham, looking at Caroline suspiciously. "Of course it must be. It is only a coincidence. It just happens so. Perhaps it is the fold of the window curtain that makes it. It must be something in the room."

"It is not anything in the room," repeated Rebecca with obstinate horror.

The door opened suddenly and Henry Glynn entered. He began to speak, then his eyes followed the direction of the others'. He stood stock still staring at the shadow on the wall. It was life size and stretched across the white parallelogram of a door, half across the wall space on which the picture hung.

"What is that?" he demanded in a strange voice.

"It must be due to something in the room," Mrs. Brigham said faintly.

"It is not due to anything in the room," said Rebecca again

with the shrill insistency of terror.

"How you act, Rebecca Glynn," said Caroline.

Henry Glynn stood and stared a moment longer. His face showed a gamut of emotions — horror, conviction, then furious incredulity. Suddenly he began hastening hither and thither about the room. He moved the furniture with fierce jerks, turning ever to see the effect upon the shadow on the wall. Not a line of its terrible outlines wavered.

"It must be something in the room!" he declared in a voice which seemed to snap like a lash.

His face changed. The inmost secrecy of his nature seemed evident until one almost lost sight of his lineament. Rebecca stood close to her sofa, regarding him with woeful, fascinated eyes. Mrs. Brigham clutched Caroline's hand. They both stood in a corner out of his way. For a few moments he raged about the room like a caged wild animal. He moved every piece of furniture; when the moving of a piece did not affect the shadow, he flung it to the floor, the sisters watching.

Then suddenly he desisted. He laughed and began straightening the furniture which he had flung down.

"What an absurdity," he said easily. "Such a to-do about a shadow."

"That's so," assented Mrs. Brigham, in a scared voice which she tried to make natural. As she spoke she lifted a chair near her.

"I think you have broken the chair that Edward was so fond of," said Caroline.

Terror and wrath were struggling for expression on her face. Her mouth was set, her eyes shrinking. Henry lifted the chair with a show of anxiety.

"Just as good as ever," he said pleasantly. He laughed again, looking at his sisters. "Did I scare you?" he said. "I should think you might be used to me by this time. You know my way of wanting to leap to the bottom of a mystery, and that shadow does look — queer, like — and I thought if there was any way of accounting for it I would like to without any delay."

"You don't seem to have succeeded," remarked Caroline dryly, with a slight glance at the wall.

Henry's eyes followed hers and he quivered perceptibly.

"Oh, there is no accounting for shadows," he said, and he laughed again. "A man is a fool to try to account for shadows."

Then the supper bell rang, and they all left the room, but Henry kept his back to the wall, as did, indeed, the others.

Mrs. Brigham pressed close to Caroline as she crossed the hall. "He looked like a demon!" she breathed in her ear.

Henry led the way with an alert motion like a boy; Rebecca brought up the rear; she could scarcely walk, her knees trembled so.

"I can't sit in that room again this evening," she whispered to Caroline after supper.

"Very well, we will sit in the south room," replied Caroline. "I think we will sit in the south parlour," she said aloud; "it isn't as damp as the study, and I have a cold."

So they all sat in the south room with their sewing. Henry read the newspaper, his chair drawn close to the lamp on the table. About nine o'clock he rose abruptly and crossed the hall to the study. The three sisters looked at one another. Mrs. Brigham rose, folded her rustling skirts compactly around her, and began tiptoeing toward the door.

"What are you going to do?" inquired Rebecca agitatedly.

"I am going to see what he is about," replied Mrs. Brigham cautiously.

She pointed as she spoke to the study door across the hall; it was ajar. Henry had striven to pull it together behind him, but it had somehow swollen beyond the limit with curious speed. It was still ajar and a streak of light showed from top to bottom. The hall lamp was not lit.

"You had better stay where you are," said Caroline with guarded sharpness.

"I am going to see," repeated Mrs. Brigham firmly.

Then she folded her skirts so tightly that her bulk with its swelling curves was revealed in a black silk sheath, and she went with a slow toddle across the hall to the study door. She stood there, her eye at the crack.

In the south room Rebecca stopped sewing and sat watching with dilated eyes. Caroline sewed steadily. What Mrs. Brigham, standing at the crack in the study door, saw was this:

Henry Glynn, evidently reasoning that the source of the strange shadow must be between the table on which the lamp stood and the wall, was making systematic passes and thrusts all over and through the intervening space with an old sword which had belonged to his father. Not an inch was left unpierced. He

seemed to have divided the space into mathematical sections. He brandished the sword with a sort of cold fury and calculation; the blade gave out flashes of light, the shadow remained unmoved. Mrs. Brigham, watching, felt herself cold with horror.

Finally Henry ceased and stood with the sword in hand and raised as if to strike, surveying the shadow on the wall threateningly. Mrs. Brigham toddled back across the hall and shut the south room door behind her before she related what she had seen.

"He looked like a demon!" she said again. "Have you got any of that old wine in the house, Caroline? I don't feel as if I could stand much more."

Indeed, she looked overcome. Her handsome placid face was worn and strained and pale.

"Yes, there's plenty," said Caroline; "you can have some when you go to bed."

"I think we had all better take some," said Mrs. Brigham. "Oh, my God, Caroline, what —"

"Don't ask and don't speak," said Caroline.

"No, I am not going to," replied Mrs. Brigham; "but —"

Rebecca moaned aloud.

"What are you doing that for?" asked Caroline harshly.

"Poor Edward," returned Rebecca.

"That is all you have to groan for," said Caroline. "There is nothing else."

"I am going to bed," said Mrs. Brigham. "I sha'n't be able to be at the funeral if I don't."

Soon the three sisters went to their chambers and the south parlour was deserted. Caroline called to Henry in the study to put out the light before he came upstairs. They had been gone about an hour when he came into the room bringing the lamp which had stood in the study. He set it on the table and waited a few minutes, pacing up and down. His face was terrible, his fair complexion showed livid; his blue eyes seemed dark blanks of awful reflections.

Then he took the lamp up and returned to the library. He set the lamp on the centre table, and the shadow sprang out on the wall. Again he studied the furniture and moved it about, but deliberately, with none of his former frenzy. Nothing affected the shadow. Then he returned to the south room with the lamp

and again waited. Again he returned to the study and placed the lamp on the table, and the shadow sprang out upon the wall. It was midnight before he went up stairs. Mrs. Brigham and the other sisters, who could not sleep, heard him.

The next day was the funeral. That evening the family sat in the south room. Some relatives were with them. Nobody entered the study until Henry carried a lamp in there after the others had retired for the night. He saw again the shadow on the wall leap to an awful life before the light.

The next morning at breakfast Henry Glynn announced that he had to go to the city for three days. The sisters looked at him with surprise. He very seldom left home, and just now his practice had been neglected on account of Edward's death. He was a physician.

"How can you leave your patients now?" asked Mrs. Brigham wonderingly.

"I don't know how to, but there is no other way," replied Henry easily. "I have had a telegram from Doctor Mitford."

"Consultation?" inquired Mrs. Brigham.

"I have business," replied Henry.

Doctor Mitford was an old classmate of his who lived in a neighbouring city and who occasionally called upon him in the case of a consultation.

After he had gone Mrs. Brigham said to Caroline that after all Henry had not said that he was going to consult with Doctor Mitford, and she thought it very strange.

"Everything is very strange," said Rebecca with a shudder.

"What do you mean?" inquired Caroline sharply.

"Nothing," replied Rebecca.

Nobody entered the library that day, nor the next. The third day Henry was expected home, but he did not arrive and the last train from the city had come.

"I call it pretty queer work," said Mrs. Brigham. "The idea of a doctor leaving his patients for three days anyhow, at such a time as this, and I know he has some very sick ones; he said so. And the idea of a consultation lasting three days! There is no sense in it, and *now* he has not come. I don't understand it, for my part."

"I don't either," said Rebecca.

They were all in the south parlour. There was no light in the study opposite, and the door was ajar.

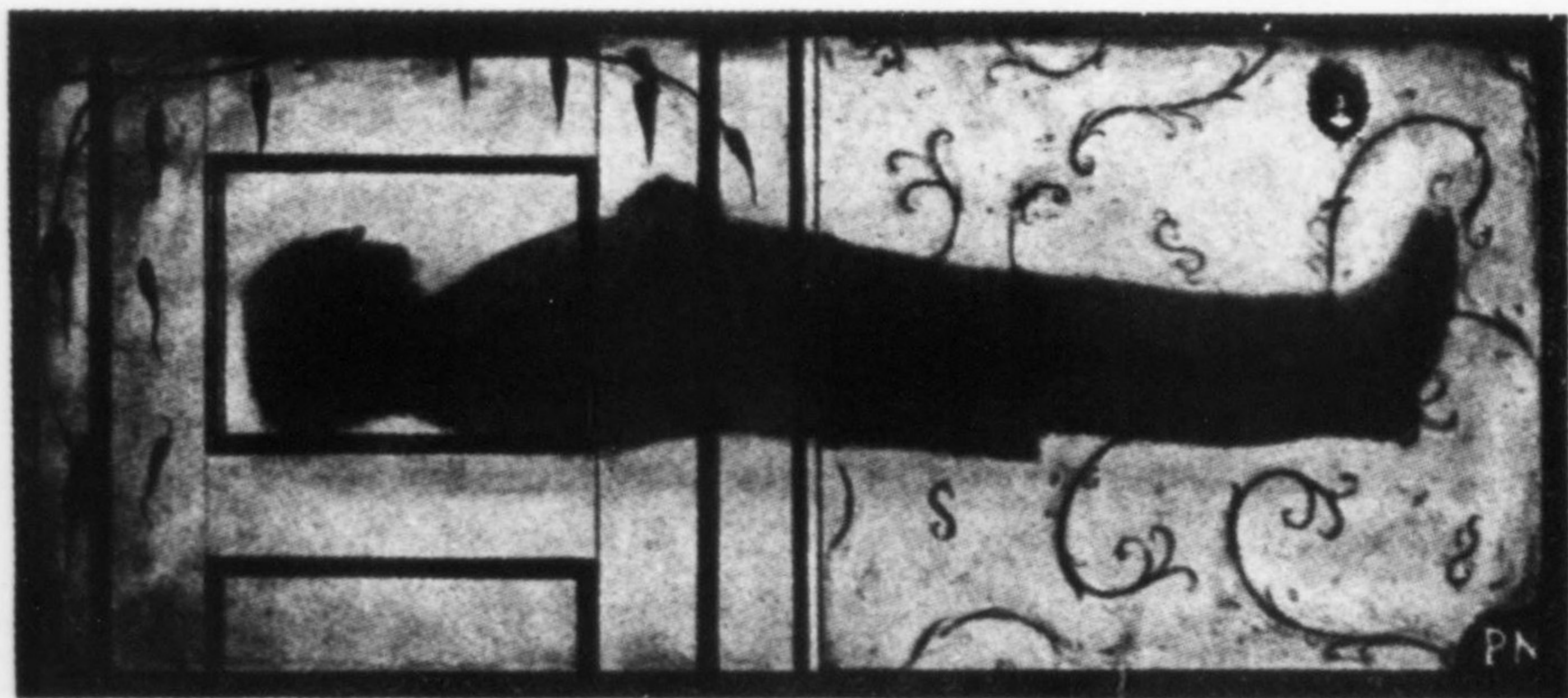
Presently Mrs. Brigham rose — she could not have told why; something seemed to impel her, some will outside her own. She went out of the room, again wrapping her rustling skirts around that she might pass noiselessly, and began pushing at the swollen door of the study.

“She has not got any lamp,” said Rebecca in a shaking voice.

Caroline, who was writing letters, rose again, took a lamp (there were two in the room) and followed her sister. Rebecca had risen, but she stood trembling, not venturing to follow.

The doorbell rang, but the others did not hear it; it was on the south door on the other side of the house from the study. Rebecca, after hesitating until the bell rang the second time, went to the door; she remembered that the servant was out.

Caroline and her sister Emma entered the study. Caroline set the lamp on the table. They looked at the wall. “Oh, my God,” gasped Mrs. Brigham, “there are — there are *two* — shadows.” The sisters stood clutching each other, staring at the awful things on the wall. Then Rebecca came in, staggering, with a telegram in her hand. “Here is — a telegram,” she gasped. “Henry is — dead.”



BOOK REVIEWS



ALIBRATIONS

WITH this issue FORGOTTEN FANTASY inaugurates a book review column which we hope will serve to keep you informed on the current reprints of SF and fantasy available in both hard and soft cover editions. We'll leave new fiction to the other magazines, where it is excellently

reviewed each month, and concentrate on what's new from yesterday.

UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS: A HISTORY AND ANTHOLOGY OF "THE SCIENTIFIC ROMANCE" IN THE MUNSEY MAGAZINES, 1912-1920, Edited by Sam Moskowitz. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1970. 433 pp. \$7.95.

Things You Thought Were Gone Forever Department: The dust jacket for this latest Moskowitz time trip brings back the Classic Triangle of all those wonderfully garish pulp covers of the 30's and 40's — the Guy, the Gal, and the BEM — only the period Sam deals with in this volume is much earlier. However, let's not split hairs outside the book — the dust jacket is fun. Inside lie more serious annoyances.

As an anthology, this volume is a disappointment in two ways: first, because many of the selections are merely excerpts from novels which, even though more or less complete in themselves, are frustrating, because the cutoff point inevitably leaves you panting for the rest. If you go along with the concept that reading part of a rare novel is better than reading none at all, you won't be upset by Sam's sampler — but be warned.

The second disappointment is the material itself. Now admittedly, Merritt, Cummings, England, Hall and Flint, et. al., were the big guns of the early Munseys, but for some reason (perhaps mercy for the frustrated reader?) Sam has chosen works by them that are largely still available. Indeed, with the exception of the Burroughs piece, five of the remaining seven selections are currently available in either hard cover or paperback editions published during the last decade. And as if that weren't enough, much to the disgust of SF magazine collectors, *every one* of the pieces (again excepting the Burroughs) was reprinted in either FAMOUS

FANTASTIC MYSTERIES or FANTASTIC NOVELS between 1939 and 1953. In fact, *THE GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM*, by Ray Cummings, was reprinted *twice*, once in each magazine. Now why, with the wealth of lesser-known material available in all the old ARGOSY's, ALL-STORY's, etc., did Sam have to pick the more common stories? Why not pick shorter, less familiar, complete stories, as he did in his previous volume, *SCIENCE FICTION BY GASLIGHT* (World, 1968. \$6.95).

However, take heart, for despite its disappointments as an anthology, the book is well worth having for the historical section alone. As in the previous book, Sam has done an outstanding job of telling the story of the Munsey magazines and the science fiction they contained in great detail, with lots of fascinating biographical information on the authors who wrote for them. Like Sam's other historical volumes, this one should definitely be on the shelves of all serious collectors, writers, and libraries.

THE SECRET OF HOLM PEEL AND OTHER STRANGE STORIES by Sax Rohmer. Ace 75750, New York, 1970. Paper, 191 pp. \$.60.

What a dirty trick to play on Sax Rohmer fans! Here is the first new collection of Rohmer stories in years, and they are the absolute bottom of the barrel! Detective stories, romances, war stories — everything but the "strange stories" advertised in the title. Only one of the stories, "A House Possessed," has any supernatural element in it at all. Everyone who is familiar with the spectrum of Rohmer's work knows that he ranged from the superlative to the godawful, and we love him in spite of his disasters. But let's not reprint the disasters when there is so much of the good stuff still available. How about reprints of *THE BAT FLIES LOW*, *GREEN EYES OF BAST*, *BAT WING*, *FIRE-TONGUE*, and *GREY FACE*, just to mention a few? Pyramid Books started a Sax Rohmer series back in 1966 which was discontinued after five titles. But the Fu Manchu series is still in print; surely there would be a market for Rohmer's other novels, even if they must be packaged to sell as "Gothic Mysteries," like the present volume.

And speaking of Fu Manchu, *THE SECRET OF HOLM PEEL* is worth having for fans of the Evil Doctor because it contains the first book publication of the next-to-last Fu Manchu story, written a few years before Rohmer's death in 1959. "The Eyes of Fu Manchu" was serialized in two parts in *THIS WEEK* magazine, October 6 - 13, 1957.

TOMORROW AND TOMORROW by Hunt Collins. Pyramid X2250, New York, 1970. Paper, 190 pp. \$.60.

A good, fast-paced novel of the future which originally appeared as *MALICE IN WONDERLAND* in the January, 1954 *IF*, by the author best known to most people as Evan Hunter.

BEFORE ADAM by Jack London. Bantam H5460, New York, 1970. Paper, 111 pp. \$.60.

The first paperback edition of this fine 1906 classic of prehistoric adventure, with an excellent introduction by the late Willy Ley and epilogue by Loren Eiseley. I have heard rumors that Airmont also has a new paper edition of this story out, but I haven't yet run across it.

CARMILLA and **THE HAUNTED BARONET** by Sheridan Le Fanu. Paperback Library 64-323, New York, 1970. Paper, 221 pp. \$.75.

A new edition of Le Fanu's most famous tale, the vampire novella that inspired **DRACULA**, together with another weird novella first published in 1871. This book, like the Sax Rohmer volume described above, is also packaged as a Gothic.

VIKRAM AND THE VAMPIRE OR TALES OF HINDU DEVILRY by Sir Richard Burton. Dover 486-22057-5, New York, 1969. Illustrated by Ernest Griset. Paper, 243 pp. \$2.50.

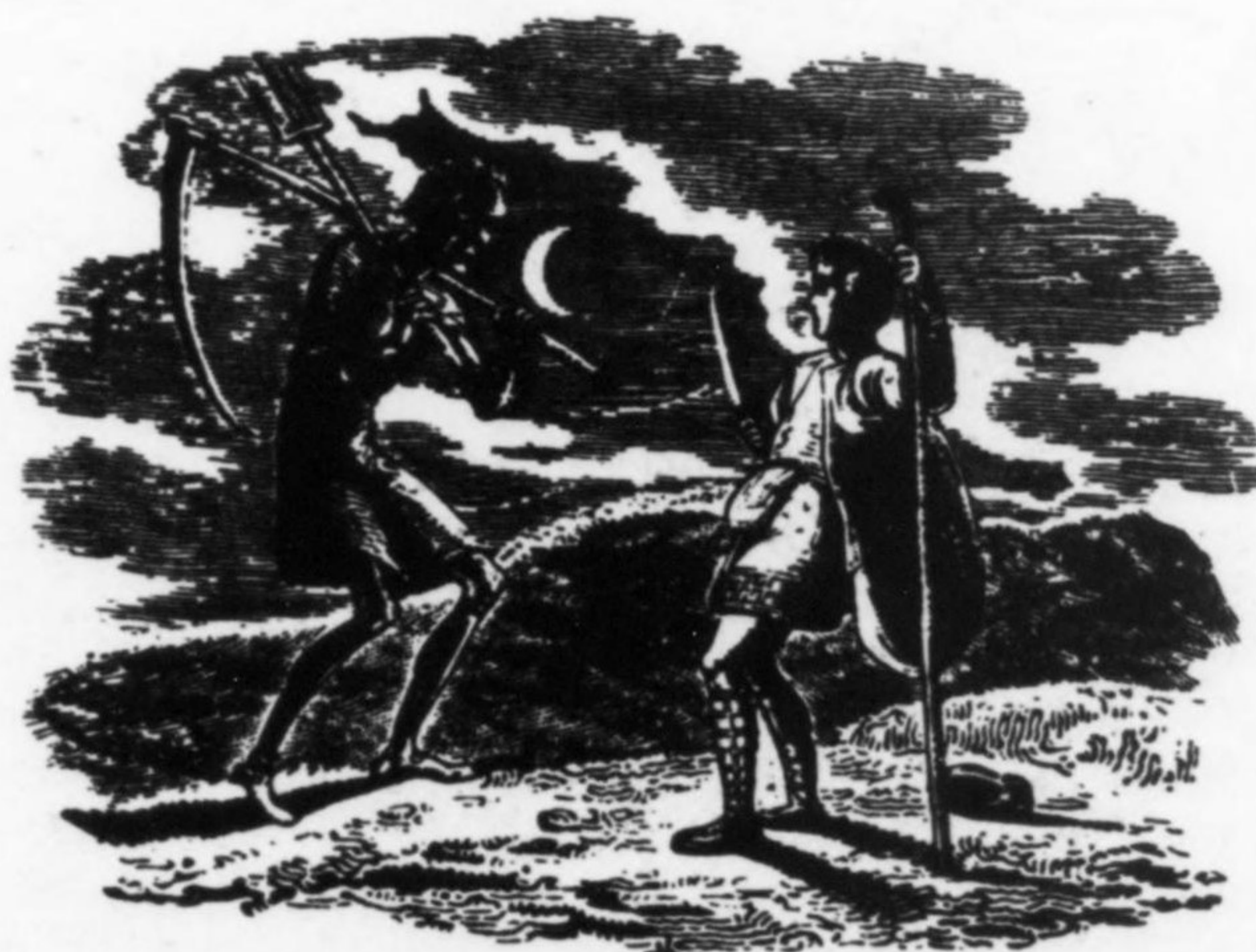
Dover does it again, with a handsome edition of an extremely rare classic of Hindu fantasy, first published in English in 1870. An amusing and delightful book in the style of **THE ARABIAN NIGHTS**, profusely illustrated. A real bargain at the price.

ZOTHIQUE by Clark Ashton Smith. Ballantine 345-01938-5-095, New York, 1970. Paper, 273 pp. \$.95.

One of the best volumes so far in the excellent Adult Fantasy series, edited by Lin Carter, this is the first paperback collection ever published of the wonderful weird tales of Clark Ashton Smith. Here are the stories dealing with his mythical Last Continent of the dim future, Zothique, most of which originally appeared in **WEIRD TALES** during the thirties. The book also contains a fine introduction, map, and epilogue by Editor Carter, and boasts a superb cover by George Barr.

Also worth adding to your collection are two other recent novels in the Ballantine Adult Fantasy series: **THE SHAVING OF SHAGPAT** by George Meredith, an Oriental fantasy first published in 1855, and **THE ISLAND OF THE MIGHTY** by Evangeline Walton, author of **WITCH HOUSE**, a reprint of her 1936 Welsh fantasy, **THE VIRGIN AND THE SWINE**.

DM





The Blocus.

The Lilasure.

Jeerloons.

The Lillipoutum.

The Green Cazzle of
Glockett Gozzle.

The Plant-animals of the Garden of Tanje.

THE
GODDESS OF ATVATABAR

by William R. Bradshaw

(PART II)

SYNOPSIS

The Arctic exploration ship *Polar King*, owned and commanded by Lexington White, and carrying an able company of officers and scientists, has attempted to reach the North Pole, but instead has sailed through a strange polar opening into an incredible interior world. As the ship and its awe-struck crew journey deeper into the inner world, they discover such wonders as an interior sun, a strange loss of weight, and finally two extraordinary flying soldiers, who come to investigate the ship. The belligerent Master-at-Arms, Flathootly, manages to capture one of the flying men, who submits with good grace. Professor Goldrock, the naturalist, is adept with languages, and soon begins to learn the rudiments of the prisoner's strange tongue. The explorers learn that he is a courier from the king of Atvatabar, a continent of the interior world situated directly beneath the Atlantic Ocean. When they convince him that their intentions are peaceful, the courier offers to lead them to Kioram, the principal port of Atvatabar, from whence they will journey inland to the capital city, Calnogar. During the voyage to Kioram, they learn that the people of Atvatabar are very advanced scientifically, with telephones, telegraphs, monorails, flying machines, and many other inventions far ahead of the outside world, powered by a force called "magnicity." They also learn of the greatly venerated living object of religious worship, the Lady Lyone, Supreme Goddess of Atvatabar. Upon arriving at Kioram, the company of the *Polar King* is enthusiastically welcomed, and the explorers take part in a triumphant procession, mounted on giant, bird-like mechanical walking machines. Then they are feasted by the governor of Kioram and given sumptuous quarters in his palace, from which, when rested, they will journey to Calnogar to meet the king — and Lyone, the Goddess of Atvatabar.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JOURNEY TO CALNOGOR.

THERE was in Kioram a temple dedicated to the god Rakamadeva, or Sacred Locomotive, which was one of the many gods worshipped by the Atvatabarese. It belonged to the gods embraced in the category of "gods of invention," and its motive power was magnicity, the same force that propelled the flying men. It was a powerful structure built of solid gold, platinum, terrelum, aquelum, and plutulum, and alloys of the most precious and heaviest of metals, and was both car and locomotive, and was hung over a single elevated rail that supported it, the weight resting on six wheels in front and six behind, all concealed by the body of the car.

The battery consisted of one hundred cells of terrelum and aquelum that developed a gigantic force. The six driving wheels at either end of the car were of immense size, and the tires were hollowed out with a semi-circular groove that fitted upon the high rounded rail. On this rail rested the entire weight of the car, which oscillated as it rushed. The end of each projecting head was inlaid with an enormous ruby, and the framework of the god was enriched in numerous places with precious stones. The sacred locomotive had as attendants twenty-four priests, clad in flowing vestures of orange and aloe-green silk (the royal colors), arranged in alternate stripes of great width, typical of a green earth and golden sky.

Royal and privileged travellers were alone permitted to harness the god, and by command of the king we were to enter Calnogor by means of the sacred courier.

The route to the temple led through a different part of the city than that traversed by us when going to the governor's palace. We had leisure to observe more particularly the architecture and the appearance of the streets through which we passed. The roadway everywhere was one solid block of white marble and emporiums and dwellings were built of the same material.

"You seem to have sculptured the city out of a mountain of

white marble," I said to the governor, who rode his bockhockid alongside mine.

"That is, indeed, the fact," replied the governor. "The entire city has been laboriously hewn from an immense mountain."

"Then in building your houses, you laid the foundation with the roof, and built them downward until you arrived at the level of the street," I said.

"That is precisely so," said he. "Our streets are simply ornamental chasms cut in the solid rock. Both roadway and building are composed of the same stone. One stone has built the entire city."

I was surprised at the idea of the stupendous labor involved in carving a city containing half a million of inhabitants, but, considering that a man could easily lift a block of stone weighing half a ton in the outer sphere, I saw that even so prodigious a task as chiselling Kioram might well be accomplished. It was a new sensation to bound on a bockhockid over the smoothly carved pavement, where once stood the mighty heart of a mountain of stone. All the buildings along the route were wonderfully sculptured. There seemed no end to the floriated mouldings, pillars and other decorations in relief, wrought in a strange order of art that was most captivating.

As for ourselves, we must have presented an interesting procession. Our Viking helmets of polished brass gleamed in the sunlight like gold. The emblazoned bear thereon was a symbol to the Atvatabarese of a species of divinity that protected us as beings of another world.

We arrived at the temple of the sacred locomotive, and were received by the winged priests in charge. Dismounting amid the sound of music, a procession was formed, the priests leading the way along a wide hallway that terminated in the temple of the god.

The god Rakamadeva was a glorious sight. On a causeway of marble flanked with steps on either side stood that object of magic life and beauty in a blaze of metals and jewels worthy the praise of the priests, in itself a royal palace.

This automobile car in shape seemed a compound of the back of a turtle and a Siamese temple, and was of extraordinary magnificence. Both front and rear tapered down to the solid platinum framework of the wheels, that extended beyond the car at both ends, the projections simulating the heads of

monsters that held each between their jaws one hundred cells of triple metal, which developed a tremendous force.

The priests chanted the following ode to the sacred locomotive:

"Glorious annihilator of time and space, lord of distance, imperial courier.

"Hail, swift and sublime man-created god, hail colossal and bright wheel!

"Thy wheels adamant, thy frame platinum, thy cells terrelum, aquelum!

"Thou art lightning shivering on the metals, thy breathless flights affright Atvatabar!

"The affluence of life animates thy form, that flashes through valleys and on mountains high!

"The forests roar as thou goest past, the gorge echoes thy thunder!

"Thy savage wheels ravage space. Convulsed with life, thy tireless form devours the heights of heaven!

"Labor and glory and terror leap as thy thundering feet go by; thy axles burn with the steady sweep, till on wings of fire they fly!"

The four-and-twenty priests formed a guard of honor as we reverentially entered the car. On our side of the god were seated Governor Ladalmir, Admiral Jolar and staff, myself and officers of the *Polar King*, including the scientific staff. The other side contained the sailors under command of Flathootly, master-at-arms, escorted by Captains Pra and Nototherboc.

The priests were distributed around the outside of the car, holding on to golden hand-rails. A priest seated on a throne in front moved a switch, and, with a roar of music, the god leaped upon the metals. The wonderful lightness of the car allowed us to attain a tremendous speed. The mightiest curves were taken at a single breath. The silken robes of the priests flashed in the wind.

The car vibrated with a thousand tremors. In the wide windows of thick glass were framed rapid phantasmagoria of landscapes, as the flying panorama unrolled itself. There were visions of interminable prairies, over which we swept, a blinding flash, leaving a low, spreading cloud of dust on the rails to mark our flight.

We plunged into tunnels of darkness, where the warm air



The sacred locomotive
stormed the mountain heights with its audacious tread.

roared with the echoes of the delirious wheels. The cry of the caverns saluted us like the shouts of unknown monsters dwelling in the heart of the mountains.

The sacred locomotive was an element of life, as it shot from the tunnels and bounded up curving mountain heights through pastures of delightful flowers. With wheels prevailed upon by the tension of the invincible fluid, the monster swerved not before the proudest precipice. It stormed the heights with its audacious tread, flinging itself on the mountain pass, a marvel of power and intrepidity, and known as the devourer of distance.

In five hours we had traversed five hundred miles, the distance from Kioram to Calnogor.

CHAPTER XV.

OUR RECEPTION BY THE KING.

THE sacred locomotive swept through a noble archway into a palace garden, a part of the king's palace in Calnogor. The railway terminal was a wide marble platform, or causeway, surrounded by a sea of tropical flowers. The priests had already alighted, and stood in double file to receive us. Through a sculptured archway a herald approached us, blowing a trumpet and announcing the coming of his royal majesty, King Aldemegry Bhoolmakar of Atvatabar.

We alighted, and I had the sailors drawn up in an imposing column on the platform, every man grasping his sword. Even the remotest walls of the garden were lined with wayleals, and military music added to the splendor of the scene.

Presently a stately figure approached us. It was his majesty accompanied by her majesty, Queen Toplissy. Koshnili whispered that it was a special honor that the king and queen should greet us even before we entered the palace. The king was tall and erect in bearing and his complexion was the color of old gold. His hair, as well as his closely-trimmed beard and mustache, were of a serpent-green tint. He wore a dome-shaped crown of gold, surmounted by a blazing ruby. His dress was a cloth of gold, light as gossamer, that swathed his form after the

manner of our Eastern potentates. His boots of gold-lacquered leather were covered with emeralds and curiously turned up at the toes. Queen Toplissy was a handsome lady, rather heavy in physique, of an orange-yellow complexion, with bright copper-bronze hair, and her unclad arms wore a profusion of bracelets and armlets of various metals. Her crown was also of gold surmounted by a blazing sapphire. Her robes were of white silk embroidered with broad bands of orange and arranged in innumerable folds. Her boots were incrustated with sapphires. All this I saw at a momentary glance as Koshnili led me forward to his majesty. I was announced as "His Excellency, Lexington White, commander of the *Polar King*, the discoverer of the Polar Gulf, and the first inhabitant of the outer world who had ever reached Bilbimtesirok and Atvatabar."

The king embraced me and I kissed the hand of her majesty. The officers and sailors received their due share of royal attention. We were the objects of unbounded curiosity on the part of the royal retinue.

Amid a salute of guns and music we passed through the archway that formed the boundary between the palace gardens and the court of the holy locomotive, and saw the palace of King Aldemegry Bhoolmakar before us.

It was a high, conical building, twenty stories in height. Each story was surrounded by a row of windows decorated with pillars. Colossal lions of gold stood on the entrance towers, their claws formed of straps of gold running down the walls and riveted to the lower tiers of stone, giving the impression that they held together the whole structure beneath. The style of architecture was an absolutely new order. It was neither Hindoo, Egyptian, Greek, nor Gothic, but there was a flavor of all four styles in the weirdly-carved circular walls and roofs. The palace was surrounded by a spacious court, enclosed by cloistered walls. Flowers bloomed in immense square-shaped vases of stone supported on diminutive square pillars. A tank of crystal water, on each side of which broad wide steps led down into the cool wave, lay in the centre of the court. The tank was fed by a wide rivulet of rippling water that ran along a chiselled bed in the marble floor of the court.

The entire scene was a picture of glorious and blessed repose. The sculptor had covered the base and frieze of the walls with a profusion of ornament in high relief. Imagination and art had

produced scenes that created a profound impression. A dramatic calmness held lion and elephant, serpent and eagle, wayleal and bockhockid, youth and maiden, in glorious embrace.

The banquet given by the king in our honor in the topmost story of the palace was both delicious and satisfying. All the fertility of Atvatabar ministered to our delight. Strange meats and fruits were music to the body, as art and music were meats and wine to the soul.

I sat beside his majesty at the feast, while Koshnili sat at my right hand. Admiral Jolar sat beside the queen, and on her majesty's right sat Captain Wallace. The professors and other officers, as well as a number of noblemen and state officers, also sat at the royal table. At another table sat the sailors, accompanied by the officers of the king's household.

We had again an opportunity of tasting the squang of Atvatabar, which was of a finer brand than that served at the table of Governor Ladalmir. It added a new joy to life to taste such royal wine.

His majesty, seated on his throne at the feast, raised a glass of squang and said: "I drink in welcome to our illustrious guest, His Excellency, Lexington White, commander of the *Polar King* and discoverer of Atvatabar."

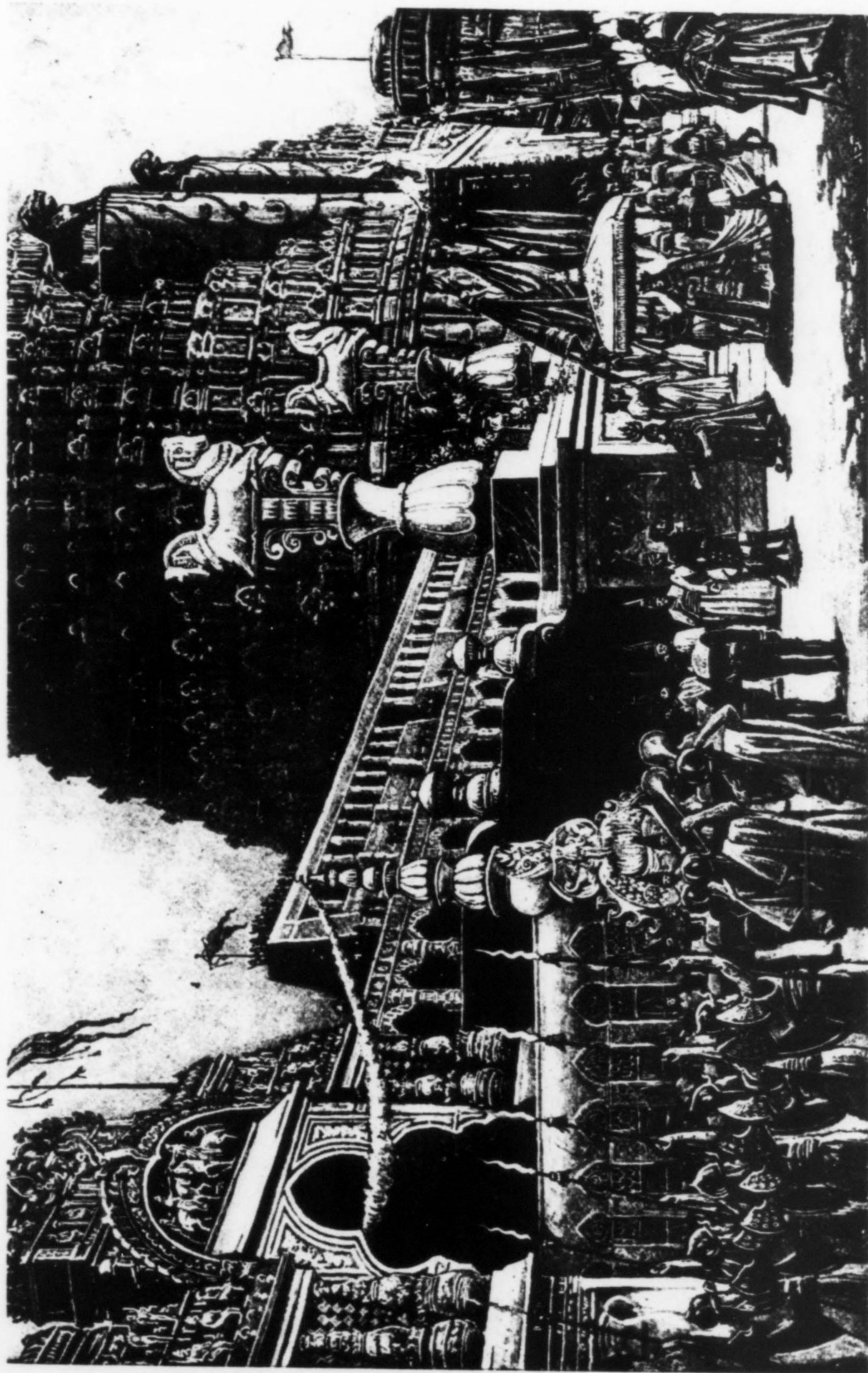
The company rising, shouted, "Welcome to His Excellency, Lexington White, commander of the *Polar King!*" and drank of their glasses in my honor.

In acknowledgment of this great compliment I rose and proposed the healths of the king and queen. I said: "I drink to the healths of their royal majesties, King Aldemegry Bhoolmakar and Queen Toplissy of Atvatabar, to whom be lifelong peace and prosperity."

The company honored this sentiment by acclamation and drinking goblets of wine. This constituted the preliminaries of our interview.

"Now," said his majesty, "we are extremely anxious to learn all about the manners and customs, of the people of the outer world. Tell us of these people, their laws, religions, and modes of government."

In obedience to the king's request I spoke of America and its nations founded on the idea of self-sovereignty, and of Europe with its sovereigns and subjects. I spoke of Egypt and India as



The king embraced me, and I kissed the hand of her majesty.

types of a colossal past, of the United States and Great Britain as types of a colossal present, and of Africa the continent of the colossal future. I informed the king that the genius of Asia, of the Eastern world, ran to poetry and art without science, while that of the Western world developed science and invention without poetry and art.

"Ah!" cried the king, who was intensely interested. "Atvatabar has both science and art, invention and poetry. Our wise rulers have been ever mindful of the equal charms of science and sentiment in educating our people."

I assured his majesty that we were no less anxious to learn all about the institutions of Atvatabar than he was regarding the external sphere.

"Atvatabar," said the king, "is a monarchy formed on the will of the people. While the throne is inalienably secured to the king for life, the government is vested in a legislative chamber, called Borodemy. This legislative assembly is also our house of nobles, consisting of one thousand members divided into three classes. To be once elected to the Borodemy entitles the representative to receive the title of Boiroon for life only; at the expiration of five years, the term of each assembly, a member, if again elected, receives the title of Jangoon; if again elected the highest title is Goiloor. No one can be elected more than three times, and Goiloor is a title which but few attain, owing to the limited number of legislators who are three times elected to the Borodemy. The president of the assembly is always a Goiloor, as only a member of the highest caste is nominated for the presidency. He is also chief minister of state. His council, which is the government, includes the chief officer of each branch of government, as well as a royal representative. Thus Atvatabar is an absolute democracy, ornamented and ruled by those men whom a generous nation loves to honor for distinguished merit employed in the public service."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KING UNFOLDS THE GRANDEUR OF ATVATABAR.

"YOUR majesty," I said, "informs us that Atvatabar possesses science and art, invention and poetry. These matters

interest us quite as much as your civil and military constitution. We will feel grateful if your majesty will inform us more particularly regarding the condition of those great forces for the development of the soul."

"You are right," said the king; "the government and the protection of society, although matters of the utmost importance, are always much inferior to the glory they defend. Mere police duties can never rank with the sovereignty of mind over matter."

"In other words," said I, "the barricade is ever inferior to the palace, and the treasure house to the heaps of gold within it. But, your majesty, in what way does mind triumph over matter in your realm?"

"Well," said the king, "we worship the human soul under a thousand forms, arranged in three great circles of deities. The first circle contains the gods of invention, that is, the practical forms by which ideas rule the physical world, and also the composite forms of the inventors themselves. The second circle contains the gods of art, and the third circle the spiritual gods of sorcery, magic and love. What gods do you people of the outer world worship?"

"In my own country," I replied, "a great many people worship one God, the Creator of the universe. Many of these only nominally worship God, but in reality worship gold, while a still greater number worship gold without pretence of worshipping anything else."

"Then," said the king, "gold is your god. Our god is the aggregated universal human soul worshipped under its various manifestations, both real and ideal. This universal human soul forms the one supreme god Harikar, whom we worship in the person of a living woman, the Supreme Goddess Lyone. The great generic symbol of our faith is the golden throne of the gods in the Bormidophia, whereon sits Lyone, the supreme goddess, the representative of Harikar."

"Harikar is then your supreme deity?" I remarked.

"Greatest, for he embraces all other gods," said the king. "But the greatest individual god is the Supreme Goddess, the symbol of the Holy Soul."

I felt a strange desire to learn everything about so singular a divinity as Lyone. It was a weird, awful, yet terribly entrancing thought, that amid a thousand gods of dead and silent gold one

only should be alive, and that one a beautiful woman. Was it possible that a live goddess could exist, and be both young and handsome? I was anxious to ask a thousand questions concerning this mysterious being, but it seemed a sacrilege to ask them. Was it possible for her to continue worthy of worship, a human being, intoxicated, as she must be, by the ceaseless adoration of millions? In other words, can a woman be a veritable goddess and live? These ideas rushed through my soul like quicksilver. My brain reeled with this discovery of the secret of Atvatabar! What to me were its never-setting sun, its want of gravity, its flying wayleals and bockhockids, its sculptured cities, its sacred locomotive, its miracles of mechanism and art, compared to a real live goddess with warm blood and a beating heart! No wonder the discovery thrilled me! I felt like embracing his majesty for the information, so simply given, that filled me with delight!

My companions were also greatly excited at the story of the king, and it was with difficulty I could appear interested in the further information he so graciously imparted to us. What were mines of gold to this? But I strove outwardly to appear calm. I felt I must listen further to the story of Atvatabar.

"Our other deities," continued the king, "are the ideal inventors and their inventions. These give man empire over nature. All those who have given man power of flight, who multiply his power to run, those who multiply the power of the eye to see, the hand to labor or to smite, the voice or pen to transmit ideas to great distances and to great multitudes, stand in the pantheon in ideal grandeur. There are the lords of labor, the deities of space and time. They are those gods that breathe the breath of life into unborn ideas, and lo! from brain and hand spring the creatures of their will."

The officers and sailors were listening to the discourse of the king with rapt attention. We were anxious to learn as much as possible about this strange religion of Atvatabar.

"We also worship art and ideal artists," continued the king, "the soul-developers, who work for noble and humane ideas expressed in their most beautiful garb; the builders of earthly palaces for the soul in literature, music, manners, painting, dancing, sculpture, decoration, tapestry and architecture which are represented by ideal statues composed from groups of living artists. These in their ideal or collective perfection are the gods

who counteract the evils of an arid and mechanical civilization by arousing feeling, imagination, truth, beauty, tenderness, patriotism and faith in the souls of their fellows.

"The spiritual forces are typified by a goddess, the incarnation of spirit power, of romantic, ideal, hopeless love. Her ministers are the priests of sorcery, necromancy, magic, theosophy, mesmerism, spiritualism and other kindred spiritual powers. These perform miracles, create matter, and impart life to dead bodies. The souls of her priests and priestesses have the power to leave the body at will, and to achieve a present Nirvana of one hundred years."

CHAPTER XVII.

GNAPHISTHASIA.

THE day following our arrival in Calnogor his majesty the king had projected for us a journey to the palace of art at Gnaphisthasia, which stood on the slope of a mountain in a rich valley lying one hundred miles southwest of Calnogor. The palace itself was surrounded by high walls of massive porcelain, beautifully adorned with sculpture mouldings, and midway on each side massive gateways, each formed of rounded cones, rising to a great height and covered with sculptured forms, between which the porcelain wall was pierced with fretted arabesque, running high above the arched opening beneath. Once within the gorgeous gateway, the porcelain walls of Gnaphisthasia stood before the enraptured eyes more than a mile in length and half a mile in depth, a many-colored dream of imposing magnificence covered with the work of sculptors. The principal part of the wall was of a greenish-white vitrification, finely diversified by horizontal friezes, with arabesques in red and green, purple and yellow, lavender, sea-green, blue and silver and pale rose and deep gray, all separated by wide bands of greenish-white stone.

In the centre of the buildings stood a semicircle of massive conical towers, gleaming like enormous jewels and connected by sculptured walls. The four corners of the palace were also

groups of towers, all the various groups being connected with the rectangular walls that were decorated with arcades and balconies.

Here in this splendid abode were poets and painters, musicians, sculptors and architects, dancers, weavers of fabrics, ceramists, jewellers, engravers, enamellers, artists in lacquer, carvers, designers and workers in glass and metal, pearl and ivory and the precious stones.

In an immense chamber of the palace a *fête* was being held. On either side a double range of massive porcelain pillars supported the roof, which covered this grand sanctuary of art like an immense vitrified jewel. The floor of the court was formed of polished wood of a deep rose color that emitted a rich, heavy perfume. Wood of a brilliant green, with interlacing arabesques of red, formed the border of the floor. At the further end of the court stood three thrones, being composed, respectively, of terrelum, aquelum, and plutulum, the three most precious metals. On the threefold throne sat Yermoul, lord of art, his majesty the king, and myself. In ample recesses amid the pillars stood the devotees of art, while the centre of the court was filled with the musicians. A procession of priests and priestesses passed down the living aisles, clad in the most gorgeous fabrics of silk spun by gigantic spiders, and they bore singly trophies of art, or moved in groups, supporting golden litters carrying piled-up treasures of dazzling splendor.

First came a band of priestesses bearing fan-like ensigns of carved wood and fretwork, and panels filled with silks, rare brocades and embroideries. Then came priests bearing heavy vases and urns of gold, terrelum, aquelum, plutulum, silver, and alloys of precious bronze. Then followed others bearing litters piled with vases and figures carved from solid pearl, or fashioned in precious metals. Cups, plates, vases in endless shapes, designs and colors went past, piled high on golden litters, looking like gardens of tropic flowers. Rare laces made of threads spun from the precious metals of Atvatabar, mosaics, ivories, art forgings, costly enamels, decorative bas-reliefs, implements of war, agriculture and commerce, magic spears and daggers, with shaft and handle encrusted with grotesque carvings in metallic alloys. These alloys took the forms of figures, animals and emblems, having the strangest colorings, like the hilts and scabbards of Japanese swords carved in



A procession of priests and priestesses passed down the living aisles,
bearing trophies of art.

shakudo and shibuichi. There were exhibited vases of cinnabar, vases wondrously carved from tea-rose, coral-red, pearl-gray, ashes-of-roses, mustard-yellow, apple-green, pistache and crushed-strawberry colored metals. There were also splendid crowns, flowers, animals, birds, and fishes, carved from precious kragon, an imperial stone harder than the diamond and of a pale rose-pink color. Every object was as perfect as though modelled in wax.

Through all this decorative movement there was something more than decoration understood as mere ornamentation — there was the keenest evidence of soul movement on the part of the artists. The music gloriously celebrated the passions of love, ambition and triumph that had filled the souls of the artists when engaged in their incomparable labors, and pealed forth that serene life of the spirit as symbolized in the perfect works of art exhibited, wherein were sealed in eternal magnificence fragments of the souls that had created them.

Between the pauses of the music an organ-megaphone shouted forth in musically-stentorian tones the words that had been impressed on its cylinders in praise of art. The five thousand priests and priestesses of art had simultaneously shouted their art ritual down five thousand tubes, which were all focussed into a single tube of large calibre. The multitudinous sound of their voices had been indelibly impressed on this phonograph-megaphone that now yielded up the sentiments impressed upon it, its tones being that of a vast multitude, re-enforced by the vibrating music of an organ, which was a part of the megaphone. These were the passages repeated by the instrument with a startling splendor of sound:

THE MESSAGE OF THE MEGAPHONE.

I.

To define art is to define life.

II.

Art is a language that describes the souls of things.

III.

Art in nature is the expression of life; in art it is life itself.

IV.

Art is too subtle a quality to be defined by the formula of the critic. It is greater than all of the definitions that have tried to grasp it.

V.

Art is the flowing focus from which radiate thought, imagination and feeling, gifted with the power of utterance.

VI.

True art is generous, passionate, earnest, vivid, enthusiastic. So also is the true artist.

VII.

To satisfy the far-reaching longing of the spirit, art makes things more glorious than they are. It is the perfect expression of a perfect environment.

VIII.

To mould his symbols with the same life that fills his conception of the idea is the supreme effort of the artist.

IX.

As nature from the coarse soil produces flowers, so also the artist from every-day life produces the subtle sweets of art.

X.

Art that is simply utility is not sufficiently decorative to delight every nerve of feeling in the soul. To feed these, many flavors of form and color are necessary, and hence the necessity of art.

XI.

Where do emotion and imagination begin in art? Where do spirit and flesh unite in a living creature?

XII.

The artist is a creator. He breathes into dull matter the breath of art, and it thenceforth contains a living soul.

XIII.

Poetry and art make life splendid without science, which is the cold investigation of that which was once thrilled with the passion of life. Invention makes life splendid without poetry and art. By whom will the glorious union of art and science be consummated?

XIV.

What is the world we live in? It is for the most part a collection of souls hidebound with treachery and selfishness; of souls covered with a slag from which have departed the fires of love and passion and delight. Such incinerated *aliases* of their former selves are your judges, oh, artists!

XV.

Art is a green oasis in an arid and mechanical civilization. It creates an earthly home for the soul, for those wounded by the riot of trade, the weariness of labor, the fierce struggle for gold, and the deadly environment of rushing travel, blasted pavements and the withering disappointments of life.

XVI.

Where is that artist that can sway imagination, create emotion, lift the banner of a high ideal, give the soul a keener appreciation of beauty, add to the mind, strength and grace, cause the brain to develop new nerves of feeling and newer cells of thought, that we may salute him as genius?

XVII.

Art is the emotion within made splendid by imagination that clothes everything with perfection. Like color it dwells only in the soul, but the cause of the sensation is without. In all art, the artist seeks to reproduce the cause of his ecstasy, that he may communicate to others a similar delight. He is like a god, he always gives but never receives, for fame, not money, is his recompense.

XVIII.

Given a soul that can feel sublimely, that can respond to beauty and feel thrilled with the joy of existence, that can feel the burden of anguish, that can appreciate the humors and absurdities of life, and given the power to adequately represent the knowledge, truth, understanding and conviction of these impressions in fitting symbols, vitalized by imagination and emotion, then have we both poet and artist.

XIX.

The soul in such inspired moments takes the form of sculptured arabesques, or flowers, or resembles the refluent sea, full of incredible shapes and symbols. It accompanies the march of thought, the profusive swell of emotion, is capable of pain

and ecstasy, and seeks to be fed with those delightful symbols of its life which we call art, the most priceless of earthly possessions.

XX.

Four things are necessary for art, viz.: idea, sentiment, imagination and manipulative skill. After these comes prestige, or the applause of the world, to crown the work.

XXI.

The art decorator is a type of all art workmen. See him about to manipulate a plastic ornament on the wall. The plaster resembles his idea; its plastic qualities his sentiment, or emotion; the style of ornament into which it is to be moulded resembles his imagination, and the power of the artist to successfully and triumphantly embody in the finished ornament the living, breathing idea that fills him is his manipulative skill. Any work of art, if perfect in itself, still remains unfinished until the world comes along and applauds.

XXII.

The age wants the artist. It wants imagination, originality, inspiration, ideality. It requires fertile, dreaming souls, to create ideal breadth.

It requires an earthly Nirvana wherein one may escape a selfish, barbarous, pitiless world. There is a great dearth of the coinage of the soul. We want artists to explain the souls of things, not their mechanical construction, but the unseen secret of their purposes, their unspeakable existence. We want heart-expanding triumphs to counteract the withering influences of life. If a soul is entranced with man or nature, we also want to feel his fascination, to be penetrated with his rapture.

The megaphone ceased its musical vociferation, which formed a spiritual exercise for the souls assembled before us. I felt entranced and lifted up to a plane of splendid life hitherto unknown in my experience. I began to understand that art, after all, is the one thing in our terrestrial life worth striving for, in fact our only possession. For is it not the transmission of the soul to outer matter, whose savagery may be thus charmed and

subdued to become a satisfactory spiritual environment?

Following the procession of artists came beautiful, wondrously-arrayed dancers, whose evolutions made the brain dizzy with delight. Fair priests and priestesses of art formed upon the floor of the palace decorative arabesques of scrolls and interlacements of living bodies, the color of their garments mingling in perfectly harmonious hues, beautiful beyond comparison. Their ceaseless evolutions were made to the measure of perfect music. Panels and bands of living decorations were framed and transformed like the magical changes of the kaleidoscope. At last Yermoul, the Lord of Art, waved his wand, and the dancers stood transfixed, a garden of ecstatic color like a Persian carpet, wonderfully designed and vividly emblazoned. It was a scene of royal magnificence. These priests and priestesses were the art workers of Gnaphisthasia, who had so finely exhibited their treasures.

Following the rhythmic movements of the art workers came poets, painters, sculptors, whose works lifted the soul to higher planes of being. These in their trophies of art recited or exhibited gave the soul imagination and sentiment, lifting it almost to the enraptured height of worship, adoration and love.

At the close of the ceremonies we were entertained by Yermoul, Lord of Art, at a banquet, at which music and song and the dancing of voluptuous priestesses made hearts thrill with delight. Bidding farewell at last to the Lord of Art and his priests and priestesses, his majesty, myself and our company returned by the sacred locomotive to Calnogor.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE JOURNEY TO THE BORMIDOPHIA.

THE palace bell announced the beginning of a new day in Calnogor. I had not slept during the hours of test, excited as I was by our visit to Gnaphisthasia and the strange customs of Atvatabar.

Koshnili arrived soon after the bell had sounded to inform me that the king had commanded his royal army to be assembled in the great square beyond the palace walls to escort

us to the Bormidophia, where a solemn act of worship would be performed before the throne of the gods. This was a most delightful message, as nothing on earth could please me better than to witness the glories of the Bormidophia.

The army under the command of Prince Coltonobory, the brother of the king, commander-in-chief, consisted of 250,000 wayleals, or flying soldiers, and 50,000 bockhockids, or flying cavalry. There was also a detachment of 10,000 fletyemings, or sailors of the royal navy. These were drawn up in review in a vast square before the royal palace.

Superb bockhockids conveyed us the four miles to the Bormidophia in the centre of the city.

The king and queen, both of whom wore crowns blazing with jewels, sat with Koshnili and myself in the first palanquin of bockhockids. The high officers of the government and nobles of the Borodemy, together with the officers and sailors of the *Polar King*, were distributed among the other stately litters.

The route to the pantheon was lined with palaces. An immense population thronged either side of the roadway. A review of the army took place *en route*. The wayleals first rose into an enormous flying column, which subsided into whirling domes and afterward broke up into a dozen living globes, that appeared to roll one after another on the ground. These were dissolved into a solid army marching on foot for a time. Then as if by magic the entire mass of men rose into spiral columns which dissolved into vast rings inextricably involved with each other. It was a sight unique and bewildering.

Behind the wayleals, fifty thousand bockhockids kept up their steady march. The people shouted with enthusiasm.

A mimic battle took place in the air above us. Ten thousand wayleals fought on either side, brilliant in many-colored uniforms. Finally, a rainbow arch of flying men spanned the entrance to the great square of the Bormidophia, or pantheon. Amid the thunder of guns and music, the entire company alighted at the doors of the pantheon, which consisted of an immense circular pile of buildings over a mile in circumference. The interior revealed a scene of surpassing magnificence. Endless tiers of seats were arranged in terraces that, rising above each other, traversed the wide sweep of the amphitheatre. The entire pantheon with its adjacent palaces and colonnades was sculptured out of a hill of green marble. The exterior walls,

rising 200 feet, were crowned with a lofty dome of enamelled glass, through which the light of the sun streamed in myriad colors on the sea of worshippers beneath. The walls of the pantheon, both exteriorly and interiorly, were sculptured with immense reliefs, the trophies of invention and art, as well as the magical symbols of spiritual forces.

The lowest circle of the amphitheatre reached down one hundred feet below the level of the outer pavement, and the royal seat was on a level with the ground and fifty feet below the top of the far-famed golden throne of the gods, that stood in the centre of the immense building.

Our entrance was the signal for welcoming music and a suppressed murmur of excitement from the myriads of worshippers that sat both above and below us. The amphitheatre contained not less than 50,000 people. The moment their majesties were seated, a roar of artillery shook the earth. The forthcoming grand act of worship was evidently instituted in our honor, for we were the observed of all eyes in that vast concourse of people.

A dozen choirs, possessed of all kinds of beautiful instruments, caressed the ear with their melodious songs. There was no dim religious light; everything was open-eyed beneath that splendid dome. Suddenly a cloud of flying priests and priestesses seated themselves on a pyramid formed of terraces of solid silver fifty feet in height that supported the miraculous throne. They at once began to sing with such force and pathos as to dissolve the multitude into a hush of breathless silence.

Then an immense bell of bronze filled the pantheon with a sonorous moan. Twelve thrilling tones made souls tremble and heads bow down. With the last vibration there rose from the crown of the throne of the gods a living woman, nude to the waist, having a broad belt of gold studded with gems clasping her figure, from which fell to her feet a garment of aquelium lace wrought with magical symbols.

She was a girl of peerless development; her arms were long and softly moulded, her breasts firm and splendid. The color of her complexion and flesh was of soft mat gold, like that of a golden fruit, and a perceptible flush warmed her cheeks. Her profile was perfect, being both proud and tender in outline. Her hair was a heavy glossy mass, of a pale sapphire-blue color, that fell in a waving cloud around her shoulders. Her whole figure



On the throne sat the Supreme Goddess, Lyone, the representative of Harikar, the Holy Soul.

bore an infinitely gracious expression, the result of possessing a tender and sympathetic soul.

On her head was a tiara of terrelum, the vermilion metal, studded with gems, on her neck she wore a necklace of emerald-green sapphires, while on either wrist were broad gold bracelets, having a magnificent blue sapphire on each.

She was Lyone, the Supreme Goddess of Atvatabar, the representative of Harikar, the Holy Soul; Queen of Magicians; Mother of Sorcerers, and Princess of Arjeels.

Standing erect for a moment, as if to assure the vast congregation of her presence, she then slowly sat down on a broad divan of aloe-green silk velvet, holding in her right hand the terrelum sceptre of spiritual sovereignty, whose head bore two hearts formed of flaming rubies.

I was entranced with the appearance of the divine girl, the object of the adoration of Atvatabar. Every feature of her face was carved with a full and ripe roundness, exhibiting repose and power. Her eyes, large and blue and lustrous, were sorcery itself. There was in them an unutterable tenderness, a divine hospitality, the result of vast pride and still vaster sympathy.

All at once she gazed at me! I felt filled with a fever of delicious delight, of intoxicating adoration. I could then understand the devotion of Atvatabar, of hearts slain by eyes that were conquering swords.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE THRONE OF THE GODS, CALNOGOR.

THE throne of the gods was the most famous institution in Atvatabar. It was the cynosure of every eye, the object of all adoration, the tabernacle of all that was splendid in art, science and spiritual perfection. The great institutions of Eyplosis, the college of ten thousand soul-worshippers, the palace of Gnaphisthasia, with its five thousand poets, artists, musicians, dancers, architects, and weavers of glorious cloths, and the establishments for training the youth of the country in mechanical skill, were but the outlying powers that lent glory to the throne itself. It was the standard of virtue, of soul, of

genius, skill and art. It was the triune symbol of body, mind and spirit. It was the undying voice of Atvatabar proclaiming the grandeur of soul development; that pleasure, rightly guarded, may be virtue. The religion of Harikar in a word was this, that the Nirvana, or blessedness promised the followers of the supernatural creeds of the outer world, after death was to be enjoyed in the body in earthly life without the trouble of dying to gain it. This was a comfortable state of things, if only possible of accomplishment, and such a creed of necessity included the doctrine that the physical death of the body was the end of all individuality, the soul thereafter losing all personality in the great ocean of existence.

The throne of the gods was a cone of solid gold one hundred feet in height, divided into three parts for the various castes of gods, or symbols of science, art and spirituality. The structure was a circular solid cone of gold, shaped somewhat in the form of a heart. It was indeed the golden heart of Atvatabar, proclaiming that sentiment and science should go hand in hand; that in all affairs of life the heart should be an important factor. The lower section, or scientific pantheon, possessed bas-reliefs of models or symbols of the more important inventions. This section was forty feet in height and seventy-two feet in diameter.

The images of the gods themselves surmounting the lowest part of the throne were in reality composite man-gods, that is to say, each figure was a statue, life size, of the resultant of the statues of all the important developers of each invention and was thus obtained:

As soon as any prominent inventor or developer of an invention died, the government secured a plaster cast of his body, if such had not been made prior to death, and this was preserved for years in a special museum. When twenty or more casts of various developers of any one invention had been accumulated these were placed on a horizontal wheel, which revolved in front of a photographic camera, and thus the composite outline of the future god was obtained. As many outlines were procured as there were eighths of inches in the circumference of the largest cast, and from the collective pictures the ideal cast was made by the sculptor. The cast once perfected, and afterward draped, was reproduced in solid gold and placed with appropriate ceremonies on a pedestal on the

throne itself. In like manner the gods of the arts, poetry, painting, etc., were created, as also the priests of Harikar, the Holy Soul.

The reliefs, or symbols of mechanical art, were originally cast on the throne itself. These included the electric engine and locomotive, electric healer, telephone, telegraph, the electric ship, elevator, printing press, cotton gin, weaving loom, typesetting machine, well-boring apparatus, telescope, flying machines (individual and collective), bockhockid, sewing machine, photographic camera, reaping machine, paper-making and wall-paper printing machine, phonograph, etc., etc.

This department of the throne being the largest, was significant of the material supremacy of the mechanical arts in the nation. Science itself was a god named Triporus, fashioned like a winged snake, so called because it was said he could worm his way through the pores of matter so as to discover the secrets therein. This god seemed a compound of our ancient Sphinx, or science, and Daedalus, or mechanical skill, but with an entirely new meaning added to both.

The second or intermediate section of the throne was devoted to the gods of art and their attributes. It was sixty feet in its largest diameter, and twenty-four feet in height. It possessed also two sections, the upper containing the statues of Aidblis, or Poetry; Dimborne, or Painting; Breedil, or Sculpture; Swenge, or Music; Tilonno, or Drama; Timpango, or Dancing; Olshodesdil, or Architecture, etc., etc. In the lower section there were tableaux cast in high relief illustrating the qualities of the soul developed by art, viz.: Omodrilon, or Imagination; Diandarn, or Emotion; Samadoan, or Conscience; Voedli, or Faith; Lentilmid, or Tenderness; Delidoa, or Truth, etc.

The final section or tapering apex of the throne was thirty feet in greatest width and thirty-six feet in height. It contained a throne and three divisions. The lowest division contained the gods Hielano, or Magic; Bishano, or Sorcery; Nidialano, or Astrology; Padomano, or Soothsaying, etc.

The intermediate division contained the gods Niano, or Witchcraft; Redohano, or Wizardry; Oxemano, or Diablerie; Bicciano, or the Oracle; Amano, or Seership; Kielano, or Augury; Toederano, or Prophecy; Jiracano, or Geomancy; Jocdilano, or Necromancy, etc.

The third division contained the gods Orphitano, or Conjunction; Orielano, or Divination; Pridano, or Clairvoyance;



The throne of the gods was indeed the golden heart of Atvatabar
the triune symbol of body, mind, and spirit.

Cideshano, or Electro-biology; Omdohlopano, or Theosophy; Bischanamano, or Spiritualism, etc.

The climax of all was the throne of the goddess. It was a seat of aloe-green velvet that, revolving slowly in the centre of the supporting throne, presented the goddess to every section of the vast audience. Thus seated, the goddess radiated an Orient splendor, herself a blaze of beauty and the focus of every eye. The music of an introductory opera warbled its soft strains with breathless execution. It seemed the carolling of a thousand nightingales, mingling with the musical crying of silver trumpets and the clear electric chiming of golden bells.

CHAPTER XX.

THE WORSHIP OF LYONE, SUPREME GODDESS

THE worship of the goddess began with the appearance on a revolving stage between the nearest worshippers and the base of the throne itself of a veritable forest of trees about one hundred feet in width. There were trees like magnolias, oaks, elms and others splendid in foliage, and amid these there was an undergrowth of beds of the most brilliant flowers.

It was the work of the magicians and sorcerers!

There were thickets of camellias and rhododendrons, amid which bloomed flowers like scarlet geraniums, primroses, violets and poppies. What appeared to be apple, peach, cherry and hawthorn trees, all in full bloom, tossed their white and pink foam of flowers.

They were real trees and flowers, made to exist for a time by the sorcery of the masters of spirit power. They had never before known the outer air. The priests of Harikar had made them, and would dissipate them as living bodies are dissipated by death.

A sacred opera was chanted by the priests of invention, art, and spirituality, on their terraces of silver above the trees and flowers. As the music continued, groups of singers would at times sweep forth on wings and float in wheeling circles around the throne. Their delightful choruses swelling upward were like draughts of rich wine, keen and intoxicating. The priests and spiritual powers marching beneath filled the vast building with

broad recitatives, full of vividly descriptive passages and finely contrasted measures, until the soul seemed melted in a sea of bliss.

The throne was bathed and caressed by a blue vapor of incense, while from the great dome above, filled with figures formed of enamelled glass, there streamed lights of all mysterious colors, that illuminated its gleaming sides and lit up the amphitheatre with ineffable effects.

A warm, rosy beam, falling perpendicularly, enveloped the goddess like a robe of transparent tissue. She sat, a living statue, the joy of every heart, the embodiment of a hopeless love that kept the worshipper in a fever of delicious unrest. Wherever the eye wandered, it always came back to the goddess; whatever the soul thought, its last thought was of her.

Amid a tempest of music and the thundering song of two hundred thousand voices repeating a litany of love, the throne itself began to revolve upon the silver cone that supported it. A fresh rapture took possession of the multitude.

In the soul of the goddess what must have been the joy of being surrounded by such an ocean of adoring love?

As I mused on the scene, I thought of the Coliseum at Rome raised to the glory of barbaric force, of an empire founded on the blood of its victims, and, being such, has necessarily passed away, becoming a heap of ruins.

Here, thought I, is a temple founded on a nobler idea the glory of the human soul, its ingenuity, art, and spiritual forces. Many in the outer world would say it was an idolatrous attempt on the part of the creature to usurp the throne of its Creator. Yet it was strangely like the religion of such people themselves. There, as here, I thought, is the same worship of gold, the same dependence on the material products of man's invention, the same worship of art, the same idolatry of each other's souls between the sexes. There is this difference, however: in the outer world men pretend that they worship something else other than such objects; here they have the honesty to say what they do actually worship.

Apart from the idea of attempting to realize a friendship that can only exist in a realm that knows neither interest, fortune, time, ambition, temper, nor sensual love, their idolatry had one splendid truth to unfold, viz., the necessity of a soul for an arid and mechanical civilization. "Every intellect shall enfold a soul"

was their motto, and there was this sanity in their creed that sentiment was the breath of its life. Science abhors sentiment; it is the cold investigation of that which once thrilled with the passion of life.

While the singing continued, a band of neophytes of occult force performed marvellous feats of magic, led by the Grand Sorcerer, Charka, chief of the magicians of Harikar. The people sat enraptured as miracle after miracle was performed. At the waving of fans by the adepts, plants issued from the hands of every god of gold, clothing the throne in one endless wreath of brilliant crimson blossoms and green foliage. The fans again waved and that crimson mass of flowers turned to a pale green, while again the green foliage changed to a vermillion color. The throne appeared like one enormous *Bougainvillea glabra*, whose leaves are flowers.

Again the fans were waved and the flowers changed to bloom all snowy-white, while the foliage became blue.

The adepts disappeared at a given signal and thereupon entered another band of beautiful girl adepts, who seated themselves, each body in a crouched mass with flowing drapery, around the base of the throne. These priestesses were in a state of catalepsy. The ego, or soul, in each case had been separated from the body, which floated in a state of apparent death. They had so developed their will by thinking enormous thoughts, yearning for spiritual power, that they could suspend the functions of the body and give all their existence to the soul. Thus hypnotized, it was stated their souls were floating freely in the dome above, in blessed converse, and that their reincarnation would afterward take place.

The organ rolled a blessed monotone, with variations exquisitely sweet. The light in the dome faded perceptibly by the magical shadowing of its windows until the rapt audience sat in complete darkness. A circle of electric lights burned around the goddess on the top of the throne, illuminating her figure. The lights faintly lit up the dome, and presently appeared as nude spectres the fifty souls of the priestesses who crouched beneath.

The organ, re-enforced with the wailing of a hundred violins, produced a storm of the most delirious music, while the souls flashed with a strange phosphorescence like a circle of fire. They wheeled with their arms extended horizontally, each aura

lying at an angle of forty-five degrees with the horizon. Then, with hands clasping each other's feet, they became a vertical circle like the wheel of fortune, and thus went round and round. Again, they revolved in a circle faces downward, with arms and hands stretched in an attitude of worship, forming for the goddess a wreath of souls. Presently each soul sought its own body floating beneath. The bodies expanding themselves absorbed each its own soul. With the returning light of the outer sun the forest beneath the throne had disappeared and the circular stage was occupied by a band of sorcerers — each having balls of jelly of various colors floating before him. At the command of the grand sorcerer the balls would transform themselves into strange animals resembling cats, dogs, monkeys, serpents, geese, wolves, and eagles. This was a tableau representing man's supremacy over inferior life.

A company of twin souls of the greatest beauty and splendor of raiment took possession of the circular platform beneath the throne and thereupon danced in rhythmic circles wonderfully entrancing and involved, chanting, in harmony with the movement of their bodies, the following hymn to Lyone:

TO LYONE.

I.

Oh goddess, oh deity glorious,
With golden wan face, and the bloom
Of spirit and figure victorious!
Oh jewel that lighteneth gloom,
Men call thee the soul of a lover,
Invested with purest of clay,
A chrysalis, eager to hover
And fly from thy prison away!

II.

A nautilus, blown on the tide-lave;
So naked a pearl and so pure,
Or coral, that sucks from the sea wave
Those marbles that ever endure!
Thus float on the ocean of being,
Or fathom its deep-flowing sea,
That feeling, believing, and seeing
Thy glory, will worshipped be!

III

With sense of the body made captive,
While that of the soul is complete.
For love of pure being, receptive,
So blessed, extravagant, sweet.
Oh victim, thy joys are Meresa's,
Who died on the bosom Divine.
Her madness of rapture appeases
The hunger of soul that is thine!

IV.

Inflammable impulse of beauty,
The breath of whose ardor is grief;
The God, in fulfilment of duty,
Hath stamped thee in highest relief!
From pots of auriferous metal,
Made pure by the torment of flame,
He pressed thee in fearful begettall,
A coinage too perfect for shame.

V.

He made thee, most splendid, a flower,
A heavy sweet rose, to unfold
Some petals immortal, and shower
Their fragrance on earth frozen cold.
On golden-hued rose, in such fashion,
By the love of the world thou art sought
Thus flushed with the triumph of passion
Or pale with the splendor of thought!

VI.

Oh soul, that inhales from the blossom
Delight in the rapture of breath,
A goddess aflame with her passion,
Ere beauty is wedded to death!
Oh virginal soul of the fountain,
Alive with the water of Youth,
All these, on the golden high mountain,
Thou dwellest, the image of Truth!

What followed was an intoxicating medley of dancing, song and magic. Circles of the fairest girls, arrayed in the most ravishing costumes, made the brain whirl with their gyrations. The oblation to the dancing gods wound up the performance, and the chorus of a thousand voices blended with the triumph of drums and explosions from musical artillery.

The incomparable girl goddess then rose to her feet and waved the blessing of Harikar over the multitude. The girdle of gold that clung to her figure blazed with a thousand jewels. Her tiara sparkled with enormous diamonds that were blue as sapphires, amber as topazes, green as emeralds and red as rubies. Accompanied by the wailing of music, the chant of megaphones, and the song of the enraptured people, she sank into the heart of the throne, glorious as she rose, herself its most precious jewel.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN AUDIENCE WITH THE SUPREME GODDESS.

THE palace of Tanje, situated about fifty miles from Calnogar, was the metropolitan palace of the supreme goddess. It was sculptured out of a hill of white marble, as were also its walls, enclosing a garden a square mile in extent.

In conformity with the programme prepared by his majesty, King Aldemegry Bhoolmakar, we were to be received by her holiness Lyone in her palace at Tanje. The thought of meeting the adorable figure that crowned the throne of the gods filled me with keenest delight.

I seemed about to visit, not a human being like myself, but a veritable deity. What honor, what pleasure, it would be to speak to her face to face, heart to heart. Disguise it as I might, a feeling for the goddess was being awakened in my soul. Was it the adoration of the worshipper, or was it the dawn of a sacrilegious passion?

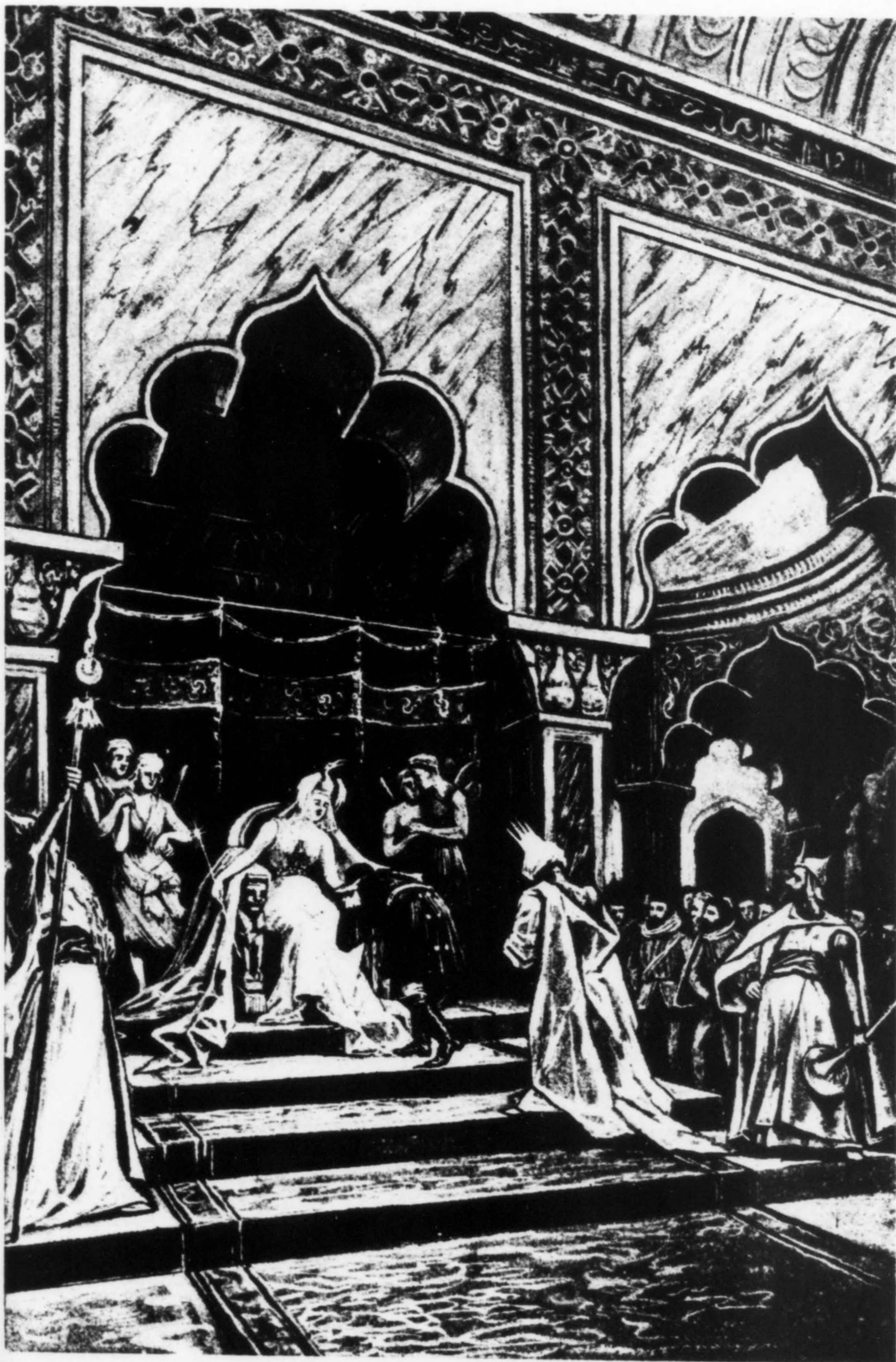
It seemed a monstrous idea for any one to love in the ordinary meaning of the term a being so high and holy. I could only worship her afar off, like any adoring citizen of Atvatabar.

His majesty the king, together with Chief Minister Koshnili, Commander-in-Chief Coltonobory, Admiral Jolar and other dignitaries of the kingdom, did us the honor to escort us to Tanje.

The method of travel between Calnogar and Tanje was by means of the pneumatic tube, also a deity of invention. This consisted of a smooth tube six feet in diameter that curved over the country in a sinuous line, being supported on pillars at a height of twenty feet above the ground. A decorative car of gold ornamented in enamelled colors rode the crest of the tube, being connected with the piston inside. The car was steadied between rails on either side and swept over the earth with inconceivable rapidity. The distance from Calnogar to Tanje was traversed in thirty minutes.

A feeling of awe overcame the sailors as we approached the abode of the living symbol of the Holy Soul.

The palace was a noble pile of masonry as it glittered in the perpendicular sunlight. It stood two stories in height and was



Her holiness offered both his majesty the king and myself her hand to kiss.

surmounted by a flattened central dome of colored glass, the ribs of the dome being of solid gold. The lower story was surrounded by a colonnade of pillars carved in the most grotesque shapes imaginable. The grand entrance on the north side was constructed of alternating pillars of platinum and gold, all three feet in thickness. From the towers brilliant banners, emblazoned with the figure of the throne of the gods, floated on the wind.

The apartments of the grand chamberlain were on the north side of the palace, where the pneumatic car was provided with a depot for the use of travellers.

Cleperelyum, the grand chamberlain, clad in white robes like an Arab chief, received us in the name of the goddess with marked deference and courtesy.

A guard of honor consisting of a thousand wayleals was drawn up around the palace. The audience chamber was a rectangular court in the centre of the building, whose ceiling was the roof of the palace itself, surmounted by the dome peculiar to the palaces of Atvatabar.

The hall leading to the presence chamber was lined with the priests and priestesses from Eyplosis in attendance on the goddess.

Led by the grand chamberlain, we arrived at the golden doors of the audience chamber, which were opened by the servitors of the place. With trembling exultation I saw at the further end of the spacious apartment a royal seat of violet velvet whereon sat Lyone, the supreme goddess of Atvatabar.

As my eyes rested upon the goddess she appeared still more divine than before. It seemed an unhallowed act that rough sailors should venture into such spiritual precincts. We were awe-struck with the presence before us. As the grand chamberlain called out our names, we bowed low to that majestic spirit that seemed much more a deity than human flesh.

Her holiness greeted us with marked favor and offered both his majesty the king and myself her hand to kiss. The high officials and my officers and sailors were obliged to remain standing during the audience, according to the etiquette of the holy palace. His majesty the king and myself were allowed to seat ourselves on an elevated dais before the goddess. When thus seated, I had leisure to observe that she was arrayed in a single

garment of quivering pale green silk, that caressed every curve of her matchless figure and spread in myriad folds about her limbs and feet. On her head she wore a model of the jarcāl, or bird of yearning, fashioned in precious terrelum. She wore also a jewelled belt of gold. The breast was embroidered with a golden emblem of the throne of the gods, the sacred ensign of Atvatabar. On her neck were circles of rich rose pearls whose light gleamed soft on the green lustre of her attire. On her head was the tiara of the goddess, the triple crown of Harikar.

Her holiness had an air of girlish frankness combined with royal dignity. She was so youthful that she could not have been more than twenty years old. She possessed a charming presence and a clear and musical voice. Her eyes were large and blue, and her finely-formed lips, like blood-red anemones, contrasted finely with the pale golden hue of her complexion.

Her features combined the witchery of a houri with the strength of intellect. They were sculptured and illuminated by a grandly-developed soul.

The odor of a high and steadfast virtue surrounded her. It was not the virtue of the ascetic, but rather that strength of soul that could triumph over temptation, that loved fair lights, fine raiment, sweet colors, and all the gladness and beauty of life.

In her soft right hand she bore a rod of divination, the spiritual sceptre of Atvatabar. On either side of her stood a twin soul in fond embrace as a guard of love.

The audience chamber was in itself a dream of grandeur and beauty. From the rose-tinted glass of the dome overhead a light soft and warm bathed all beneath with a peculiar sweetness. The lower part of the walls resembled the cloisters of a mosque. Behind pillars of solid silver a corridor ran all around the chamber. Here an artistic group of singers, clad in classic robes in soft colors, perambulated, singing as they went a refrain of penetrating sweetness. The audience listened with the deepest respect to the singing and to our conversation with the goddess. In the assembly were all the notables of the kingdom, poets, artists, musicians, inventors, sculptors, etc., as well as royal and sacerdotal officers.

The singing of the choir, that moved like an apparition of spirits in the dim cloisters, seemed to embody our thoughts and feelings. For myself the divine song was a draught of joy. It was a breath of verdure, of flowers and fruits, of a warm and serene

atmosphere made perfect by the presence of a peerless incarnation of man's universal soul.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GODDESS LEARNS THE STORY OF THE OUTER WORLD.

HER holiness was pleased to say how honored she was by receiving us. Our advent in Atvatabar had created a profound impression upon the people, and she was no less curious to see us and learn from our own lips the story of the outer world. She was greatly interested in comparing the stalwart figures of our sailors with the less vigorous frames of the Atvatabarese. It could not be expected that men who handled objects and carried themselves in a land where gravity was reduced to a minimum could be so vigorous as men who belonged to a land of enormous gravity, whose resistance to human activity developed great strength of bone and muscle.

I informed her holiness regarding the geography, climate and peoples of the outer sphere. I gave her an account of the chief nations of the world from Japan to the United States. I spoke of Africa, Australia, and the Pacific islands. I spoke of Adam and Eve, of the Deluge, of Assyria and Egypt. Then I described the glory of Greece and the grandeur of Rome. I spoke of Caesar and Hannibal, Cleopatra and Antony. I spoke of Columbus, Galileo, Michael Angelo, Faraday, Dante, and Shakespeare. I described how art reigned in one kingdom or country and invention in another, and that the soul or spiritual nature was as yet a rare development.

"You tell me," said the goddess, "that Greece could chisel a statue, but could not invent a magic engine, and that your own country, rich in machinery, is barren in art. This tells me the outer world is yet in a state of chaos and has not yet reached the development of Atvatabar. We have passed through all those stages. At first we were barbarous, then, as time produced order, art began to flourish. The artist, in his desire to glorify the few, lost sight of the many. Then came the reign of invention, of science, giving power to the meanest citizen. As

democracy triumphed art was despised, and a ribald press jeered at the sacred names of poet and priest. By degrees, as the pride and power of the wealthy few were curbed and the condition of the masses raised to a more uniform and juster level, universal prosperity, growing rapidly richer, produced a fusion of art and progress. The physical man made powerful by science and the soul developed by art naturally produced the result of spiritual freedom. The enfranchised soul became free to explore the mysteries of nature and obtain a mastery over the occult forces residing therein."

"In the outer sphere," I informed the goddess, "there has also existed in all ages an ardent longing for spiritual power over matter. But this power, which in many periods of history was really obtained, had been purchased by putting in practice the severest austerities of the body. Force of soul was the price of subjugation of passion and the various appetites of the body. The fakirs, yogis, jugglers, and adepts of India; the magicians, sorcerers and astrologers of Mesopotamia and Egypt; the alchemists, cabalists, and wizards of the middle ages, and the theosophists, spiritualists, clairvoyants, and mesmerists of the present time, were members of the same fraternity who have obtained their psychological powers from a study and practice of mystic philosophy or magic."

"You say that the outer-world magicians derived their powers of soul from abnegation of the body," said the goddess. "Now the soul priests of Atvatabar can do quite as wonderful things, I dare say, as your magicians, and they have never practised austerities, but, on the contrary, have developed the body as well as the soul. In the worship of the gods of science and invention, art and spirituality, both body, mind, and soul are exercised to their utmost capability. In all stages there is exultance, exercise, development. But I am deeply interested in your remarks. Tell me just what the principles of the worshippers of your Harikar are!"

"Spiritual culture in the outer world," I explained, "is obtained by a variety of religious beliefs, but the belief that most nearly resembles that of Atvatabar is that of the soul-worshippers, who deny the existence of any power beyond the human soul, teaching that it is only by our own inward light that we can rise to higher planes and reach at last to Nirvana, or passive blessedness. This inward light can only be truly followed

by self-obliteration, fastings, penances, and repression of desires and appetites of all kinds, carried on through an endless series of reincarnations. The final blessedness is a beatific absorption into the ocean of existence which pervades the universe."

"That is a different creed to that of Harikar in Atvatabar," said the goddess, "which is worship of body, mind, and soul. We believe with your Greeks in perfection of body and also with your Hindoos in perfection of soul. We re-enforce the powers of body and mind by science and invention, and the soul powers by art and spiritual love. We believe in magic and sorcery. Our religion is a state of ecstatic joy, chiefly found in the cultured friendship of counterpart souls, who form complete circles with each other. Enduring youth is the consummate flower of civilization. With us it lasts one hundred years, beginning with our twentieth birthday. There is no long and crucial stage of bodily abstinence from the good things of life; there is only abstinence from evil, from vice, selfishness, and unholy desire. Our religion is the trinity of body, mind, and spirit, in their utmost development. Such is the faith of Atvatabar."

"And such a faith," I replied, "with such a deity as your holiness, must profoundly sway the hearts of your people."

The goddess was a woman of intuition. Almost before I was aware of it myself she evidently discovered a sentiment underlying my words. She paused a moment, and before I could question her further regarding the peculiar creed of Atvatabar said: "We will discuss these things more fully hereafter."

At a signal from the goddess the trumpets rang a blast announcing the audience at an end. With the summons music uttered a divine throbbing throughout the chamber, while the singers marched and sang gloriously in the cloisters.

As I sat, my soul swimming in a sea of ecstasy born of the blessed environment, I felt possessed of splendors and powers hitherto unknown and unfelt. A thrill of joy made hearts tremble beneath the crystal dome. It was a new lesson in art's mysterious peace.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GARDEN OF TANJE.

A SERIES of banquets and other entertainments followed each other during our stay at the palace of Tanje. The goddess had held frequent interviews with the professors and myself regarding the external sphere, and had examined our maps and charts with the greatest curiosity.

His majesty did not take nearly so much interest in our revelations as the goddess, being inert and prosaic in character.

On the morning of the fourth day of our stay at the palace of Tanje I received a visit from the grand chamberlain Cleperelyum, with a command from the goddess to meet her in her boudoir. Cleperelyum led me to the sacred apartment, which, when I entered, was vacant. The walls were models of decorative architecture, the panels being filled with silk tapestry of a pale yellow-green hue, the mouldings being ivory-white. The panelled frieze was filled with figures in violet and gold, and sea-green upholstery covered couch and divan, while the draperies were silks of cream and blue. It was a luxurious retreat. The carpet was a silk rug, soft as a bed of rose leaves, with a broad border in tones of green, violet and white.

Presently the goddess entered with a winning smile on her features. She was arrayed in a dress of soft violet silk, that, apparently, had no other garment beneath, so perfect was the revelation of her figure. Beneath the figure it fell to the ground in a thousand folds, like a wave of smooth water bursting into foaming rapids. Round her neck was a garland of lustrous yellow pearls. On her head she wore a tiara of much smaller dimensions than that worn on public occasions. Her pose was upright as an arrow.

I rose and bowed profoundly, and the goddess also bowing, requested me to be seated.

"I have sent for you," said she, "to learn more about your country and to talk with you about ours. I am consumed with curiosity regarding the external world."

"Your holiness," I replied, "permit me to say that your graceful condescension exceeds, if possible, your splendor. I am truly bewildered at the vastness of my good fortune in

discovering a country ruled by so glorious a goddess."

"And I also," said the goddess, "have learned the Bilbimtesirol is not the universe, but a very small portion thereof indeed. I am intensely interested in your accounts of the outer world. I am overpowered with the thought that the exterior surface of the planet is peopled with beings like ourselves, and that civilization, government, religion, art, manufacture, and social life are so greatly developed beneath a still more glorious sun than ours."

"Did it never occur to your astronomers," I inquired, "that human activity might also pervade the outer sphere?"

"Our astronomers," said the goddess, "have long since decided that the conditions of climate on the exterior planet were too severe to allow human life to exist. They are aware that a great luminary gave the outer earth light by day, for our most daring aerial voyagers have frequently caught a glimpse of its light seen through the polar gulf. They argued that the equatorial regions were too hot, and the polar regions too cold, to support life, consequently the outer earth was a barren waste as desolate and uninhabited as your own satellite."

"Would your holiness like to visit the exterior earth?" I boldly inquired.

"If duty did not prevent me," she replied, "I would love to visit those far-off strange lands and peoples and see your sun and moon and all the stars!"

From the goddess I first learned the precise location of Atvatabar. Lying exactly underneath the Atlantic Ocean it stretched east and west some two thousand miles, surrounded by the interior sea. There were other continents in Bilbimtesirol which we had already dimly seen spread upon the concave walls of the world around us.

"You must come to see both Eyplosis and Arjeels," said her holiness, "but before you leave Tanje you must see my garden."

"It must be a little paradise!" I exclaimed.

"Let us go and see it now," she said, and, so saying, arose with a gracious gesture and led me out of the apartment.

I accompanied her holiness down the terrace leading to the lovely retreat. Curving walks led between banks of flowers of all hues. There were avenues of tall shrubs not unlike rhododendrons, with the same magnificent bloom. Other plants, such as the firesweet, displayed a blinding wealth of yellow

flowers.

The goddess led the way to the conservatory in the garden wherein were treasured strange and beautiful flowers and zoophytes illustrative of the gradual evolution of animals from plants, a scientific faith that held sway in Atvatabar. The goddess showed me a beautiful plant with large fan-shaped leaves from whose edges hung a fringe of heavy roses; long trailing garlands of clustering star-shaped flowers sprang from the same roots. The plant was a perfect bower of bliss, and while called the laburnul, might with greater propriety be styled the rose of paradise.

Another fern-like plant was in reality a bird flower, called the lilasure. It had the head and breast of a bird, from whose back grew roots and four small feathers resembling those of the peacock. Its tail resembled two large fronds of a fern, which served the animal for wings, for by their aid it flew through the air.

There was also a flock of strange green-feathered creatures, resembling buzzards, called green gazzles, on whose heads grew sunflowers. On either side, beneath their wings, were the plant roots by means of which they still sucked nourishment from the soil, as their bills were not yet perfectly developed. They belonged to a locality on the south coast of Atvatabar known as Glockett Gozzle.

The lillipoutum was another wonderful creature, half-plant half-bird. It represented the animal almost entirely evolved from the plant stage. A wreath of rootlets adorned the neck, but the most conspicuous features were the stork-like legs that terminated in roots with radiations like encrinital stems. The bird fed itself like a plant by simply thrusting its root-legs into the soft ooze of lake bottoms and slimy banks of rivers. Its tail was also a root possessing great absorptive powers. In shape the bird resembled a flamingo, and its feathers were of an old-rose color, mottled with lichen-green. A beard-like radiation of roots decorated its head, and its bill was extremely delicate.

Such wonders as these intensified the glamor of the interior world. I was fast becoming bewildered with the intoxication of an environment of strange, abnormal creatures-unlike anything I had ever seen before.

The goddess regarded her pets with the greatest interest, and was pleased at being the first to acquaint me with such living

wonders of Atvatabar.

"Your holiness," I said, "these creatures are so wonderful that unless I had actually seen them it would be impossible for me to believe in their existence." As I spoke, two strange bat-like forms flew toward us; they were flying orchids, known as jeerloons, with heart-shaped faces and arms terminating in wire-like claws. Their wing projections were bristling with suckers like the rays of a starfish. Altogether they were weird, uncanny creatures. The goddess caught one of them in her hands, and laughed at my excitement. "They will haunt you in your dreams," she exclaimed, "poor, pretty things!"

"But now," she added, "let me show you a plant that is fast becoming a brood of animals, both root and flower. It is the jugdul. Still rooted in the soil, strange faces are swelling in the mould, while the flower is a leaf surmounted by a weird, small head, the nasal organ of which is a ponderous proboscis. We do not know as yet what kind of animal life will evolve from the plant, but the botanists and physiologists of Atvatabar are agreed that at least two new species of animals will be developed when the evolution of the zoophyte is complete."

I assured her holiness that I considered myself the most favored of men to be permitted to visit the sanctuary wherein the occult transmigration of life was being manifested. It was a rare experience!

Just then the goddess directed my attention to a flying root resembling a humming-bird. It was the far-famed jalloast, the semi-evolved humming-bird of Atvatabar. Other similar beings, half-root, half-bird, were seen perched in a bower of tree-ferns, whose waxy green fronds fell like an emerald cascade about the jalloasts.

From porcelain boxes suspended along the roof of the conservatory a perfect forest of strange plants depended, a species of zoophyte known as the yarp-happy, which seemed to be a combination of ape and flower. Its peculiarly weird, ape-like face was covered with a hood, and from the open mouth of each animal the tongue protruded. From the neck of the animal three long leaves radiated, the two lower leaves in each case terminating in claw-like extremities, which gave a weird expression to the zoophyte.

Right underneath these strange beings, there grew an immense quantity of spotted pouch-shaped plants, each having



The Jugdul.



The Eaglon.



The Yarphappy.



The Crocosus.

the head of a cat growing above the pouch. This peculiar zoophyte was known as the gasternowl. From either side of the junction of the cat-like head with the pouch radiated two speckled leaves. The tips of the ears terminated in frond-like plumes, and a peculiar plume like a crest surmounted the head.

A strange root known as the crocosus was developed into a perfect animal that crawled with four legs upon the floor. The animal was not unlike the lizard, or a diminutive crocodile, with an immensely long neck, which it held erect. The neck terminated in a bulbous head, with an open, bill-shaped mouth, not unlike the mouth of a pelican, while right below the jaws there grew a root-like appendage, that coiled around the neck. The animal possessed a root-like tail, and was a most interesting creature.

To enumerate all the wonders of the conservatory of plant transmigration at Tanje would be impossible. I saw the jardil (or love-pouch), an orchid resembling a pouch, with the face of a child growing therein, from which radiated rootlets and jabots of spiral fronds. I also saw the redoubtable blocus, an animal resembling a jerboa, or kangaroo, whose only trace of plant existence was a few rootlets growing out of its back. The funny-fenny, or clowngrass, was a weed with veritable goblins growing on the stems. The goblins had long noses and wore high hats and lace collars, but were otherwise but plants with absorbent roots. They were so grotesque that I began to think that nature was laughing at me quite as much as I laughed at nature.

When leaving the conservatory I heard a chorus of tender voices like a band of spirits singing, whereupon the goddess directed my attention to a cluster of fairy girls that, like flowers, were growing upon the stem of a plant. It was a peculiarity of these fairy creatures to sing every time their goddess passed by, her spiritual atmosphere quickening them into conscious life and song. I was fairly dazzled with such a tribute of love to my gracious companion, and were the fairy flowers not sacred things I would have borne them away to exhibit such a trophy to the outer world.

This wonderful plant seemed more like the production of spirit power indulging in a weird fantasy of imagination, rather than an evolution of nature. It was a new experience to me to hear the little creatures sing in a tender chorus of adoration to

the goddess and dance gleefully upon their stems. My guide fondled the strange creatures with her own fair fingers, and they seemed to me the greatest wonder I had yet beheld in Atvatabar.

"These," said the goddess, "are gleroserals, and I would gladly give you a spray were it not that removal from their tender habitat would kill them. But here is a flower, half-bird, half-plant, that I will send you in a proper cage if you care for it." The zoophyte referred to was another bird plant that flew around the conservatory possessing the head and body of an eagle, the wings of a butterfly and the tail of a plant. The plant-like appendage was composed of long beautiful sprays of graceful foliage, not unlike pine branches, that were curved into sinuous forms as the animal flew. It was known as the eaglon, and was without legs. I thanked the goddess for her precious gift, whereupon we left the conservatory.

Wandering through thickets of roses whose burning blossoms swooned upon their stems, we came upon a thick carpet of verdure that surrounded a hidden lake of clear, cool water. The rocky basin of the lake had been sculptured by human hands. Its margin was in outline a bold pear-shaped curve, that also curved upon itself, formed by an immense chiselling of the fundamental rock. In a little harbor of cut rock lay a pleasure boat, a curiously-wrought shell of silver that was propelled by magnicity. The goddess entered the boat, bidding me follow her. We sat together on an ample couch in the stern of the boat underneath a silver canopy. Touching a button, the boat moved swiftly over the water. It was a scene of rapture! Gazing into the depths of the water I saw the bottom of the lake sculptured in immense masses of flowers of stone, like the roof of a Gothic cathedral, but a hundred times more luxuriant. Around and above us rose heights of blessedness filled with all the thousand ecstasies of leaf and flower. An islet bore a little pagoda that stood in the eternal noon a pillared jewel of stone, silent and beautiful. It was half concealed with festoons of creeping plants whose flowers were great globes of crimson, yellow and blue.

There was around me — paradise, and beside me — ecstasy!

"You are pleased with my garden?" said the goddess.

"This must be the garden of Hesperides that our poets write of," I replied. "Here at last I have found the ideal life."

The goddess reclined on the couch in an attitude of luxurious

grace. Her every gesture was at once heroic and beautiful.

"Tell me what your poets say of nature, life and love," said she; "do they ever sing the delights of hopeless love?"

As the goddess uttered this last question I felt within me a strange delight. There sat beside me, floating on that mysterious wave, the idol of a great nation, the deity of its universal faith, a divinity of power, glory and beauty, laying aside spiritual empire to become the companion of a simple explorer of the internal world, her discoverer and her friend, by a most happy chance of fortune.

As these thoughts swiftly ran through my brain, and before I had time to reply, music, soft, weird, intensely intoxicating, was blown from among the tempestuous bloom of the paradises. The melody seemed the holiest thrill of hearts communing in the rapture of love! To explain the sweetness of the moment is impossible — the goddess was so alluring and serene. She kept her own emotions in the background as the result of a proud devotion to duty, and yet I felt swathed with a soul that seemed to have found an opportunity worthy the expression of its life.

A situation so daring, yet so tender, required an equally daring and reverent soul to meet it. I felt all its surpassing loveliness.

"Our poets," I replied, "have written of love in all its phases, describing the most spiritual passions as well as the most lustful. In poetry love may be any phase of love, but the reality is a compound of lust and spirituality, being rooted both in body and soul."

"Do your people," said the goddess, "never differentiate lust and love and obtain in real life only a spiritual romantic love such as we do in Atvatabar?"

"We believe, your holiness," I replied, "that such a love as you refer to is only to be found in a spiritual state and is the secret of disembodied blessedness."

"You must see Eyplosis," said she, "ere you depart from us, and there learn the possibility of ideal love in actual life."

"To discover such a joy," I replied, "will repay my journey to Atvatabar a thousandfold."

We alighted from the boat on a rocky margin of the lake that led into a labyrinth of flowers. Here we wandered at will, discovering at every step new delights. Lyone was not only a goddess, but also the fond incarnation of a comrade soul.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE JOURNEY TO EGYPLOSIS.

NEVER did time pass so rapidly or so happily as the days spent in the palace of the goddess. Although I met Lyone at the daily banquets and at our scientific discussions with the astronomers, naturalists, chemists, geologists, physicians and philosophers of Atvatabar, yet neither by look nor gesture did she betray the slightest memory of that ravishing scene in her garden only a few days before.

Again and again I asked myself. Was it possible that that calm and crowned goddess of the pantheon was a being that could feel thrilled with ordinary human ecstasy? Would I, most daring of men, ever be permitted to kiss that far-off mouth divine, and not be slain by one dreadful glance of contempt?

Our discussions terminated in an invitation by the goddess to accompany her in her aerial yacht, the *Aeropher*, to Eyplosis, whither, according to the sacred calendar, she must proceed to take part in the ceremony of the installation of a twin soul. Her holiness, their majesties the king and queen, myself and officers of the *Polar King*, together with the chief minister Koshnili, the military, civil and naval officers, the poets, savants, artists, and musicians of Atvatabar, would sail in the yacht of the goddess.

A host of lesser dignitaries, including the sailors of the *Polar King* under command of Flathootly, would follow us in another yacht, called the *Fletyeming*. Each yacht had its own priest-captain, officers and crew of aerial navigators.

Each yacht consisted of a deck of fine woven cane, compact as steel, woven with great skill, with cabins, staterooms, etc., of the same material erected thereon, and high bamboo bulwarks to prevent the voyagers falling off the deck.

The propelling apparatus consisted of two large wheels, having numerous aerial fans that alternately beat backward and cut through the air as they oscillated on their axes. The wheels were supplemented by aeroplanes, resembling huge outspreading wings, inclined at an angle, so that their forward rush upon the air supported the ship. They revolved with great rapidity, being driven by the accumulated force of a thousand magnic batteries, composed of dry metallic cells, especially

designed for aerial navigation. Very little force was required to keep the vessel buoyed up in the air, owing to the diminished gravity.

It was discovered that the rarer metals terrelum and aquelium developed in contact, without salts or acids, enormous currents of magnicity without polarization or the development of gases. These metallic cells would run without attention or maintenance exerting magnetic action, and could be stopped or started at any time without corrosion of metals or loss of energy, like the electric batteries on the outer sphere, but infinitely more powerful.

Aerial navigation was one of the great institutions of Atvatabar, and the goddess' yacht was only one of many thousand aerial ships that carried passengers, mails and light freight to and from every part of the country.

On such a machine as this we purposed travelling a distance of one thousand miles.

Five hundred miles west of Calnogar lay a range of lofty mountains, whose peaks pierced the upper strata of cold air. This region was the breeding-place of fearful storms that occasionally vexed the otherwise placid climate of the country.

Westward of the mountains, an elevated prairie or tableland extended for five hundred miles further, broken here and there into crevasses and cañons, the beds of mighty rivers. Beyond the prairie an irregular agglomeration of mountains and valleys stretched five hundred miles further until the ocean was reached which formed the western boundary of Atvatabar.

Egyptosis, or the sacred palace, stood on an island in a lake lying in a romantic valley of the central plateau, one thousand miles west of Calnogar. This was the destination of the *Aeropher*, the goddess making a special visitation to the palace of hopeless love.

No journey could have begun with better auspices than ours. We soared up the grand divide, underneath the brilliant sun, which threw the moving shadow of the ship on the earth beneath.

Captain Lavornal, the inventor of the *Aeropher*, was resolved to outdo all former records in aerial navigation, and accordingly drove the *Aeropher* at a speed of eighty miles an hour.

The captain explained to me that he was using the wheels simply to lift the ship over the mountains. Once over these the

wheels that were being used to lift the ship would thus propel her, when her normal speed of two hundred miles an hour would be reached.

Lyone was in a particularly happy mood. "I like aerial travelling so much," said she, "because it is the nearest mechanical approach to the nature of the soul."

"What relation to the soul can the ship possibly possess?" I inquired.

"Why, don't you see," said she, "that our travelling approaches nearer to that of the spiritual state than any other mode? We can at will sweep up into heaven or descend to earth. We are independent of obstacles. Rivers and roads, mountains and seas have no terrors for us. Then the infinite daring of it all — oh! it is to me delightful."

Higher and yet higher mounted the ship up the steeps of the continent until we plunged into a grisly pass. On either side the huge shoulders of the mountains lifted up forests of pines and cedars, whose colossal trunks seemed the gateways of a new world. The ship indeed possessed some of the attributes of a soul. It could plunge us into sublimity or death, lift up to the very sun itself, or, like a disembodied soul, skim the surface of the earth.

The mountains once crossed, we swept down their declivities toward the prairies with tremendous speed. The propellers seemed powerful enough to control the ship in the fiercest storm. The inner world lay spread out beneath us like a map in relief. There was a strange absence of shadow caused by a perpendicular sun that realized the climate of Dante,

"A land whereon no shadow falls."

Yet as the *Aeropher* swept onward her shadow could be seen drifting over cornfields, miles of rustling wheat and pastures where the cattle started and fled from the apparition in the sky.

We were admiring the beauty of the panorama beneath, when the sky became suddenly overcast with clouds, obscuring the light of the sun. This was so unexpected an occurrence that Lyone and myself looked at each other in alarm.

Captain Lavornal exclaimed: "Your holiness, I apprehend these clouds are the couriers of a hurricane!"

"Do you mean that we shall be overtaken by the storm?"

asked Lyone.

"Most certainly," said the captain, "and I tremble lest anything should happen to your holiness."

"Do not fear for me," said Lyone; "even a storm is not insurmountable."

"Shall I descend, your holiness, or keep to our course?" inquired the captain with some trepidation.

"Keep to your course." replied Lyone.

Just then a hollow booming was heard, and then a fierce explosion in which the darkened sky became enveloped in a sheet of flame.

In a moment the cyclone struck the ship!

Some of the terrified voyagers shrieked and others remained silent, but all held tightly on to the nearest thing they could get hold of.

The ship lay at an angle of forty-five degrees from the plane of the rotating storm, having been caught by the wind with a fearful shock, snapping several of the cables that bound cabins and decks together. Strangely enough, the ship did not become a wreck, but was blown out of its course, the toy of the wind. We lost sight of the other ship containing the sailors, and could certainly only care for ourselves.

The cyclone proved to be a storm five hundred miles in diameter. The currents of air most remote from the centre did not sweep round in the same uniform plane. The entire circumference of wind was composed of two enormous waves each seven hundred and fifty miles in length and four miles in perpendicular height. It was as if the rings of Saturn had suddenly assumed a vertical as well as a spinning motion, and both movements of the storm produced an appalling splendor of light hitherto unknown to human sensation. Can the *Aeropher* survive the roaring storm? was the thought of every heart. Bravery was of no avail with the destroying force that had so suddenly overwhelmed us.

CHAPTER XXV.

ESCAPING FROM THE CYCLONE.

THE ship, lifting her prow, would spring into the sky upon the bosom of the whirling waste of air. The sun was completely obscured by dense masses of flying clouds and we were deluged with torrents of water. The terror of the situation obliterated all thoughts of country or home or friends. All worldly consciousness had evaporated from the pale beings that in despair held on to the ship for life or death.

The ravages of the storm on the earth beneath could be heard with startling distinctness. We heard at times the roaring of forests and saw the shrieking, whirling branches in every earth-illuminating flash of lightning.

The goddess stood holding on to the outer rail of the deck, the incarnation of courage. She had risen to meet the danger at its worst.

The *Aeropher* having risen to an enormous height, being thrown completely out of the tempest as if shot from a catapult, turned to descend again. It flew downward like an arrow, filling every soul, save perhaps that of Lyone, with fear. All were resigned for death; there could be no escape from the destruction that threatened us.

All this time the centre of the storm had been travelling to the southeast, or about forty-five degrees out of our proper course. Suddenly the ship shot downward from the southeastern limb of the storm, which almost reached the earth at this point. Gazing below, we discovered a fearful chasm in the face of the earth toward which we were rapidly flying. It was the cañon of the river Savagil, a merciless abyss ten thousand feet in depth.

Frightful as was the scene, it might yet prove our salvation if the ship could escape colliding with the precipitous walls. Were there no abyss we would certainly be dashed to pieces on the earth itself.

Suddenly the ship heeled over fifty degrees, flinging its living freight violently against the houses on deck and the lower rail. But we were saved! One side of the deck grazed the precipice as it plunged into the cañon. We had passed through the danger

before knowing what had happened.

Lyone was stunned, but safe, the captain had a dislocated wrist, and others had broken limbs, but none was fatally hurt.

It was a terrible experience.

As the cañon of the river led in a northeasterly direction we did not emerge from the shelter it gave us to seek fresh conflict with the cyclone, but kept flying between the formidable walls. We soon knew by the returning sunlight and the silver clouds that the hurricane had died away.

The damage done to the *Aeropher* was quickly repaired. The ceaseless humming of the fans revolving on axles of hollow steel lulled our senses once more into dreamy repose.

"Ah," said Lyone, "this is life. I feel as though I were a bird or disembodied spirit. This aerial navigation is the realization of those aspirations of men that they might like birds possess the sky. Some have wished to enjoy submarine travel, to explore those frightful abysses of ocean where sea-monsters dwell; to behold the conflict of sharks in their native element, to see the swordfish bury his spear in the colossal whale. I prefer this upper sphere of sunlight and the dome of forests, mountains, and valleys of the dear old earth."

"You are right," said I; "the world into which we are born is our true habitat."

The walls of the cañon grew wider apart until we floated in a valley two miles wide. The meadow land below us was carpeted with grass and covered with clumps of forest trees, down the middle of which ran the river, green and swift. The walls of the valley here rose twelve thousand feet in perpendicular height, prodigies of stone, stained in barbaric colors by the brushes of the ages. Here and there triumphant cataracts flashed from the heights and fell in torrents of foam to the valley below. Sometimes a tributary of the river dashed furiously from the battlements above us into the abyss, flinging clouds of spray on the tops of the trees beneath.

The *Aeropher* maintained a uniform height of five thousand feet, sufficiently high to give us the exultation of a bird, yet sufficiently deep to allow the sublimity of the scene to fully impress us.

The musicians, who had hitherto remained in abeyance, now broke the silence of our progress with a swelling refrain. The music rolled echoing from granite to jasper walls in strains of

divine pathos. We seemed to sail through the fabled realms of enchantment. In that little moving heaven, ceremony was dissolved into a thrilling friendship; the harmonious surroundings created a closer union of souls.

Above where I sat with Lyone there floated a flag of yellow silk a hundred feet in length. As it floated on the wind it assumed a varying series of poetic shapes, very beautiful to witness.

Sometimes there was a long sinuous fold, then a number of rippling waves, then a second fold only shorter than the first, then more rippling waves. It was a symbol of the soul and of the goddess, and represented the fascination and poetry that belongs to the adepts of Harikar. Its folds changed momentarily. At times there would be one large central curve like a Moorish arch, flanked on either side by a number of lesser arches. Again the flag streamed in throbbing waves, frequently blown by an intense breath of wind straight as a spear, crackling and shivering like a soul in pain. It responded not only to the motion of the ship, but had an independent life of its own.

"You see," said Lyone, "that the spiritual part of our creed is but the development of this independent life of the soul. The spiritual nature responds to the opportunity worthy of its recognition."

"That is but the mechanical law of cause and effect." I ventured; "where does self-sacrifice come in?"

"I do not quite understand," she replied; "self-sacrifice is the first law of the soul."

"What I mean," I said, "is this — having discovered your counterpart, do you adore despite the circumstances of fortune?"

"Most certainly," she replied; "there is the divinest self-sacrifice on both sides as far as the fortunes of each will permit. Ideally, the sacrifice is unlimited, but practically is limited as to time, opportunity and other circumstances."

"Is the counterpart soul loved in spite of disparity of circumstances, or is an equality of circumstances, such as rank, wealth and nationality, etc., a factor in the case?" I inquired.

"Outward circumstances have nothing whatever to do with the matter," said Lyone. "Friends, wealth, rank, everything is thrown aside in favor of the inward circumstance that the two souls are one."

"But," I urged, "you expose your spiritual creed to very violent shocks at times. The king of to-day may be a beggar to-morrow, and, besides, one or both of two souls may before they have known each other have been freighted with lifelong responsibilities. How, then, do you prevent a catastrophe to some one?"

"I admit," she said, "that as far as the every-day world is concerned, there are serious difficulties to contend with. But we avoid these by creating a little world of our own, exclusively for the cultivation of the spiritual soul. Just as some people apply themselves to physical culture to become athletes and show how grand the physical man may become, so we set apart a number of people as soul-priests to develop spirituality, or power over themselves and others and power over matter. It was for this object that Egeplosis was founded, to form a fitting environment for those who have achieved the ideal life. This life fully ripened, with its fresh and glorious enjoyment, can be maintained for a hundred years without diminution or loss of ecstasy."

"And do you mean that, after living one hundred years, beginning with your twentieth birthday, you are still only commencing your twenty-first year?"

"That is exactly what I mean," said Lyone. "I myself have lived ten years of Nirvana, and am yet only twenty years old."

I could well believe that such glorious freshness and beauty as hers was quite as young as she had represented it; but it was a strange idea — this achievement of an earthly Nirvana.

"Do you believe in the independent life of the soul after death?" I inquired.

"I believe that, as our bodies when they die become reabsorbed into the bosom of nature, to become in part or whole reincarnated in other forms of life, so also our souls are reabsorbed into the great ocean of existence, to also dwell, in time, wholly or in part in some other form of life or love."



The goddess stood holding the outer rail of the deck,
the incarnation of courage.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BANQUET ON THE AERIAL SHIP.

THE saloon, which was also the *salle a manger*, was situated in the centre of the ship. Thus the entire travellers could assemble together without disturbing the centre of gravity of the structure.

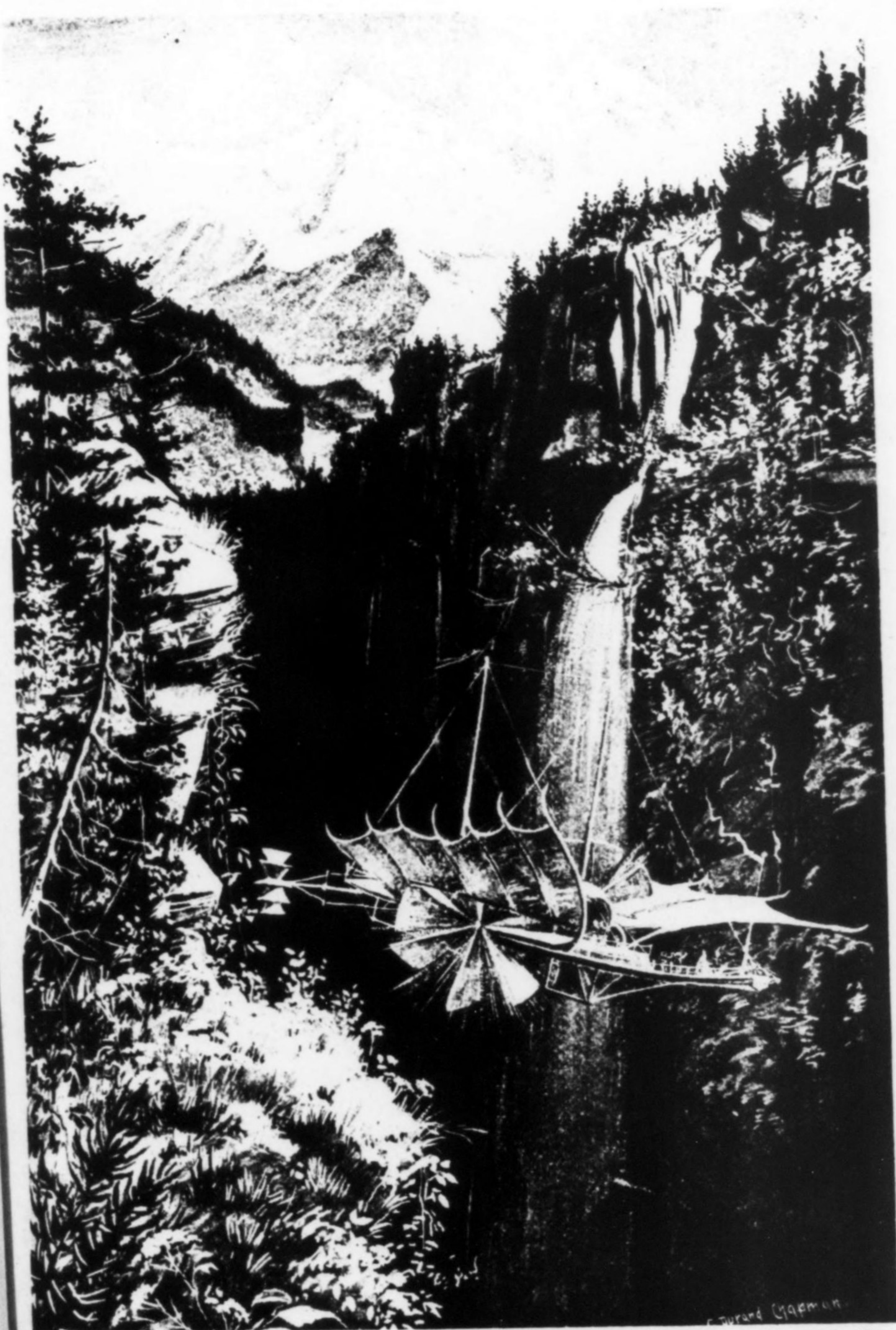
The saloon was composed of woven cane, and ornamented with a dado of sage-green silk, on which were embroidered storks, pheasants and eagles flying through space. An elongated table, also of wicker works, contained a sumptuous repast.

The goddess congratulated the guests on their safety, which proved that the skill that produced the *Aeropher* had successfully grappled with the difficult problem of aerial navigation.

The inventor of the *Aeropher* said it was the apex of mechanical skill. Invention had raised humanity from the depths of slavery, ignorance, and weakness to a height of empire undreamed of in earlier ages. Such material greatness expands the soul with godlike attributes. The ideal, inventive soul, the typical soul, was a god.

The poet said that the *Aeropher* was the symbol of that kind of poetry in which energy and art were in equipoise. It glorified mechanical skill. It had been prophesied that as civilization advanced poetry would decline. There was a period in the history of Atvatabar in which matters of taste, imagination and intellectual emotion had been utterly neglected by a universal preference for scientific and mechanical pursuits. The country was overrun with reasoners, debaters, metaphysicians, scientists and mechanical artists, but there were no poets. Such mechanical civilization was unfavorable to their development. The founding of such institutions as the art palace of Gnaphisthasia and the spiritual palace of Eyplosis had grafted on their modern life the soul life of more ancient times, until soul-worship had become the universal religion.

The goddess said that the aerial ship was the symbol of an ideal and passionate temperament resolved on discovering new spheres of spiritual beauty, so as to spiritualize the race. Such a soul ought to be free to surround itself with that atmosphere



Then the ship rose again toward the mammoth rocks, adorned with the tapestries of falling wave.

from which it absorbs life. It must choose its own weapons and armor, so as to be adequately equipped for the battle. In its eagerness to climb on discovering wings it must be accompanied by its own retinue of spirits, by enthusiastic and lasting friendships so consoling to its nature. Such was the idea of Eyplosis.

Captain Lavornal at this point stated that when the company regained the deck he would put the rotating wheel, placed at the stern of the ship, in motion, so as to produce the combination of a revolving as well as an onward flight.

"These wheels," said he, "will spin us around, and by means of our double rudder we produce both vertical and lateral undulations, which, combined with the rotary movement of the deck, will produce a delirious sensation. All the abandon of great and strong birds are ours. We can imitate the sonorous sweep of the seemorgh, who plunges with supreme majesty in the abyss of air."

"These elaborations of flight," said Lyone, "are not pursued merely for physical pleasure, but in a mysterious way they are the moulders of the soul itself. That essence, re-enforced with such subtle and powerful enthusiasm, develops sensibility and assumes a grandeur and ecstasy unknown to those who merely travel on the earth. Each gesture of flight is a stride nearer omnipotence, an attribute more godlike by reason of its supremacy over those obstacles that crush and overwhelm."

I shared the same seat with Lyone at the prow of the vessel.

The scenery had in our absence developed into more marked grandeur. Under the spell of an eternal morning, of such light as poets only dream of, there rose on either side of us consummate rocks and cataracts that signalled heaven. The swinging pillars of incredible streams leaped thousands of feet into the gulf beneath. They charmed us like glittering serpents. The gorge, the rocks, the cataracts, the heavens of the earth above us were a prodigal feast to which nature had bidden us.

As we explored the depths of the gulf the *Aeropher* assumed an undulating motion. For several miles the vessel kept descending, until we swept through an overwhelming jungle of wild flowers. There were acres of roses riotous in bloom, there was the trailing of wild peas sweet as honey, the blue of larkspurs, the fragrance of musk flowers, and the swaying cups of scarlet poppies.

Then the ship rose again toward the mammoth rocks that shimmered in the sunlight adorned with the tapestries of falling wave. Still upward we rose into the spell-bound sky, feeding on the savage sweets of nature, the rhythm of the golden cliffs, the echoes of the waterfalls. We were the associates of mighty pines that on the Theban peaks spread incomparable solaces for mind and heart. Then, as we descended from our extreme altitude, we began also to revolve with a splendid sweep of motion, until the landscape swam around us like a dream.

It was a delirious phantasy of airy clouds, fluttering leaves, songs of birds, milky avalanches, balsamic forests, and the awe-inspiring silences of revolving walls!

The intoxication of such wheeling flight filled us with a strange joy. Our journey became wistful, eager, breathless. We became poets, and the soul of a poet is a chameleon that takes its glow and color from the surrounding infection. The motion that bore us in daring circles produced a euthanasia of mind and an exaltation of soul. The jugglery of flight under such conditions produced a Nirvana of soul and a Dharana of body. An exquisitely sweet whirlwind of emotion swept through I know not how many souls on the *Aeropher*, but certainly through the souls of Lyone and myself.

We both flew round and round like birds in intoxicating converse. During the progress of the flight, intellect, will and memory slumbered. I was deprived of the use of all external faculties, while those of the soul were correspondingly increased. Imagination and emotion were excited with rapturous energy. Lyone's eyes sparkled with a celestial joy. She was again the goddess in her ecstasy!

CHAPTER XXVII.

WE REACH EGYPTOSIS.

WHEN I recovered my every-day senses the revolving motion of the *Aeropher* had ceased and our flight was confined to an undulating movement. I was holding the hand of the goddess, who had been in a hyperaesthetic condition herself during the gyrations of the ship, and when feeling her senses leaving her

she had involuntarily grasped my hand. Our souls had been the recipients of the same rapturous joy.

When we were once more ourselves, Lyone was anxious to know something of the character of the women of the outer world. I talked to her about such women as resembled herself in spiritual fervor.

I described the Egyptian legend of Isis, the goddess of love, of life, of nature. I told her of St. Theresa, that blessed visionary, whose soul frequently experienced those voluptuous sensations, such as might be experienced when expiring in raptures on the bosom of God. I spoke also of pearly Eve, to whom, ere she had eaten of the fatal fruit, every moment was a delight, every blossom a wilderness of sweets. I spoke of Cleopatra, the haughty daughter of the Nile, the fervor of whose passion thickened into lust and death.

My story was interrupted by the arrival of the captain, who said: "Your holiness, we will reach Eyplosis in an hour."

"So soon," murmured the goddess.

"Is it the pleasure of your holiness that we alight at the private sanctuary or at the grand gate?" inquired the captain.

"At the grand gate, of course," said the goddess; "we must give our friends a royal welcome."

The captain bowed in obedience and disappeared.

The charms of our journey grew more and more interesting. In addition to the delights of discovery, I felt the rising ambition of a great joy in connection with Lyone. It was a daring thought, that I might possibly partake of a glorious *camaraderie* with the goddess, but when I thought that no stranger could possibly share a heart that belonged only to her own people, only to Atvatabar, I felt that Lyone was very far off indeed.

In a land where spiritual love was the prerogative of the priestly caste, strictly limited to the members of that caste, any priestly condescension or favor given to those outside the pale of the priesthood could have no meaning and was forbidden under penalty of death. Of course human nature is liable to err always, and it came to pass that the records of the legal tribunals of Atvatabar proved that many departures in soul fellowship took place between the most loyal inmates of Eyplosis and the outer inhabitants. The punishment for such offence to the most sacred law of Avatabar, although terrible,

was powerless to prevent such *mésalliances* of souls.

I knew that a spark of what might prove a mighty conflagration was already kindled in the bosom of the goddess. It thrilled me to know it, but only as the laws and customs of this strange country became known to me did I realize the tremendous risk in Lyone allowing her heart to betray any kinship, however remote, with mine. The greater the dignity, the greater the offence. The crime was sacrilege, and the punishment was death by the magnic fluid.

The goddess already belonged to her faith. She was love's *religieuse*. It was a cruel thing to seek her love when I knew it would perhaps bring her to an untimely end and stamp her name with everlasting disgrace. On the other hand, if the goddess, knowing much better than I the result of loving one not only outside of the sacred caste, but an "outer barbarian" as well, was brave enough to incur even the risk of death on behalf of her love, would I be so cowardly as not to follow her supreme soul even to martyrdom itself? And it might be that we might even raise a following large enough to defeat our enemies, and end in a greater triumph than either of us ever yet experienced.

Such were the thoughts that filled me when the aerial ship suddenly shot out of the chasm in which we had so long travelled and emerged upon the wide circular basin of the mountains about one hundred miles in diameter. In the centre of the high valley lay an immense lake, in whose centre stood a large island, everywhere visible from the shores, whereon stood the sacred palace of Eyplosis, the many-templed college of souls. We saw its pale green, gleaming walls rising from a tropical forest of dark green trees. Its gold and crystal domes reflected the sunlight dazzlingly, making the palace plainly visible all over that wide valley.

Eyplosis was a little city composed of an immense quadrangle, the supernal palace together with the subterranean infernal palace. The supernal palace was of enormous dimensions, being a square mile in extent, and was composed of over a hundred temples and palaces rising high in the air, the chief seat of soul worship in Atvatabar, and the home of twice ten thousand priests and priestesses.

The infernal palace consisted of one hundred subterranean temples and labyrinths, all sculptured, like the supernal palace,

out of the living rock, and situated directly underneath it.

Our course lay in a direct line across the noble valley. It was the most diversified part of the country we had yet crossed, being broken up into hills and valleys, glens and precipices, fields and forests, lakes, islands and gardens, all composing a region of bewildering beauty.

The emotions awakened by my near approach to this strange place were keen and exciting. Now for the first time in history its mystery was about to be disclosed to alien eyes from the outer world.

Soon after entering the park we saw, some fifty miles to the north, the ship containing the sailors rapidly approaching Eyplosis. It had also escaped destruction by the cyclone, having doubtless followed us down the cañon we sought refuge in.

It was a new sensation to float bird-like over the enchanted fields in this most mysterious of worlds, toward a spot that has no prototype on earth.

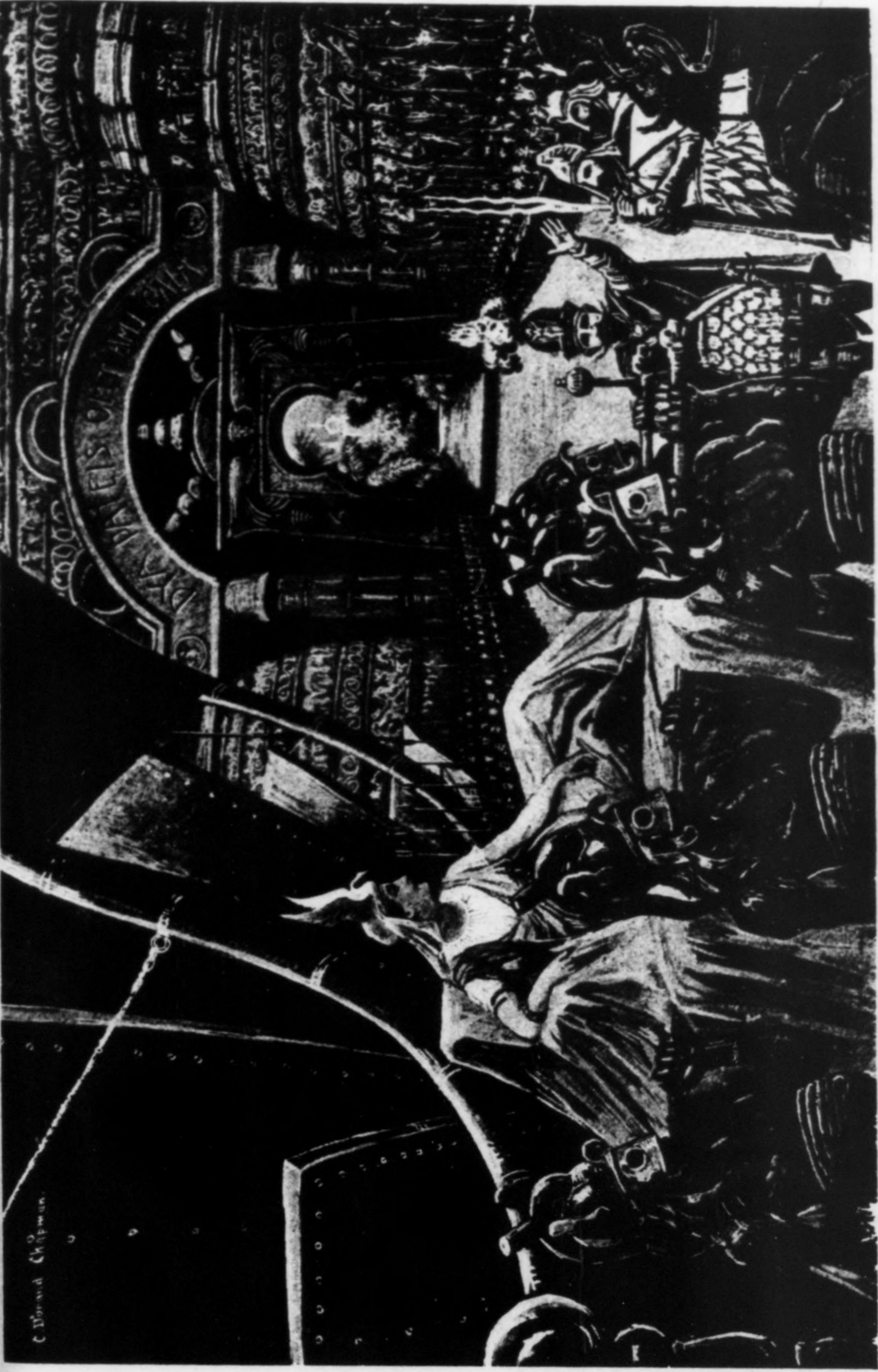
A multitude of domes and crenelated walls grew into immense proportions beneath the boundless light. Eyplosis possessed in its palaces the enchanted calm of Hindoo and Greek architecture, together with the thrilling ecstasy of Gothic shrines. Blended with these precious qualities there was a poetic generalization of the mighty activities of modern civilization. It was the home of spiritual and physical empire.

I wondered greatly what Eleusinian mysteries its courts contained. I was indeed another Hercules visiting the realms of Pluto and the garden of Proserpine in quest of the immortal fruits of knowledge. Would I be successful in my quest, and bear back to the outer world some magical secret its nations would be glad to know?

Finally, we saw the clear and marvellous palace close at hand. A hundred banners floated from its walls, and music from an army of neophytes on its towers saluted us.

The *Aeropher* swept over the lake, and, reaching the island, alighted on a marble causeway leading to the grand entrance of the palace. A thousand wayleals stood ranged on either side as a guard of honor. We had left the forest that largely covers the island, and on either hand stretched gardens of rainbow-colored flowers, and here and there fountains sparkled in the sunny air.

Lyone seemed the impersonation of divine loveliness as she



Lyone was borne on a litter from the aerial ship to the palace.

C. Howard Chapman.

was borne in a litter from the aerial ship to the palace. On her head sparkled the bird of yearning, typical of hopeless love.

The high priest Hushnoly and the priestess Zooly-Soase of the supernal palace and the grand sorcerer Charka and the grand sorceress Thoubool of the infernal palace, surrounded by the chief priests and priestesses, magicians, sorcerers, wizards, theosophists, spiritualists, etc., gave us a royal welcome, and were jubilant at the return of the supreme goddess to Eyplosis.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE GRAND TEMPLE OF HARIKAR.

TWELVE of the most handsome priests and priestesses constituted the guard of twin-souls in waiting to the goddess, and these escorted her into the grand court of the temple palace. Over a gigantic archway were sculptured the words "Dya Pateis omt Ami Cair," which meant "Two Bodies and One Soul." This was the motto of Eyplosis, the expression of ideal friendship and indicative of a system of life the reverse of that of the outer world of Atvatabar, which had for its motto, "One Body and Two Souls."

The architecture of the supernal palace was of amazing proportions and solid grandeur. Its aggregation of temples was sculptured out of one mighty block of pale green marble. The vast quadrangle seemed a tempest of imagination and art, whose temples, terraces and towers were the expression of the infinite souls that formed them. The color of the stone was beautifully relieved by broad bands of the vermilion metal terrelum, that plated the walls with several parallel friezes, which lent an amazing splendor to the scene, and made us feel as though we were entering some palace of eternity, where magnificence has no end.

We had no time to examine the marvels spread before our delighted eyes, for, on the conclusion of our reception by the great officers of the palace, we were conducted to chambers set apart for our use, to rest and refresh ourselves to witness the exercises attending the installation of a twin-soul on the following day.

The chief temple at Eyplosis was interiorly of semi-circular shape, like a Greek theatre, five hundred feet in width. It was covered like the pantheon with a sculptured roof and dome of many-colored glass. The roof was one hundred and thirty feet above the lowest tier of seats beneath or one hundred feet above the level of the highest seats beneath. The walls were laboriously sculptured dado and field and frieze, with bas-reliefs of the same character as the golden throne of the gods that stood at the centre of the semi-circle.

The dado was thirty-two feet in height, on which were carved the emblems of every possible machine, implement or invention that conferred supremacy over nature in idealized grandeur. Battles of flying wayleals and races of bockhockids were carved in grand confusion. It was a splendid reunion of science and art.

Higher up the field space, which was fifty feet in height, was broken by a gallery or cloister behind a tier of splendid pillars, themselves carved with the emblems of art. The hidden wall, as well as those portions above and below the cloister between dado and frieze, were covered with endless representations of the creations of art. Heroic eurythmic figures representing poetry, music, painting, architecture, etc., formed a mighty symposium.

Highest of all, the enormous frieze, fully sixteen feet in width, was one mighty band of solid terrelum. This had been cast in plates having sculptured symbols in high relief of the sublime emblems of Harikar, and portrayed scenes from the idealities and mysteries of Eyplosis.

There were represented the fine and perfect figures of magicians in the midst of their incantations, of sorcerers raising souls to life again; there were visions of the sorcery of love in all its moods, and of the rapt practices of twin-souls generating a creative force in batteries of spirit power.

Above all rose the dome whose lights were fadeless. The pavement of the temple had been chiselled in the form of a longitudinal hollow basin, containing a series of wide terraces of polished stone, whereon were placed divans of the richest upholstery. In each divan sat a winged twin-soul, priest and priestess, the devotees of hopeless love. On the throne itself sat Lyone, the supreme goddess, in the semi-nude splendor of the pantheon, arranged with tiara and jewelled belt and flowing skirt of sea-green aquelum lace. She made a picture divinely

entrancing and noble. Supporting the throne was an immense pedestal of polished marble, fully one hundred feet in diameter and twenty feet in height, which stood upon a wide and elevated pavement of solid silver, whereon the priests and priestesses officiated in the services to the goddess. On crimson couches sat their majesties the king and queen of Atvatabar, together with the great officers of the realm. Next to the royal group myself and the officers and seamen of the *Polar King* occupied seats of honor. Behind, around and above us, filling the immense temple, rose the concave mass of twin-souls numbering ten thousand individuals, each seated with counterpart soul.

As I gazed on those happy terraces of life, youth, love and beauty, I felt exhilarated with the sensations the scene gave rise to.

The garments of both priests and priestesses were fashioned in a style somewhat resembling the decorative dresses seen on Greek and Japanese vases, yet wholly original in design. In many cases the priestesses were swathed in transparent tissues that revealed figures like pale olive gold within.

The grand sorcerer Charka and the grand sorceress Thoubool occupied a conspicuous divan upholstered with cloth of gold. The sorceress was a grand beauty, neither blond nor brunette, but her complexion would, chameleon-like, change from a rosy white to a clear golden hue. Her hair was bright copper, gleaming like strands of metal. Her eyes changed color incessantly, being successively blue and black.

Her robe was a pale green silk, bound at the waist with a heavy cincture of gold. She wore a necklace of many-colored gems.

The grand sorcerer wore a robe of moss-green velvet embroidered with appliqued white silk lace, resembling lotus bloom. Both wore diadems of emeralds. Other twin-souls were arrayed in equally splendid attire, and seated on couches whose upholstery accentuated or harmonized with their fair occupants. Whatever the color selected, I observed that each twin-soul priest and priestess wore robes of a consanguineous hue, however the individual stuffs might vary in texture or quality. I also observed that in no case were the laws of taste in color violated, and unerring instinct had guided every priest and priestess in achieving the most piquant harmonies of color. With

garments in simultaneous contrast each twin-soul sat on a couch upholstered in fabrics in pure contrast of color.

How I wished some great painter of the outer world could transfer to canvas that conflagration of beauty.

Several twin-souls, with garments that seemed beaten gold, reclined on black velvet couches beside us. On an immense divan of white velvet near by sat a group of priests and priestesses arrayed in stuffs that were the strangest tones of purple, brown, violet, green, and red. A twin-soul in golden maize sat on a dark purple couch. A twin-soul in *écru* sat on a salmon-colored couch, while a twin-soul in *myosotis* blue reposed on a couch of the color of Australian gold. Celibates and vestals in russet robes luxuriated on couches of magnolia green.

It was evident their artists possessed a happy skill in creating such harmonies of costume. Sculptor, upholsterer and *couturière* formed the trinity of genius that wrought marvels of form and color.

Harikar, the Holy Soul, was the deity, who was symbolized by the goddess, and ministered to by such a retinue of souls. No doubt Harikar was mightily pleased at such a tribute of wealth, love and beauty. As far as an individual could appreciate such splendor, I must testify it was an eminently thrilling oblation.

The votaries themselves were no solitary ascetics who practised heroic mortifications to obtain dominion over life or nature. Instead of the pale devotee who in other creed cultivates the desire to get away from all things earthly, and whose every effort is to extinguish pleasure in life, every theopath of Harikar cultivated a Greek perfection of body, as well as a Gothic intensity of soul. By what powerful incantation were the priests of Eglyptosis able to overcome the law of the outer world, that all joy must be paid for in pain, and that the joy was nearly always too dear at the price given?

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE INSTALLATION OF A TWIN-SOUL.

THE sacred musicians of the temple surrounded the throne in solid circles each arrayed in lordly attire.

They flourished instruments of gold, that rang out music of such depth and clearness of tone as to melt every soul in that vast audience into one thrilling whole. The sounding song was the incarnation of all things majestic and glorious. In its breathless measures were born the spirits of conquest, pride, inspiration, love and sympathy. The thrilling climax was wrought of passages eloquent of love, tenderness, reverence, joy, adoration and poetry.

Again, with the music becoming more refined, a choir of singers in the high cloister in the walls sang as they walked a refrain of purifying sweetness. It was a wail of fidelity and love, and both song and music moved in perfect accord.

Thereafter music alone was heard, when the high priest Hushnoly, and the high priestess Zooly-Soase stood before us on the silver pavement beneath the throne.

The blue-black hair of the high priestess fell around her olive face and shoulders like a cloud of darkness. She wore a robe of coral-red silken gossamer, that with its foldings shivered like quicksilver, revealing a figure of olive marble beneath. Her shoulders, arms and breasts, soft and heavy in mould, were dimly seen beneath their coral veil. Her profile was perfect. Her eyes were jewels of swart fire. Her eyebrows made perfect arches above them, enhancing the beauty of her face. Her mouth was fine and tender, and her lips red with kisses. The high priest, whose noble features were olive-green in hue, wore a splendid opaque silk burnous of camellia-red, of heavier texture than that of the priestess. He wore boots of scarlet lacquered leather. Both wore diadems of kragon, the precious stone.

A stone altar curiously carved, on which stood a green bronze turtle of large size, occupied one side of the front of the pavement. The turtle held its head stretched upward, and through its open mouth a thin stream of blue smoke ascended. On the wide flat back of the turtle lay an open volume, the sacred book of Eyplosis.

The priest and priestess stood beside the altar, each reading an alternate stanza from the ritual of the goddess. While reading, the priests with loud voice followed the intoning of the high priest, and the priestesses that of the high priestess, as follows:

THE RITUAL OF HOPELESS LOVE.

PRIESTS.

Harikar is the supreme soul, and the goddess Lyone his supreme incarnation. Equally free from asceticism and indulgence, she treads the golden path.

PRIESTESSES.

Let us joyfully obey our adorable goddess, who commands us in all manner of spiritual joys; let us follow her glorious example, preserving purity of heart and life.

PRIESTS.

Let us adore a cupid agonized, worshipping the goddess of hopeless, tender, romantic love. Let us, with our counterparts, the most lovely of maidens, become twin-souls for evermore.

PRIESTESSES.

Let us love the shapely and active youths, the young men of soul and intellect, likewise those of courage and daring, whose hearts and minds are in complete unity.

PRIESTS.

Let us add splendor of body to greatness of soul. May we excel in the chase, the dance and the race. Let us drink ambrosial wine, and eat the juiciest of meats, and clothe ourselves with the finest and strongest of tissues.

PRIESTESSES.

Let us have a beautiful companionship with our counterpart souls. Let us rejoice in the sun, in the free winds of the sky, in the glory of flowers, in the price of horses and elephants richly caparisoned. Let us treasure jewels. Let us possess emeralds, turquoises, diamonds and rubies. Let us array ourselves with marvellous stuffs, dyed with the richest colorings.

PRIESTS.

Let us here in search of the ideal find an ever-increasing Nirvana of blessedness. Goddess of souls, lead us to imagine higher and holier exaltations; keener and more blessed raptures!

PRIESTESSES.

Sweet mother of souls! teach us to cultivate consoling friendships with sympathetic hearts. Give us longings for the utmost depths of love and tenderness; let us possess fervid and impassioned souls.

PRIESTS.

Let us create a paradise wherein life is one long intoxication of love, beauty and soul-culture, found in the fascinating converse of soul with soul and intellect with intellect.

PRIESTESSES.

May rapturous energies spring from hopeless loves! May the yearning for inaccessible pleasures fill us with blessed extravagance and holy madness.

PRIESTS.

May we, firmly poised on virtue, become possessed of noble, delicate, enormous souls. May the meeting of spirit with spirit be too ecstatic for words to express. May vows be written in each other's hearts. May the jewelled ring bind soul and soul, and in the commingled life may the holy compact be known, that a perfect circle of souls has been consummated.

PRIESTESSES.

Secure by our compact and our vows from tasting of the forbidden fruit, may we always possess the happy intemperance of never-satiated souls.

PRIESTS.

May the sorcery of love procure for us the shuddering sensibility of sorrow, without its agony, as we possess the perfect delight of day without the cold and lugubrious shadows of the night.

PRIESTESSES.

Contact with life begets love, and love begets sensation, and sensation desire, but reason and culture control desire and so preserve the endless sweetness of our joy.

PRIESTS.

The real mortal, the ideal divine. The real awakens desire, the ideal feeds it. The real is the maimed, the halt and the blind; it is the sepulchre of faith; the poor, the tawdry, the miserable, it is the measure of our imperfect attainment of the ideal.

The ideal is the supreme made possible by love and charity. It is wide as imagination, perfect as love, calm as death. It is the unchangeable and the immortal.

The real with its disappointments is soul shattering, but the ideal is perennial life.

The more inaccessible the pleasure, the keener the delight in its pursuit.

In love, accessibility is death.

PRIESTESSES.

By losing the real we obtain the ideal. What others strive for we possess. Praise to Harikar for the most glorious of men, for precious viands, odoriferous wines, rare and costly jewels, marvellous stuffs, and the hundred temples and gardens of Eyplosis! Praise to Harikar for our counterpart souls!

PRIESTS.

Praise to Harikar for the loveliest of women, noble, cultured and tender, with whom Nirvana is ecstasy.

PRIESTESSES.

Nirvana is the consummate gift of Harikar, the one everlasting sweetness!

During the intonation of the ritual, the twin-souls put into practice the manifestations of those endearments prayed for, and which they certainly seemed to possess.

Throughout the entire congregation, priest and priestess, enfolded in each other's arms, swayed caressingly together and rapturously kissed each other. The fondest sighs were heard amid the recitations, and the faces of lover and beloved were flushed the color of rosy flame. A tempest of restrained passion shook the entire congregation.

What wonder, that, ruled by such a faith, each twin-soul splendidly apparelled, in such an edifice, should grow rich and

strange, bold and delicate, and exhibit the intemperance of emotion excited by sensations so multiplied and extreme? I then saw a new meaning in the grandeur and efflorescence of the sculptures of the temple. I saw in the profuse decorations, in the arabesques so fantastically entangled and unrolled, a manifestation of the delicate sensibility that created them.

Not only were real or natural objects idealized in art, but also conventional art, or the record of what nature suggests, as well as how she appears, to the soul of the artist. And what must have been the infinite wealth of suggestion to such souls as these to account for such mouldings and traceries on wall and roof, and such wealth of color in attire, reflected and duplicated in the jewelled windows of the dome. Here were souls fitted by nature and art to fuse and create the suggestions of nature into shapes of eternal beauty. These flamboyant shapes and mystical colors presuppose the strange illuminations that had pierced tender and extravagant hearts.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE INSTALLATION OF A TWIN-SOUL (CONTINUED).

WHILE priest and priestess were folded with mutual emotion two of the loveliest souls took the place of the high priest and priestess on the silver pavement. The girl was young and tender, golden white in complexion with crimson lips. Her figure was swathed in a vermillion robe, on the breast of which was embroidered in outline a sea-green sun whose swaying rays reached the furthest parts of her garment. Her pale blue hair was crowned with a chaplet of daffodils. The youth wore a robe of scarlet silk embroidered with a golden sun similar in design to that of the priestess. His pose was singularly noble. These two souls were about to become priest and priestess, and, after having taken the vows of hopeless love in presence of the goddess, high priest and priestess and congregation of twin-souls, they sang the following anthem, accompanied by a wailing storm of music from several hundred violins, entitled:



The Priest and Priestess stood beside the altar each reading an alternate stanza from the Ritual of the Goddess.

THE TWIN-SOUL.

PRIEST.

Love is a heated furnace that devours
The thickest ice; love is a sweet moist wind
That cools the fevered desert with its balm.
There is no rain nor heat, yea, even snow
Is warm and rosy to ideal souls
That shudder in life's sweetest ecstasies.
If love, that makes ideal life, that dwells
In fragrant silences, makes green the grass,
And far more tender the diviner flowers,
It surely makes both bold and delicate
The warm superiority of flesh
Of that strange, sacred soul that dwells with mine.

The clear, yet golden whiteness of the form
That shines through pale green diaphane,
Showing its pliant beauty, is the dress
Of that rapt soul that is all tenderness,
Her brow is crowned with wistful daffodils,
Making her fair face fairer, and her eyes
Are clouded sapphires; yea, her perfect lips
(Whereon my soul will dwell for evermore)
Clear blood-red rubies! The sweet hand holds
Red poppies and blue lotus, and the soft
And sulphur blossomed wind-flower. If such dress
Enshrine a soul as perfect if the curves
That make her form voluptuous describe
The splendor of her soul (and this I know),
Love has no purer temple, nor more sweet!

The priest had sung along so far, and now both priest and priestess joined their voices in a marvellous song. Wilder, sweeter and more intense, the violins stormed and wailed pathetic whirlwinds of ecstasy. At times their insufferable moans caught the excited hearts of the audience, and twin-souls in their passion would rise on their wings and, revolving, sweep around the amphitheatre locked in each other's arms.

PRIEST AND PRIESTESS.

Sharper than pain, we love, and the caress,
Keener than torment, overmaddens us!
There is no fasting when our feverish lips
Meet in the shock that strikes the spirit dumb
With swooning raptures! The dilated soul,
Imtemperate with the enormous moan
Of passion, would outleap the strenuous will.
The flesh, transfigured with the crisis, reels,
Stretches the chain of duty and would leap
To grasp the tempting and forbidden fruit.
Were not that virtue is our comrade now.

We lift our eager faces to the sun
And feast on life and on each other's souls.
Luxuriate, confounded with delight.
For us no mouldy cloister waits its prey,
Nor cave of darkness, where existence mourns
And dies beneath its scourgings. We have made
Our grim novitiate with reality.
Have known its agony, for we were born
So eminent for rapture, that the pain
All men inherit desolated us
And spread a living terror in our souls;
So that through clouds of everlasting woe
Scarce came the gleam of gladness or of love,
And earth was pitiless, and brutal souls
Who cannot feel there ruled. Oh, the wide world,
Degraded by ignoble brutishness,
Could yield no tendernesses infinite
For we who feed on rapture. Thus it was
Our souls on meeting, in the thrilling kiss
Were fused in indissoluble embrace:
We who were famished, in ideal love
Found sustenance and passed from death to life!

The song was perfect. The strange, fresh accents of the singers, so full of love and passion, melted every heart in the temple with their ecstasy. One might hear such measures without thought of lapse of time or of worldly concerns. Ah! if

one could hear such melody forevermore!

With a burst of dramatic joy the singing of the last stanza revealed whole worlds of rapture.

Reincarnated in an earthly heaven,
Now have we reached Nirvana, now
Above us open the wide gulfs of joy,
And luminous and glorious round us blow
Millions of flowers; while afar there shines
The mighty splendor of the exhaustless sea!
We dwell in breathless joys, thrilled through and through
With majesty and sweetness; we have grown
Athletes of joy in our Agapemone:
Eager and breathless, we have found at last
The fount of youth, the magical Arjeels;
Fruits of organic gold amid the leaves
Sparkle, and around our island home
Are spread the veritable golden sands
Whereon our happy feet tread evermore!

The singers disappeared, and in their places a hundred wondrously-arrayed figures moved in the dance of pure being on the silver pavement. Lithe as leopards, with unclad limbs and feet, priest and priestess danced all the ecstasies of Egeyptosis. The dancers were so young, so fresh, so tender, so beautiful, and so innocent, that it was a supreme joy to behold them. Rapture grew universal and lovers cried with hysterical shudderings. The rainbow-colored throng, moving to the music of the golden instruments, flashed upon the pavement like joy taking possession of the world!

I felt intensely sad for Lyone, who sat like a statue of golden marble, gazing on the abyss of joy beneath. Had the goddess no lover to press her to his heart amid the universal rapture? Alas! the immense dignity of her position and the unalterable laws of Atvatabar alike prevented any single soul from feeding the intense hunger that consumed her.

Accompanying the dancers, the unseen choir in the cloisters began to sing a new opera of love, and the strains of an "Ave, Lyone, bona dea," stole upon the senses like the bewildering sighs of angels, making one ache with delight. A story of romantic love once more sculptured the faces of priest and

priestess with angelic beauty, as it rose on wings of song and swept in delightful moans upon the carven stone.

It was a memorable scene, one never to be forgotten! The hieroglyphic walls, carved in high relief with the instruments of empire, the dome with its ten thousand fadeless lights, the terraces of twin-souls radiant with delight, the marvellous dancers, the superb music that seemed to shake the heart of the solid stone that enclosed us, and high over all the supreme goddess in whose honor all this adoration was made, seated in bliss on the throne of the gods — such was the situation at that moment.

It was a monstrous and a splendid joy!

Suddenly a roar of invincible music issued from gigantic tubes that pierced the body of the throne itself with fresh and warlike explosions of melody. I was filled with a maddening delight, until consciousness could hardly bear the strain any longer. I cried aloud, amid a Chimborazo of song, a hundred-cratered Popocatepetl of sweet strains. The audience, enraptured with the climax, became an inferno of passion, laughter tears and felicity!

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE MYSTERY OF EGYPLOSIS.

THE palace of the goddess at Eyplosis was a component part of the vast quadrangle known as the supernal palace. The view therefrom embraced the wide inner garden of the entire palace of temples, discovering jungles of shrubs and flowers of all imaginable hues, interspersed with lakes sleeping in their marble basins like enormous jewels. Fountains of solid silver gushed forth a brilliant foam of waters amid the embowering foliage, and there glad priests, in the society of priestesses sweeter than the flowers themselves, dreamed life away in enthusiastic peace. Surrounding all was the high and glorious palace, forming a background, on the design of which imagination and art had been entirely exhausted.

The scene the day following the Ritual of the installation of a twin-soul in the temple of Eyplosis was a boudoir in the palace

of the goddess. It was a large apartment, whose walls were hung with panels of rose-colored velvet, embroidered with gray-green silk foliage. In one large tapestry, the hands of loving priestesses had embroidered a scene in the garden of Egeyposis. On a dais, upon a couch of soft red silk upholstery sat Lyone, swathed in draperies of shrimp pink and pale peacock green, embroidered with ivory-white silk. A large terra-cotta silk rug, whose only ornament was an elaborate border, covered the floor. The goddess wore a belt of aquelium serpents having tulips in their mouths. Heavy terrelum bracelets adorned her wrists, and she wore a diminutive tiara on her head.

I sat on a luxurious seat, the sole guest of the goddess. I was rapidly learning from the divinity the mystery of Egeyposis. I was especially anxious to find out how the jewel of one hundred years of youth could be grafted into the ordinary existence. An idea so splendid seemed to be the germ of earthly immortality. We were discussing the subject of hopeless love, and I asked her if she considered life and love were the same element.

"Life and love are synonymous," she replied. "By love I mean the spiritual, ideal, romantic passion that is hopeless."

"Yes," I replied, "but does not the idea of inaccessibility create a worthless desire, that is, a desire for something that is forbidden or unattainable? The majority of men, I think, will prefer an every-day love with all its risks and imperfections to the shadowy ghost of a hopeless love. The hopeful love does no violence to nature such as is contemplated by the hopeless sentiment."

"You hardly understand me," said she; "the pleasure we aspire to is superior to any physical delight, and is an end in itself. It is romantic love, that blooms like a single flower in the crevices of a volcano. It is the quintessence of existence, the rarest wine of life, the expressed sweetness of difficulty and repression and long-suffering, the choicest holiday of the soul. We are willing to pay the price of hopelessness to taste such nectar. In the every-day world such joy only rarely exists. Interest, indulgence, ambition, fortune, time, temper and marriage destroy it. Youth, captivated by a beautiful face or a winning smile, thinks it has discovered its true counterpart, and so takes possession of the prize. It finds afterward it was mistaken, and all its life thenceforth becomes miserable."

“But,” I replied, “if the world at large had discovered that your theory of love was the true one, it would long since have acted on its discovery and put no destroying restraint or obligation on so precious a possession. But the world found that a thousand accidents would infallibly open the eyes of both parties to the fact that they possessed but few qualities in common, or in counterpart, and with such knowledge of good and evil they would infallibly separate. Hence the foundation of society would be torn asunder and the rising generation of helpless children become orphaned of home, the very bulwark of life. Society must have assurances that people do not get married simply as an experiment, but are willing to honorably undertake the mutual sacrifices their act carries with it.”

“I have already admitted,” said she, “that the joy of spiritual love hardly ever exists in its virgin force in the every-day world. I admit that the necessary regulations of society, although they tend to destroy it, must be enforced. The Atvatabar nation rests on the marriage idea. At one time in our history the people strove for ideal love and overthrew the ordinary marriage yoke without the restraint of reason. Law and order disappeared and social chaos reigned. The land was filled with the wailings of orphans whose parents had deserted them, and men and women formed new associates every day. Unbridled license devastated the country. Our lawgivers re-established the law of marriage as being the only law suitable to mankind. Man in the aggregate had not developed to a state in which the consummation of marriage could be dispensed with. Yet there were many among those who had advocated ideal love worthy of their theory. Although married to each other, they had remained celibates. For these Eyplosis was founded, for the study and practice of what is really a higher development of human nature and in itself an unquestionable good. It is the most powerful element in the production of creative energy of soul and personal beauty. As you will have observed, all our devotees are singularly beautiful in form and feature and possess spirit power to a high degree.”

As the goddess spoke a few threads of her bright blue hair had strayed across her face. Her beautiful eyes flashed with a royalty of truth, tenderness, magnetism, and feeling. She was the living illustration of her claims for Eyplosis.

“What you say,” I replied, “illustrates that ordinary marriage,

with all its limitations and infelicities, is absolutely necessary for the well-being of society. Marriage is simply the application of reason and morality to blind, passionate nature. The home circle is the origin of nationality, progress, and wealth. Ideal love, wrested from the dragon of difficulty, is, I think, but rarely tasted in so real, so practical an institution. This is the experience of the nations of the outer world, and how much better for man that it is so? A roadway in proportion to its rhythm of undulation becomes useless, hindering travel rather than accelerating it. So also with love. When settled in the calm security of marriage the mind is freed from the romantic extravagance, the torture, the delight of hopeless sentiment. Thus men are free to devote themselves to the more serious purposes of life and achieve wealth and fame for themselves and their families. I am, nevertheless, curious to see how your institution is conducted, for hopeless love seems to me one of the most disquieting things in life. Its victims, happy and unhappy, resisting passion with regret or yielding with remorse, are ever on the rack of torture. They resemble the devotees of certain idols, who pierce themselves with cruel hooks and swing aloft in honor of their god. It may be pleasure, but not one in a thousand will ever achieve that degree of soul exaltation and physical abnegation to think it so."

"And yet not one in a thousand, not one in a hundred thousand lives in Eyplosis," said the goddess.

"The men who achieve anything," I continued, "good and great in the world, the men who build empires, discover ideas, who both rule and populate nations, are all rewarded by a hopeful love. It is only a hopeless love that sets up its mirage of false and never-to-be-obtained joys. Hence, I ask you the question, What of Eyplosis?"

The goddess smiled at my controversial attitude. "It is the old question," she replied, "of conventionalism *versus* art, of economic institutions *versus* nature and life. Just as we endeavor to rescue spontaneous invention and originality from the disease of the tasteless and laborious productions of a mechanical civilization, so we labor to create an earthly home for the soul in a world where superficial necessities will stifle it out of existence. There was a time in the history of Atvatabar when people talked of art and love, both of which did not exist. The octopus of commercial, mechanical and economical life had

strangled the soul and all its attributes. Men fought for treaties of commerce, treaties of marriage, deeds of property, and all the while acted in defiance of their obligations. They cheated each other, lied to each other, deserted each other incessantly. Love had taken wings and fled. Art had lost its language and its cunning. Life was no longer illuminated with splendid ideals. It was no longer arrayed in the fair and fascinating garments that only the soul can weave. History was no longer glorified by paintings and sculptured reliefs. Religion was no longer symbolized in the solemn magnificence of architecture, or sculptured shrines of gods. Articles of daily use were made solely to make a profit, and the widespread use of machinery was destroying the art, the soul, the pure life of the people. A paternal government, seeing the tyranny of commercialism and the possible extinction of the soul itself, has wisely, in the spirit of patriarchal hospitality, established the art institution of Gnaphisthasia and the religious institution of Eyplosis, for soul development in harmony with the high destiny of mankind. Harikar, or developed soul, is the natural sequence of the development of the soul and intellect, achieving the supreme virtue of spiritual perfection, or dominion of the passions of the body and the forces of nature. Love was the one great end of our religion, for life is love."

"I value your creed," I continued, "to the fullest extent. I value the idea that every intellect shall enfold a soul. You practise the doctrine that hopeless love is that phase of the passion that contains the most delirious possibilities of joy, yet, allow me to ask, have you never discovered that there may be disappointments for even such guarded emotions as yours? Are your neophytes perfectly happy? We find, in the outer world at least, that no state or condition in life is perfectly pleasurable. Their joys die of their own *ennui* if for no other cause. We find happiness like a flower; it has its period of bloom and decay. The more intoxicating the beauty the shorter its life. Happiness long continued grows common, fades and dies. Then again the human soul is always in a fever of unrest. It always thinks what is beyond its reach is liberty. As one of our poets has expressed it:

" 'Oh, give me liberty!
For even were a paradise itself my prison,
Still would I long to leap the crystal walls!' "

As I spoke I saw that the goddess was an eager listener to my words. Was it possible that she might have an idea that even Eyplosis might indeed be a prison? But, then, her position, her vows, recalled to her the fact that she was love's *religieuse*, an indissoluble part of the temple of love itself.

The goddess replied, that sometimes impatient spirits had entered the palace, but any incorrigible cases of insubordination were either imprisoned in the fortress beneath the palace or were expelled into the outer world. The neophytes entered the temple college while under twenty years of age. Each soul, thereafter mingling freely with five thousand of the opposite sex, chooses in a month its counterpart for life, thus forming a complete circle. The choice must be approved by a council of "Soul Inquisitors" who, before the life-long union is made, see that both possess all the elements that will produce a high, holy and pure blending of thought, feeling, emotion, joys spiritual and intellectual, whose every breath will be an ecstasy, and at the same time possess reverence for each other and the power of resistance to passion and are able to walk in the pure path.

"Do you not think," I replied, "that the temptation being ever present, the struggle in the soul must in time exhaust and enfeeble the moral powers, producing disastrous consequences?"

Before the goddess could reply, a terrible commotion was heard in the palace garden. The shrieks of a woman mingled with the loud voices of men were heard in furious clamor, and one of the royal guards entered the palace chamber in breathless haste.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SIN OF A TWIN-SOUL.

"YOUR holiness," said the captain of the sacred guard, as he entered the apartment, "the twin-soul Ardsolus and Merga has sinned against the laws and religion of Eyplosis. I crave permission to bring the guilty pair before the goddess with the evidence of their guilt."

The goddess, answering quickly, order the priest and priestess

to be produced.

The captain thereupon commanded his wayleals to bring the prisoners into the audience chamber.

Shrinking between her guards, the priestess Merga appeared bearing in her arms a lovely babe, a rosy duplicate of herself. Following her came the priest Ardsolus, also a prisoner.

The priestess was the picture of petite girlish beauty. Her delicate rose complexion was flushed with a feeling of shame, and her handsome hazel eyes, dilated with vexation and sorrow, were filled with tears.

Her lover was tall, straight and athletic, with a proud, fine-cut face. The down of manhood was just showing itself on his upper lip.

"I feel sorry for you both," said the goddess: "did you weary of the joys of Eyplosis?"

Ardsolus threw back over his shoulder a falling fold of his white bournous and, drawing himself proudly up, replied: "Yes, your holiness, our life here is imprisonment. We have grown weary of its restraint and are eager to return to the outer world with all its cares and freedom."

The chamberlain at this moment announced the arrival of the high priest Hushnoly, the secular, as well as the sacred governor of Eyplosis, and the high priestess Zooly-Soase, who both entered the presence chamber. Hushnoly, saluting the goddess, announced that he had come in search of the erring twin-soul. The high priest was astonished beyond expression at finding sin and shame in so glorious a retreat.

Addressing the weeping girl, he said: "Do you know, my child, how unfortunate you have been? You have committed the unpardonable sin in the temple of hopeless love. Did you not think of your lifelong vows of celibacy and of the deep and tender joy of romantic love?"

Merga only replied by clasping her babe still closer to her breast and bathing it with her tears.

"What excuse do you offer for your crime against yourself, your religion and your fellow-priests?" demanded the high priest of Ardsolus.

"Your highness," said the youth, "we have, after due experience of our vows, arrived at the conclusion that such vows are a violation of nature. Everything here bids us love, but the artificial system under which we have lived arbitrarily draws

a line and says, thus far and no further. Your system may suit disembodied spirits, if such exist, but not beings of flesh and blood. It is an outrage on nature. We desire to leave Eyplosis and return to the common ways of men. We may be there unfortunate, but we will be free. This rarified atmosphere stifles us."

The high priest was horrified. Never before had a twin-soul been so sinful, so contumacious. It revealed a state of things too terrible to contemplate! If such conduct became contagious, it meant the ruin of Eyplosis.

I could detect, however, in the sight of the goddess a certain sympathy for the prisoners which, perhaps, it would just then be very impolitic for her to reveal. It was clear that beneath all this ideal joy lay a slumbering volcano of passion that only awaited a favorable moment for a fierce outbreak. The laws of this strange faith seemed not to have contemplated that to avoid temptation is the only security of moral strength, and that to seek temptation is to paralyze the moral fibres of the soul. The high priest grew pale with excitement.

"Are you aware of the enormity of your offence?" said he to the defiant youth. "For a moment of sinful delight you destroy your interregnum of a hundred years of blessedness, and you, each of you, have delivered a blow at earthly immortality. The success of our religious system is proven by the fact that we have already lengthened the life of our hierophants one hundred years, or twice the duration of life in the outer world of Bilbimtesiol. This is the last of many outbreaks of *malfaisance* to vows made in deliberation, and a fresh exhibition of treason in the sacred college of souls."

"I tell you this," said the youth in reply, "you are slumbering on the edge of a volcano. There are thousands of twin-souls ready to cast off this yoke. They only await a leader to break out in open revolt!"

"Then, sir, we will take care that you are not their leader; we shall suppress you, as we have all similar cases, in the cells of the fortress. Neither Eyplosis nor Atvatabar will hear of your crime. His majesty the king will, I have no doubt, acquiesce in the wisdom of such sentence."

"The punishment is no greater than the crime," said the high priestess. "I despair of Eyplosis if such crimes become frequent. What will our goddess think, what will Atvatabar

think of our holy temple when its own priests, the sacred devotees of Harikar, the ministers of the supreme goddess and teachers of the people in their holy religion, are found traitors? Will the government support rebellious and sinful souls in every luxury for the senses, with every possible means for developing and achieving spiritual mastery over the physical world, on the sole condition of hopeless love? It will not. Hence, I say, this disobedience must be quenched in the spark, or it will break out in ruin to our whole religious institution."

"Your punishment," said the high priest, "unless you will repent of your misdeed, give up possession of your offspring, and live ever afterward as holy priests of hopeless love, will be separate and solitary confinement for life in the fortress. You will both be simply obliterated from the world."

As the high priest uttered these words the mother-priestess gave a cry of terror, and, grasping her infant convulsively, gazed with an appealing glance at the goddess.

"We refuse to live as hypocrites," said the youth; "we are no longer twin-souls — we are man and wife and demand to be set free."

"Will you, each of you," said the goddess, "renounce that obedience that makes you factors of deities? Will you dethrone ideal love? Will you throw away palaces and gardens and flowers? Will you forswear the delight of the companionship of twin-souls?"

"We wish to be set free, your holiness," said the youth with firm, set lips.

"Do you no longer value the secrets of magic and sorcery? Do you renounce initiation into the secrets of nature to possess creative force to taste the elixir of life, the secret of the transformation of metals, and, above all, the blessedness of Nirvana? Knowing that love dies in possession do you desire to step forth from paradise into a hard, cold, realistic world, where every experience is a spear driven into the flesh?"

"We dare our fate!" replied the youth. "We ask you, goddess, to set us free."

"I will bring you both before the spiritual council," said Hushnoly, "and, as you are aware, the sentence of the council as provided by the constitution of Eglyptosis will be that you, each of you, be imprisoned in separate cells for life, and the child removed and cared for in a distant part of the kingdom."

You will henceforth be obliterated from life."

The lovers convulsively embraced each other, the beautiful Merga weeping bitterly.

"We will accept the punishment," said Ardsolus, "because we will give courage to the many twin-souls already imprisoned and also to those who as ardently desire freedom as ourselves. They will never forget that we are fighting their battle against a monstrous wrong."

"Guards, remove the prisoners," said the high priest.

"Can nothing that I may say mitigate their punishment?" said the goddess.

"Your holiness is aware," said Hushnoly, "that the laws of Eyplosis admit of no other interpretation than that prescribed for such a case as this. The foundation of the religion of Atvatabar must be preserved at any cost."

"I urge for mercy," said the goddess, who honored the prisoners with her tears.



TO
BE
CONTINUED

The Fisherman

by Matthew Gregory Lewis

(1775 — 1817)

from the German of Goethe

THE water rushed, the water swelled,
 A fisherman sat nigh;
 Calm was his heart, and he beheld
 His line with watchful eye:

While thus he sits with tranquil look,
 In twain the water flows;
 Then, crowned with reeds from out the brook,
 A lovely woman rose.

To him she sung, to him she said,
 "Why tempt'st thou from the flood,
 By cruel arts of man betrayed,
 Fair youth, my scaly brood?"

"Ah! knew'st thou how we find it sweet
 Beneath the waves to go,
 Thyself would leave the hook's deceit,
 And live with us below.

"Love not their splendour in the main
 The sun and moon to lave?
 Look not their beams as bright again,
 Reflected on the wave?"

"Tempts not this river's glassy blue,
 So crystal, clear and bright?
 Tempts not thy shade, which bathes in dew,
 And shares out cool delight?"

The water rushed, the water swelled,
 The fisherman sat nigh;
 With wishful glance the flood beheld,
 And longed the wave to try.

To him she said, to him she sung,
 The river's guileful queen:
 Half in he fell, half in he sprung,
 And never more was seen.

MEMNON

OR HUMAN WISDOM

by Voltaire

VOLTAIRE (1694 — 1778) was a pseudonym adopted by Francois Marie Arouet, one of the most brilliant satirists who ever lived. He was a poet and a philosopher, a spiritual revolutionary and an iconoclast, and declared himself the avowed foe of all dogmatic creeds. Born in Paris, Voltaire studied law for a while, but soon turned to a literary career despite the objections of his father, a minor official. His early writings caused him to be imprisoned in the Bastille twice, and in 1726 he was expelled from France and went to England, where he became rich and famous with a series of bitingly savage plays and poems directed against the government, church, and literary scene of France. In 1751 Voltaire accepted an often-extended invitation to live at the court of Frederick the Great of Prussia, but soon proved too much for the Emperor, and three years later, moved to Switzerland. After the death of Louis XV Voltaire returned in triumph to Paris in 1778, thus ending an exile of 28 years. He died the same year, at the age of 84, but the church he had attacked so often during his lifetime refused him official burial. Voltaire's complete works have been published in 90 volumes, but he is best remembered for his philosophical novels CANDIDE, OR OPTIMISM (1759) and ZADIG, OR FATE (1747). He occasionally used fantasy and science fiction as a vehicle for expressing his opinions, and produced a number of lesser-known short works such as "Micromégas," the story of a giant from the star Sirius, and the present tale, published in 1747, which concerns another extraterrestrial visitor.

ONE day Memnon conceived the senseless project of being perfectly wise. At some time or other this folly has passed through everyone's head. Memnon said to himself: To be very wise, and consequently very happy, one has only to be without passions; and nothing is easier, as everyone knows. First of all, I will never fall in love with a woman, for when I see a perfect beauty, I shall say to myself: One day those cheeks will be wrinkled, those lovely eyes will be red-rimmed, those round breasts will become flat and drooping, that fair head will be bald. Thus, I have only to see her now with the same eyes I shall see her with then, and certainly her head will not turn mine.

In the second place, I shall always be sober; however much I may be tempted by good cheer, delicious wine and the seductions of society, I shall only have to think of the results of excess — a heavy head, a loaded stomach, the loss of reason, health and time — and I shall then eat no more than I need; my health will always be good, my ideas always clear and luminous. It is all so easy that there is no merit in it.

After that, said Memnon, I must think a little of my income. My desires are moderate; my money is solidly invested with the Receiver-General of the Finances of Nineveh; I have enough to live independently, and this is the greatest of all blessings. I shall never endure the cruel necessity of paying court to anyone; I shall envy no one and no one shall envy me. And this too is very easy. I have friends, he went on, I shall keep them, since they will have nothing to contend about with me. I shall never be out of temper with them nor they with me; there is no difficulty in that.

Having made his little plan of wisdom in his room, Memnon looked out the window. He saw two women walking under the plane-trees near his house. One was old and seemed to be thinking about nothing; the other was young and pretty and seemed to be in deep thought. She was sighing, she was weeping, and was all the more beautiful in consequence. Our wise man was touched, not by the lady's beauty (he was quite sure he could not feel such a weakness), but by her affliction. He went down and spoke to the young lady of Nineveh with the idea of consoling her with wisdom. The fine creature told him in the most natural and touching manner about all the wrongs done her by an uncle she did not possess; how by his artifices he

had deprived her of property she had never owned, and all she had to fear from his violence.

"You seem to me a man able to give such good advice," she said, "that if you would be kind enough to come home with me and to examine my affairs, I am sure you would be able to get me out of these cruel difficulties."

Memnon had no hesitation in following her to examine her affairs with wisdom and to give her good advice.

The afflicted lady took him to a perfumed room and made him sit down with her on a large sofa, where they both sat facing each other with their legs crossed. As the lady talked she lowered her eyes, from which a few tears escaped, and when she raised them they always met the gaze of the wise Memnon. Their talk was full of tenderness which increased every time they looked at each other. Memnon took her affairs extremely to heart and every moment felt a greater desire to oblige so virtuous and so unfortunate a person. Little by little, in the warmth of conversation, they ceased to face each other. Their legs were no longer crossed. Memnon advised her so closely and gave her such tender counsel that neither of them could discuss affairs and did not know where they were.

At this stage the uncle arrived, as you may well suppose; he was armed from head to foot and the first thing he said, as was natural, was that he would kill the wise Memnon and his niece; and the last remark which escaped him was that he might be forgiving for a large sum of money. Memnon was obliged to give all he had with him. At that time a man was lucky to get off so cheaply; America had not yet been discovered and afflicted ladies were then not nearly so dangerous as they are to-day.

Memnon went home in shame and despair, and found a note inviting him to dine with some of his intimate friends. If I stay at home, he said, my mind will dwell upon my unlucky adventure and I shall not be able to eat; I shall be ill; it would be much better to go and take a frugal repast with my intimate friends. In the pleasure of their society I shall forget the folly I committed this morning. He went to the gathering and his friends thought him a little low-spirited. They made him drink to get rid of his sorrow. A little wine taken moderately is a remedy for body and soul. Thus thought the wise Memnon; and he got drunk. After dinner somebody suggested gambling. Limited play among friends is a respectable pastime. They

gambled; he lost all he had in his purse and four times as much on his word of honour. The game led to a dispute, which grew warm; one of his intimate friends threw a dice-box at his head and knocked out an eye. The wise Memnon was taken home drunk, moneyless, and short of an eye.

He slept off his wine; and when his head was freer he sent his servant for money to the Receiver-General of the Finances of Nineveh in order to pay his intimate friends; he was informed that his debtor had that morning become a fraudulent bankrupt, to the distress of a hundred families. Memnon in a rage went to court with a bandage over his eye and a petition in his hand to ask justice of the king against the bankrupt. In a drawing-room he met several ladies who all wore with an air of ease hoops twenty-four feet in circumference. One of them who knew him slightly, looked at him sideways and said to him:

“Horrors!”

Another who knew him better, said to him:

“Good-evening, Mr. Memnon; I am delighted to see you, Mr. Memnon; how did you come to lose an eye, Mr. Memnon?”

And she went on without waiting for his reply. Memnon hid himself in a corner and waited for the moment when he could throw himself at the monarch's feet. The moment came. He thrice kissed the ground and presented his petition. His most gracious Majesty received it very favourably and handed it to one of his satraps to give him an account of it. The satrap took Memnon aside and said to him haughtily and with a bitter sneer:

“You are a one-eyed fool to address yourself to the king rather than to me, and still more foolish to dare to ask for justice against an honest bankrupt whom I honour with my protection, and who is the nephew of one of the waiting-women belonging to my mistress. Give up this affair, my friend, if you wish to keep the eye you still have.”

Memnon, having thus renounced in the morning women, the excesses of the table, gambling, all quarrels and the court especially, before night had been deceived and robbed by a fair lady, had got drunk, gambled, quarrelled, lost an eye and had been to court where he had been laughed at.

Petrified with astonishment and overcome with grief he returned with death in his heart. He went to his house and found the bailiffs taking away his furniture on behalf of his

creditors. He remained under a plane-tree almost in a swoon; there he met the fair lady of the morning who was out for a walk with her dear uncle, and who burst out laughing when she saw Memnon with his bandage. Night fell; Memnon lay down on some straw near the wall of his own house. He had an attack of fever; he fell asleep and a celestial spirit appeared to him in a dream.

The spirit glittered with light. He had six beautiful wings but no feet, no head, no tail, and was like nothing at all.

"Who are you?" said Memnon.

"Your good angel," replied the other.

"Then give me back my eye, my health, my property, my wisdom," said Memnon.

He then related how he had lost them all in one day.

"Adventures like this never happen to us in the world where I live," said the spirit.

"And what world do you live in?" said the afflicted man.

"My country," he replied, "is five hundred million leagues from the sun in a small star near Sirius, which you can see from here."

"Wonderful country!" said Memnon. "What! Among you there are no devils of women to deceive a poor man, no intimate friends who win his money and knock out his eye, no bankrupts, no satraps who laugh at you when they refuse you justice?"

"No," said the inhabitant of the star, "nothing of the kind. We are never deceived by women, because we have none; we never fall into excesses at table, because we do not eat; we have no bankrupts, because we have neither gold nor silver; we cannot have our eyes knocked out, because our bodies are not like yours; and satraps never do us an injustice, because in our little star everyone is equal."

Then said Memnon to him:

"My lord, without women and without dinner, how do you spend your time?"

"In watching over other globes which are confined to our care," said the spirit, "and I have come to console you."

"Alas!" replied Memnon, "why did you not come last night and prevent me from committing so many follies?"

"I was with Assan, your elder brother," said the heavenly being. "He is more to be pitied than you. His gracious Majesty the King of the Indies, at whose court he has the honour to be, caused both his eyes to be knocked out on account of a small

indiscretion, and at the present moment he is in prison, with chains on his hands and feet."

"What is the use of having a good angel in our family," said Memnon, "when of two brothers one has lost an eye and the other is blind, one is lying on straw and the other is in prison?"

"Your lot will change," replied the animal from the star. "It is true you will never have more than one eye; but with that exception you will be comparatively happy so long as you never form the silly plan of being perfectly wise."

"Then it is something impossible to attain?" cried Memnon, with a sigh.

"Just as impossible," cried the other, "as to be perfectly skilful, perfectly strong, perfectly powerful, perfectly happy. We ourselves are very far from it. There is one globe in which all that is to be found; but in the hundred thousand millions of worlds scattered through space everything is connected by degrees. There is less wisdom and pleasure in the second than in the first, less in the third than in the second, and so on down to the last, where everyone is completely mad."

"I am very much afraid," said Memnon, "that our little terraqueous globe is precisely the mad house of the universe of which you do me the honour to inform me."

"Not altogether," said the spirit, "but near it; everything must be in its place."

"But then," said Memnon, "certain poets and philosophers must be very wrong to say that everything is for the best?"

"They are quite right," said the philosopher from above, "in regard to the arrangement of the whole universes."

"Ah!" replied poor Memnon, "I shall only believe that when I recover my lost eye."



NEXT ISSUE*ROGNOSTICATIONS*

NEXT time we have a strange and horrifying tale by H. G. Wells entitled "The Valley of Spiders," plus a weird story by a famous children's author of the early 1900's, E. Nesbit. And there'll be another healthy slice of our serial, THE GODDESS OF ATVATABAR, as Lexington White

and Lyone unwittingly bring revolution and death to the peaceful world inside the earth.

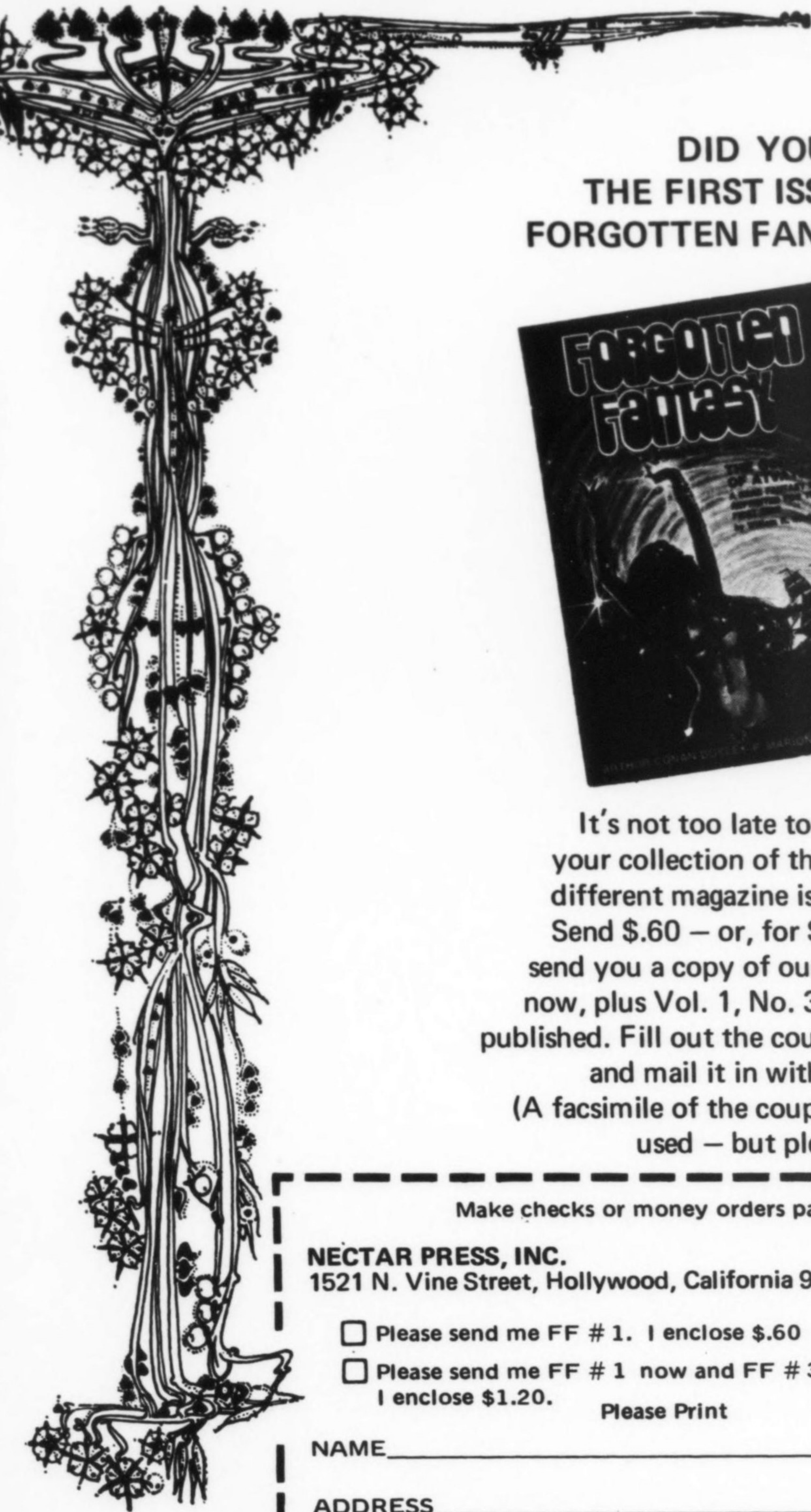
As this is being written, it's still too early for the letter column we mentioned last time, but we do hope to include it in the February issue. So let's hear from you.

DM



THE COVER

This month's cover is the work of George Barr, a native of Salt Lake City, Utah, who is producing some of the most striking fantasy art in the field today. George, who now lives in Los Angeles, first discovered science fiction at the age of 13, and has been hooked ever since. George's art has been featured in such fan publications as TRUMPET and MYTHLORE, and his first professional work appeared in FANTASTIC in 1961. In 1968 he won a Hugo, and is currently doing a series of paperback covers for Ace and Ballantine. An avid collector of the work of fellow artists, George's dream is to own a Hannes Bok and a Maxfield Parrish.



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