

# The Empire of the Invisibles

By H. E. Orcutt

## *Part I.*

### Chapter I.

#### The Ghost.

“I am surprised! This is not what I expected!” exclaimed a ghost as he walked slowly back and forth in the spacious parlors of a stone mansion on Drexel Boulevard, and paused meditatively in the bay-window to look out upon the gay life on the street.

“Here I am, all alone! Not a friend has come near me. For aught I know to the contrary, I am the only ghost in existence. If this is all there is of a future life, I must say that it is extremely unsatisfactory! I always supposed the invisible world was thickly populated, but as yet I see no signs of any other inhabitants. Before I stepped out of the body, I thought that by this time I should be holding interesting conversations with friends who have crossed the River of Death before me, roaming around on the surface of the moon, or visiting some of the other planets! I always had considerable curiosity about the rings of Saturn and the moons of Jupiter. I should like to study the effect of four moons in a sky on a cloudless summer’s night. But somehow I don’t feel much like roaming. I have a strange disinclination to go any farther than my own front doorstep. Something pulls me back into the presence of the body I at first tried so hard to escape from. Strange! I fail to understand it!”

The ghost left the window and again began his monotonous walk back and forth through the parlors. Unconsciously he attempted to put his hands in his pockets—for he seemed to himself to have hands; but he found that he did not seem to have pockets. There was a large easy-chair near the bay-window. The ghost took hold of it and tried to move it where he could have a better view of the passers-by on the boulevard. But his attempt was vain. He could not stir the chair.

“I hoped I might be stronger to-day, but I am as helpless as ever!” he said. “The limitations of a ghost are as vexatious as the limitations of a body. I can’t see that I have gained much by stepping out. More loss than gain so far. Lost, a body that could walk, and swim, and lift, and manage a horse, yes—and skate, too, as well as one could expect of a body that had been in use for a half-century. It was a very good body, as bodies go. And there it lies now, stiff and cold and helpless. A deserted tenement. Its owner a wanderer upon the face of the earth, without home or habitation.

And that crape floats upon the breeze to tell to the happy life of the Boulevard as it glides by in well-appointed carriages, that death has entered here. . . . But is the Boulevard life as happy as it appears to the looker-on? Not often—not often!”

Tired of his monotonous walk, the ghost leaned against the window to watch the scenes on the street, although the sight of the crape and ribbon which fluttered from the door-knob was an annoyance.

“There goes young Rathberger, who is busy spending his father’s money, inherited last year—he is happy. And he will be as long as the money lasts! And then—the bottomless abyss of poverty will swallow both him and his happiness. But is happiness merely a question of money?”

“No! Here goes Smith, the millionaire. How the harness glitters! That is one of the handsomest turnouts in the city. But—his wife is suing for a divorce, and his only son was recently killed in a drunken brawl. He hasn’t a friend in the world, poor man—not a friend. But his money buys him a few acquaintances who are ready to help him spend it. After all, personal character is a more important element in the production of happiness than money. It is a beautiful world, and I loved life. But I was tired of the continual struggle for existence—tired of hard times. Tired of ‘business’ carried on according to modern ‘business principles.’ Money sits on a throne, and men worship as if they were slaves. At least I have gained one thing in stepping out of the body. I have gained freedom. I am no longer a slave to gold. Here it is worthless trash; a mountain of pure gold could neither help nor hinder me in this new life. Strange, when it played so important a part in the old one!

“But am I alive? How do I know that I am anything more than an astral shell doomed to slow disintegration?

“I am more thoroughly alive than ever before. I am all here, including memory, though the philosophers are so fond of asserting that we must lose that faculty when we leave the body. I believe I could think up every incident of every day since I was born, if I chose to spend my time that way. I can think of a thousand things that a week ago I had entirely forgotten. . . . But I want new experiences. I am not content merely to live the old life over. I am alive, but with a different set of limitations, a set to which I am not yet thoroughly accustomed. Matter has no power over me—which is gain; but I have no power over matter—which is loss. The law of gravitation has ceased to affect me—personally. I can sit on a lamp-chimney, but I can’t lift a penny; I can twist through a keyhole, but I can’t turn a door-knob! Even if there is no key-hole, the door itself is not an insurmountable obstacle. The exercise of a little willpower brings me on the other side of it. I seem to be merely thought clothed in—what? Mist? Brick walls cannot stop thought, nor can they stop me.

“I wonder how I look?—and I am likely to wonder. There isn’t enough of me to make an impression on a mirror, and yet—I seem to have some sort of a vapory body. I wonder if that new thought-reading machine could read *my* thoughts? That is worth looking into. It may furnish a means of communication with the visible world. And this is likely to prove a lonely life, unless I can learn to communicate with the visibles. What is life worth if one can’t talk to his friends? I never thought I should like to be a hermit. I can walk and stand and sit, but nobody sees me or pays the slightest attention to me.

“It seems strange! I was sitting in the chair by my bedroom window when Bridget came in to make the bed. The first I knew she put both pillows and the bed-clothes into the chair where I was sitting! It was extremely annoying! I don’t think she would have done it if she had seen me. She would probably have screamed. But it was worse yet, when the undertaker came and sat down on me. He is a large, heavy man and completely filled the chair. I wonder what he would have thought, if he had known I was watching him! Since that experience I have ceased to occupy chairs for fear of accidents. I tried the centre-table, but Bridget put the big Bible on me. Now I sit on the clock-shelf or on the picture-frames where people can’t get at me, unless they take a broom.

“I never supposed that people attended their own funerals; but I shall certainly attend mine. There doesn’t seem to be much else of interest going on. The funeral is to be to-morrow at two o’clock, they say. That gives the relatives time to get here. They sent telegrams as soon as they found me—the thing has been very well managed so far. They have all done just as I thought they would—and nobody suspects. That is the best of it all. Nobody suspects! But when my

brothers and sisters find that I died poor, instead of rich—how will it be then? Will they suspect? I hope not. They will be happier if they never know the truth.

“And the doctor?”

“He is a good friend of mine. He will write out a burial-certificate reading ‘heart failure’ and help me keep my secret, unless he blunders and concludes I was murdered by some one else. That would complicate matters. Then he would move heaven and earth to find and punish the criminal. I would not like to see an innocent person arrested, imprisoned, and tried for a murder I had committed. Yes; murder! That is what it seems like now. Three days ago I called it ‘suicide,’ and felt that I had a right to take myself out of a world that I had no voice in entering. But now—it looks different. A useful body had been put under my control, and because I feared that my supply of happiness was likely to run short—I murdered it. I hoped to solve the problem of existence, but it is as inexplicable as ever. I wonder why, when we are alive, we all think that the moment that we are dead we shall know everything. It is a bitter disappointment. Here I am, a piece of animated vapor, but still an inhabitant of the same old world, with no other interest in life except to go to my own funeral!

“After that—what?”

“I cannot imagine. That dead body under the black canopy there, attracts me so that I cannot get very far away from it. Wilt it be the same after it is buried? Shall I have to spend the remainder of my existence wandering around among the tombstones in the cemetery? Not a cheerful prospect certainly! But perhaps that is where all the ghosts live. From time immemorial the human race has believed in haunted houses and in burial-places populous with ghosts. Perhaps there is something in the old legends. Who knows?”

“Really I am getting lonely. I should like somebody to associate with on terms of equality. This sneaking around through closed doors, and listening to conversations not intended for me to hear, is hardly a respectable occupation. I don’t like it. Life in the cemetery, leaning against tombstones, watching other people’s funerals and getting acquainted with the new ghosts, would be as interesting, and certainly less sneaky.

“I wonder, I just wonder, what there is to prevent me from travelling, after the funeral. I always wanted to see the world. Now I have all the time there is, for I am no longer obliged to use it to make money. What a wild, conscienceless struggle it is to get money! And in these days of fierce competition it requires a constant struggle to keep it. The human race is going mad over money. Never before since the world began were there so many opportunities for happiness. Never before was there more misery, or more men and women in anxiety as to how to obtain a subsistence. The whole world is a battle-field which is constantly strewn with the wreckage of war, the wounded and dying killed by our present industrial system. But then—my friends called me a monomaniac on that subject. Perhaps I am. But it is hard to see the slow gains of an honest business life of thirty years swallowed at one gulp by a trick corporation which makes a business of crushing out competitors. It is as wicked as highway robbery or piracy, and yet it is done over and over again right here in America, and by men who pose before the Republic as honest and respectable. It is maddening! It has driven better men than I into insane-asylums and suicides’ graves. But I am free from all that now—a ghost cannot starve, needs no clothes, and can find shelter anywhere. Bolts or bars or iron doors cannot keep out a ghost!

“And yet—in spite of all these advantages, I feel as if I would like to be back in the fight again. Life *is* worth living. I never was surer of that than I am now that people call me dead. We seldom fully appreciate a thing while we have it. Earth-life was interesting in spite of financial worries; and it seems that annihilation is a fiction. Change occurs, but annihilation is an impossibility. I

have jumped from the frying-pan into the fire. . . . And now, I don't know of any other place to jump. How can a ghost kill itself? And what would it be next? I do not think I will experiment any farther in that direction at present; I might turn into a mere memory, without the capability of motion. I'll wait until I know what the next state of existence is like, before I try to force myself into it.

"I wonder if anybody will shed real tears at my funeral? I wonder how much they will care—those brothers and sisters of mine? I gave the best years of my life for their support and education— but what do they know or care for that? It seemed sometimes as if all they wanted of me was money! But then—perhaps I am wronging them. Perhaps if they had known my need they would have given to me as gladly as I gave to them. . I doubt it! . I doubt it!

"I am tired of this solitude, this silence! The night was so long—so unutterably long! They may not come for hours. . . . I believe I will go out to the cemetery and see where they are going to put me. It will be pleasanter than staying here alone—with the dead. That body of mine is certainly dead, and not very good company for a live ghost.

"I couldn't get a nickel out of that pocket-book that used to be mine to save my life; but as the conductor can't see me, he won't try to collect any fare. Yesterday I wanted to turn a dime over so I could see the date, but I might as well have attempted to lift up the Auditorium tower and throw it into Lake Michigan! I can't even lift a sheet of note-paper, and as for a lead-pencil—it weighs tons; I might as well try to write with Cleopatra's needle! I'm not of as much account in the material world as a lively breeze. The wind is shaking that lace-curtain and pulling it out of the window—which I could not do! But I can pass through that pane of glass! I'm ahead of the wind there. I'll go out and take a car and see how it seems to be among the living. I'm tired of silence and myself."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE GHOST VISITS THE CEMETERY.

"As sure as I'm alive there is a ghost sitting on a tombstone watching the grave-digger! Evidently I have come to the right place to find company. The living don't know how to treat a ghost. The conductor wouldn't stop the car for me; and in spite of my wild gesticulations and earnest remonstrances, a washerwoman who was taking home a basket of clothes put it in my lap, just because I was sitting in the only vacant seat in the car. She couldn't see that the seat was occupied. But it was worse yet when she got out and three small boys with energetic heels took her seat—and mine. I never did like to be kicked. I am not a rowdy, and I know I couldn't have presented a very dignified appearance, if anyone could have seen me, climbing out of the car window onto the roof—but what was to be done? I didn't like to sit on the strap-pole for fear someone would see me. There are people who see ghosts—at least they *say* they do. I used to doubt it. But now that I am a ghost myself it seems as if everyone ought to see me."

"Good-morning! Is this man digging your grave?" the Ghost who was sitting on the tombstone inquired of the New Ghost as he approached.

"Perhaps so. I am to be buried out here to-morrow."

"It is a pleasant cemetery."

"Yes; I always liked Oakwoods. I heard them say my grave was to be in sight of one of the lakes, so probably this is it."

"I congratulate you on your location. But I wish you could tell your friends to put up a square-topped tombstone for you. They are all round or pointed—there isn't one in sight comfortable for a ghost to sit on."

"What difference does it make?"

"I was a fat man; and unless I have a good square seat I always feel as if I am slipping off. I like to be high enough so I can see, and I don't like to be walked over, as anyone is liable to be when he stays on the ground among people. The relatives who order tombstones seldom give a thought to the convenience of the ghosts who are to use them!"

"That is a fact. Never having had any experience as ghosts they don't know what ghosts want."

"How do you like it?"

"Like what?"

"The Empire of the Invisibles."

"It doesn't meet my expectations."

"You are disappointed?"

"Yes."

"The most of us are. When we step out of life we expect to improve our condition. But in a material world, life with a body is preferable."

"Where are the other ghosts? You are first and only one I have seen."

"Oh, they are scattered around in various places. There are always a few at the club. Some are in the library, reading; six or eight went to Lincoln Park; five or six said they were going to take a sail on the lake. The others are scattered around the streets and stores. There are three or four who are inveterate shoppers."

"But that accounts for only a few, and there are thousands of people buried in the cemeteries around Chicago. Where are their ghosts? I didn't meet any on the street."

"Perhaps there are not so many of us as you think."

"There must be millions of ghosts! Just think of the millions who have died!"

"Millions have died, certainly. That fact is indisputable. But where they are I do not know. Why did you wish to join the invisible army?"

"Wish? You speak as if you thought I wished to die?"

"I do not think—I know."

"You know?"

"Yes."

"That is strange!"

"Not at all. Men who do not wish to die do not commit suicide."

"Who told you that I committed suicide?"

"No one."

"What makes you think so?"

"I do not need to think—I know."

"Were you watching me?"

"I never saw you until now."

"Will every ghost who sees me know?"

"Yes."

"Do you mean to say that there is something about me which will betray my secret to every inhabitant of this land of shadows?"

"Certainly."

"I am bewildered. Please explain."

“It is most simple. Only suicides make ghosts. We never see anything of the people who really *die*. They do not stop in Shadowland. The universe is not so loosely constructed as we are in the habit of thinking while we are on the other side. We can shove ourselves out of the body; so much lies in our power. But we cannot shove ourselves into the next world. Death holds the key, and all our efforts to unlock the door without his aid are in vain. This land of ghosts is the half-way house. We ghosts are neither wholly dead nor wholly alive.”

“Where is heaven?”

“I don’t know.”

“Where is hell?”

“I don’t know that either—unless this is it. I sometimes think this monotonous monotone of an actionless existence is more hell than I know what to do with. But there! I shouldn’t discourage you! Perhaps you will enjoy this new kind of life for a while.”

“If sitting on tombstones is the most cheerful occupation you can find, it looks to me as if opportunities for happiness must be limited!

“Oh, well, you won’t need to watch the cemetery until your turn comes. If you object, you won’t need to do it at all. There are enough of us old ghosts who find it as interesting as anything else we can do. I usually take it a month in the summer-time. It is a little breezy in the winter—but then I am always ready to take it when no one else wants it.”

“Watch the cemetery! Do you expect the dead to get up and run away with their coffins? or do you fear that burglars will carry off the tombstones?”

“If burglars wanted to carry off the tombstones I don’t know how ghosts could prevent them. We watch the cemetery for the benefit of new ghosts like you, who are apt to be lonesome. By the time his funeral is over, a new ghost is usually glad to meet other ghosts who can tell him something about Shadowland, and introduce him to its inhabitants.”

“I began to fear that I was the only ghost in the world, and that my ghostly existence was a huge mistake, or a fantastic dream from which I should slip into the night of annihilation and total unconsciousness. And that I disliked, because I always had a consuming curiosity to know why I was born.”

“My life in Shadowland has not helped me to solve that mystery. The problem of existence is as inexplicable as ever. I don’t know of anyone who knows anything about it, unless it is the Occultist. You will have to consult him.”

“Since all ghosts are suicides, may I inquire what induced you to cross the boundary-line between worlds?”

“The usual cause—lack of funds. Money represents all the good things of life in these days. I came over during the hard times just after the World’s Fair in 1893. Out of a job. No prospect of getting any. Lived on one meal a day until I was as thin as a rail. I concluded there were too many men in the world. There ought to be food enough for all, but there was no chance for some of us to get hold of any. I tried to borrow a pistol to shoot myself with, but I couldn’t. So I walked out to the end of a pier and jumped off in deep water. There was a high wind coming in, and a big wave took me and dashed me against a post. That finished me. But I had to stay out on that pier all night in a drenching rain-storm, to see that my body didn’t get lost. I don’t know why it is, but I haven’t found a ghost yet but feels as if he must keep track of his body until it is safely buried, so he’ll know where to find it.”

“An unpleasant prelude to life in the world of shadows!”

“Rather! The sailor found me in the morning. He keeps watch of the river and harbor. You can see him almost any time perched in the rigging or sitting on the top of a mast. He likes to stay on

the pleasure-yachts anchored in the basin, and watch life on the water. It is pleasant there. I spend a day with him occasionally. But it looks as if you were to have an expensive funeral. It couldn't be hard times that sent *you* over."

"It was the loss of my fortune."

"Indeed! How did you come?"

"Poison. I am something of a druggist, and I prepared it myself. Three drops were enough. I prepared it in a test-tube, and when I was ready drank it, crushed the glass-tube in my hands and threw the pieces out of the open window. I had just time to get into bed in a comfortable position. I had been complaining of my heart for a week or two—the thing had acted queerly! They found me in the morning and supposed of course it was heart-failure. My plan has worked well so far. No one has suspected suicide—unless the doctor has thought of it. But whatever he may think he has said nothing."

"You have no near relatives?"

"I have a brother and a sister, married and living in homes of their own at a distance. They ought to be here by this time. I shall have to go back to the house to see what is going on."

"I don't wonder you are anxious. We had an unpleasant case similar to yours. A wealthy, well-known artist poisoned himself; and his younger brother, who inherited his fortune, was charged with murdering him. The brothers had had a violent quarrel about money matters a week before, although they really thought a great deal of each other. The younger one was arrested, tried, convicted, and hung—actually hung for a murder which was not committed! A man never can tell what sort of a tangle he is leaving behind him when he tries to step out secretly."

"Will you be here to-morrow?"

"Yes; after your funeral I will take you down to the club and introduce you—unless you prefer visiting your relatives. Some ghosts spend a few weeks with their relatives; but they soon get tired of associating with the living, it is such a one-sided piece of business. And then—it disturbs some ghosts to see how soon they are forgotten."

"I have been wondering what I should do with myself after the funeral. I don't think I should enjoy sitting on tombstones an indefinite length of time."

The New Ghost walked quietly out of the cemetery, unseen by the half-dozen mourners he met, who were coming to visit graves, and unnoticed by the funeral procession which was slowly winding through the gate. To his annoyance, he found himself obliged to give the whole road or be walked over. It was the same on the sidewalk. No one paid the slightest attention to him. He took a seat in an empty cable-car, which slowly filled. The conductor passed him without asking for a fare, and the passengers took no notice of him until a fat woman, carrying a three-year-old child in her arms, sat down on him and failed to get up for the next twelve blocks.

"Twenty-one carriages! Those relatives of yours will have quite a bill to pay for funeral expenses," remarked the Old Ghost to the New Ghost as they stood at the side of the grave, the next day, watching the people as they alighted from the carriages. "Climb up on this tombstone at the right and then we can see without being crowded. Are these your relatives and their children here in these first carriages?"

"Yes."

"See that golden-haired six-year-old crying for 'Uncle Rodney!' And that big boy—he's ashamed to cry, but he can't help it. They are all nice-looking folks, too! Your sister is taking it hard. They don't groan and howl the way I have heard some folks, but you can see that they all feel bad. What a fool you were to come over here and leave all that! Do you think I would have

come if I had had relatives and friends? Not a bit of it! I fail to see any reasonable excuse for your desertion of life.”

The New Ghost was intently watching the disposal of his body, and made no reply to the Old Ghost’s comments. They were silent until the service was through and the last carriage had departed.

“Have the arrangements suited you?”

“Yes; they had the right minister and everything has been done in good order, and—nobody suspects! I must say that I never expected to enjoy attending my own funeral as well as I have. Of course, I never expected to attend it consciously—nobody does! It is the unexpected that happens on this side of the grave as well as the other, I find.”

“Chills would run down the backbones of the mourners if they knew we ghosts were looking on.”

“How is it that you and I can hear each other, when the people around us do not hear a sound we are making?”

“We are not making a sound.”

“But I hear every word you say.”

“Not at all. You simply imagine that you do.”

“You must permit me to doubt that statement until you prove it.”

“You will have to talk with the Occultist. He can explain the matter much better than I can. Sound, you remember, is caused by a vibrating body which sets sound-waves in motion. The substance of which we ghosts are composed is of too rarefied or ethereal a nature to have power over matter in its ordinary forms. It is as impossible for us ghosts to set a sound-wave in motion as it would be for us to lift up Lake Michigan and empty it into the Atlantic.”

“But I certainly *hear* you!”

“You only think you do. Because, during life on earth, when we communicate with our friends their thoughts usually reach us through their voices, we learn to associate thought with sound, and continue to imagine that we hear voices in this world of silence. That is a mistake. Sound for us is no longer a reality. We have neither ears to stop a sound-wave, nor vocal organs to set one in motion. If a man should fire a cannon at our feet we couldn’t hear it; although you would probably imagine that you did.”

“Yet I understand you.”

“Certainly. It is a matter of thought-transference. We have our compensations. We can understand what is going on in the visible universe, just as well as those who have bodies—but it is in a different way. I refer you to the Experimenter for further explanations. He is full of theories. Will you go down to the club with me now?”

“Thank you. I think I’ll go home with my sister. It made me feel queer, when she knelt by that poor deserted body of mine and cried as if her heart would break! I didn’t know they would care so much. And yet—I ought to have known! We were always a united family. After I have stayed with her awhile I will go and see my brother. He took it hard, too. I wish there was some way of letting them know that I am alive yet, and just as near as ever!

“Don’t try it. You would only scare your sister into fits, and your brother into brain-fever. There are very few people who care to associate with ghosts.”



## CHAPTER III.

### THE GHOSTS' CLUB.

“Good morning, my vapory friend. You look as if the wind annoyed you.”

“It does. I always disliked an energetic wind. The lake is so rough and the waves run so high you’ve no idea what a time I have had! Lake Michigan is treacherous. Last night when I took the steamer to go across, there was hardly a ripple to be seen; and the lake was as calm and untroubled as an inland pool so surrounded by woods that the wind can scarce ruffle its surface. Now you see those billows as high as a roof; and when a big wave dashes over the end of a pier, see the white spray rise forty feet into the air! I don’t see how I ever lived to get through it!”

“Where did you come from?”

“I hardly know myself. I remember jumping off of the steamer after we were out of sight of Chicago, and starting for the bottom of the lake. Then I don’t know exactly what *did* happen—but I have been hours trying to get back on shore.”

“So you are a Chicago man, and left your body out in the middle of the lake, did you?”

“I suppose so. I don’t seem to have it with me.”

“That is unfortunate. It will be so much trouble to find it. You don’t look like a sailor. How came you to cross to the Empire of the Invisibles by means of water?”

“I always had a great deal of curiosity to know if a person really did live his life over again while he was drowning. The more I reflected upon the matter, the more insatiable grew my curiosity. At last I determined to satisfy it.”

“Do you mean to say that curiosity alone brought you over here?”

“Of course there were other reasons that had some influence. The college where I had spent the best years of my life, decided to do without my services because my views on certain questions of the day did not fully harmonize with those of the officials. My tastes are simple, but it takes a certain amount of money to buy food and chemicals, and pay rent and gas-bills and coal-bills and when a person has absolutely no cash, and no means of obtaining any, as life on earth is arranged at the present time, a man is much better off out of the world than in it.”

“That may be true. But how is a man to get out of the world? That is a question which I should like to have answered. You have tried, but you are still here! You have merely got rid of your body—which in many respects is a great convenience to have.”

“I am quite willing to try life without it for a while, although I must acknowledge that I expected something different from this. I don’t understand what has happened to me. I feel so light and vapory. I had no trouble at all to walk on the water. As for you, you look as much like a piece of animated fog as anything of which I can think. What have you done with *your* body?”

“I tried the same experiment you did—several years ago; that is, I tried to get out of the world.”

“Indeed! do you mean to say you have been living in this vapory condition, for several years? I should think you would have blown to pieces long ago.”

“That would be impossible. Wind is nothing but air in motion and you will find that it cannot affect you, unless you choose to let it. Matter in its ordinary form has no power over us—which is sometimes an advantage. But we have no power over matter, which is often a disadvantage. This is the first lesson ghosts have to learn.”

“And is experience the teacher?”

“Certainly—experience is the best teacher in the universe. Some men and ghosts will learn in no other school.”

“Now, it really seems to me that a wind traveling at the rate of eighty miles an hour, as this one surely is, would have power enough to carry anything as thin and unsubstantial as we are to the North Pole. I don’t know that I should object to the trip. I would really like to see how it looks up there.”

“You will have to talk with No. 209, over at the club. He has been thinking of joining some of the Arctic expeditions. You might go together.”

“Who is No. 209?”

“Oh, he’s a ghost that came over a few months ago. I’m not much acquainted with him. He’s a great traveler—always was before he came to Shadowland.”

“Shadowland! Where is that?”

“Everywhere! We ghosts call the region we inhabit ‘Shadow-land,’ although we are not so substantial as a shadow, for ordinary people can see shadows, but they can’t see us.”

“Are you sure people cannot see us?”

“Certainly. Walk down State Street any afternoon when it is crowded, and you can convince yourself of that fact. Nobody will know you are there. People will walk right through you, unless you dodge.”

“Extraordinary!—most extraordinary! I shall try that experiment at the first opportunity! I should think the other people would dodge. A person has such a peculiar appearance when he walks about without his body. Do all ghosts look like animated fog?”

“That is altogether according to circumstances. If we had known each other while on earth, we should see each other now as we looked then. Meeting as strangers, we have no preconceived ideas as to each other’s personal appearance and so we see ourselves as we are. Or, rather, we look to each other as we have always imagined that a ghost would look.”

“Extraordinary! Most extraordinary! I don’t understand it. Do you?”

“Oh, there are theories—plenty of them! Shadowland is full of theories; but they are not always satisfactory.”

“There is another ghost coming down the pier!”

“Yes; that is No. 14. He is fond of the water and has come to relieve me.”

“Relieve you? What do you mean?”

“We ghosts who like the water intend to keep watch of the river and harbor so as to greet the new ghosts when they come. When I came to Shadowland there was no one to meet me and I found it decidedly lonesome, wandering around alone and finding out everything for myself.”

“What an ancient piece of fog! He looks old enough to be the grandfather of ghosts!”

“He is the oldest Chicago ghost. There were a few before him, but they have died off.”

“Ghosts—die! I don’t understand you!”

But before a reply was made the old ghost had joined the others.

“No. 14, permit me to introduce the latest arrival in Shadowland.”

The gray old ghost extended a ghostly hand which the new ghost grasped as cordially as a ghost could.

“How do you like the change?”

“I hardly know. It isn’t what I expected.”

“That is what they all say. I’ve asked every one. They all say it isn’t what they expected.”

“How long have you lived in Shadowland?”

“Forty years next month.”

“How do you like it?”

“Too monotonous. I’ll be glad when the call comes to move on. I’ve stayed here as long as I care to, but you will probably find many things to interest you.

“Where are you going to next?”

“That is what we should all like to know. When you find out, just tell me! The sail-boats all came in hours ago, I suppose?”

“None have been out to-day, the wind was so high. A tug steamed out to the crib with supplies, but there has been very little stir on the lake except the wind and the waves. The white caps have had things their own way.

“No chance to get out to the light-house then?”

“Not unless you walk. I think I shall go to the Court House. I’m anxious to hear how a certain case went this morning. No. 14 will keep watch now. Would you like to accompany me and be introduced to the Club?”

“If that is the proper thing to do, of course I’d like to do it. But I shouldn’t be in the least surprised if the wind should blow me off of this pier into the lake.”

“No harm done if it should; you could walk ashore. But it can’t! Don’t give way to your fears; walk fast and you will be all right. There is no need of letting the wind influence you.”

“This pier is so long! I wonder if we couldn’t sit down somewhere a few minutes. I believe I am tired.”

“Nonsense! that is all imagination! There is nothing about you to get tired! You have no muscles to need relaxation, no nerves to need rest.”

“But I was blown about the lake so long! It was hours before I could get ashore. I know I’m tired. The wonder is that I lived through it all!”

“Very well, we will sit down on a vacant seat at the dock until you have overcome the illusion. Your weariness is a good illustration of the power of imagination. If you were wearing a body, and had been blown all over the lake, your body would be exhausted and in need of rest. But we ghosts can keep going the whole twenty-four hours without any danger of wearing out the machinery of existence. No. 196 practises ghost-gymnastics the most of his time. He can not only walk on water and penetrate walls, but he is taking lessons of the Experimenter to learn to sit on nothing.”

“Sit on *nothing!*”

“Well, on air, then. I suppose air is something. They say that a man of average size sustains an external pressure of about fifteen tons.”

“Sit on air?”

“It amounts to the same thing. The Experimenter says that lack of will-power, and force of earth-habit is all that prevents the rest of us ghosts from learning to sit on nothing whenever we please.”

“Extraordinary! Most extraordinary! I don’t understand it. Do you?”

“Theoretically, I ought to be able to sit on the point of a pin, but practically I feel as if it pricked me. Of course it doesn’t—but the feeling makes me uncomfortable. I prefer a chair.”

“To sit on air is unearthly. I can feel a chill run down my spinal-column.

“Another illustration of the force of habit, as you have no spinal-column for a chill to run down.”

“What you tell me is all so very “extraordinary!”

“The Occultist says we ought to be able to walk through the air or go to the moon if we want to. He says we are nothing but visible thoughts—visible to each other though not to the

inhabitants of earth—and we ought to be able to go wherever our thoughts go. If you have overcome the illusion of weariness we will walk on. Look out, or you will be stumbled over! Remember these people don't see us and we must do the dodging!"

"What a long bridge this is! I never crossed it before, as many years as I have lived in Chicago. There is such a pretty view of the basin, the sail-boats and the lake. But it is not so pleasant to look down at the trains of cars passing underneath. I don't like to walk directly over a smoking engine even if I am a ghost."

"It will be gone by the time we reach there."

"What a long train! Are there always so many people on this bridge? And are they always in a hurry? How they crowd to get past!"

"There is more room in the street. Here we are! Don't run in front of that cable-car! The conductor can't see you."

"What would happen if it should run over me?"

"Oh, nothing serious! You would have to pick yourself up and put yourself together again—that is all. But it is not a pleasant experience, so it is as well to avoid it, when you can."

"How good those peaches and bananas look! If only I had some money!"

"What would you do with it? You couldn't lift an ounce of it, if you had a ton of gold. You couldn't eat a peach if you had a hundred bushels."

"It really seems to me that I am hungry."

"An illusion which will soon wear off. Ghosts have no use for food. Yonder is the Court-house. And there is the Experimenter sitting on that low cloud that hangs just over the street. He says he is going to learn to ride the wind, and I presume he will. I wish he would come down. I would ask him to keep a look out for your body. It is easier for him than for any of the others, because he can sit on the clouds when they drift over the lake. I am always afraid I shall fall through and therefore I do."

"But how are we to pass between these immense flying-doors?"

"Wait until somebody swings one open, then step in behind. Keep to the side of the hall or you will be walked over. There! what did I tell you!"

"But he'd no business to walk through me like that! It isn't gentlemanly! Where am I, anyway?"

"Oh, you are all here! Gather yourself up, and you will be all right. It isn't every ghost that has the honor of being walked through by the Mayor."

"Was that the Mayor?"

"Yes; with an alderman on one side of him and a lawyer on the other. These Court-house corridors are thick with lawyers, policemen and city-officials of all sorts."

"He's very impolite, if he *is* the Mayor."

"He couldn't see you. The first time I came into this corridor a policeman with a lighted cigar stepped right through me. I was frightened. I didn't know but I should burn up or explode, like any other gaseous substance. I was so startled that before I could gather myself together and get out of the way, another and a fatter policeman walked over me. We ghosts have to learn to be expert dodgers, as we have all the dodging to do. Shall we take an elevator, or shall we walk up the stairs?"

"The elevator by all means I should say. Are there any objections?"

"It is usually crowded and it sometimes requires considerable expertness to slip in behind other people without getting caught in the door. If the elevator boys could see us, I am sure they would be more accommodating. The stairs are usually empty, so there is plenty of room. It takes longer

to walk, and if one doesn't know what to do with his time that is an object. Watch your chance and slip in behind that fat man. There you are! Don't try to sit down, for they will be sure to sit on you if you do. Here we are at the top floor without any disagreeable accidents. Oh, you will soon learn to accommodate yourself to the exigencies of ghost-life."

"That fat woman poked her umbrella directly through my ribs! I should think I would bleed! They crowded me so my internal organs feel as if they were squeezed out of place. I'll try the stairs next time. People are so unaccommodating. They don't give us the ghost of a chance."

"The visibles are inconsiderate. They seem to think there is no one in the world but themselves. I sometimes feel as though, if I had a body to fight with, I should like to fight. But here we are at last. These long corridors and vacant halls are the headquarters, the clubrooms, of Ghosts' Club No. 1 of Shadowland. Here is where all our ghosts congregate when they have nothing more interesting on hand. There is No. 203, the Showman. It is his delight to take a new ghost around and introduce him, so I will deliver you into his charge. I'm anxious to see how that law-case was decided."

"Why didn't you ask No. 14?"

"He wouldn't know. He takes no interest in law-cases—can't even get him inside of a courtroom. No. 203, this is a late arrival by the way of the bottom of the lake. I think he would like to see the Philosopher, and the Optimist, and the Pessimist, and the Scientist—he is fond of experiments himself."

"They are all here—except the Experimenter. I haven't seen him for an hour or two."

"He's out viewing the city from a cloud. We could signal him from the roof, but it isn't wise for a new arrival to be in too much haste about seeing everybody. There will be plenty of time."

"Yes; there is plenty of time, and no way to kill it!" groaned the Pessimist. "Time is the one thing of which we have a superabundance in Shadowland. How do you like it over here?"

"I hardly know yet."

"A dull life, insufferably dull! No sensations, nothing to eat, drink, or wear; nothing to excite or interest one. I don't see why we can't die and be done with it! The Experimenter, with all his wisdom, hasn't found out how a ghost can commit suicide!"

"But we are dead!"

"No; folks think they can kill themselves—but they can't. They can only turn themselves into ghosts," was the Pessimist's reply.

"The dark waters of the river of death," remarked the poet, "Separate the known from the unknown, the seen from the unseen. It is not in the power of man to enter the next world unsummoned. We can desert from our post on earth, and leave our bodies uninhabited and subject to decay, but we are unable to open the doors of the next world. The universe is not so loosely hung together that we in our puny childlike anger can disarrange its mechanism and force ourselves where we do not belong. It is not in our power to enter another life uncalled before our place is prepared for us and our work ready. This is the half-way house, where we must wait for the Death Angel to come and turn the key which unlocks the gates that inclose the Invisible Empire."

"I never felt quite sure whether death meant annihilation or the beginning of a new existence. But of course Shadowland solves that problem," said the new arrival.

"Hardly," replied the Poet. "We have simply learned that we cannot die until death calls us. All our efforts to escape—whether we consider existence a blessing or a curse—are in vain. Life is a school from which no pupil is excused until death calls the roll. The doors of the next world are

locked against us. On earth we said that death waits for no man; here we find that men are compelled to wait for death.”

“You see,” explained the Pessimist, “we don’t die up here until, if we hadn’t killed ourselves, we should have died a natural death on earth. I was talking with a ghost once when he disappeared in the middle of my sentence. It must have been that that ghost would have died a sudden death on earth. I have often wondered what it was.”

“Couldn’t you find out?”

“No.”

“Then don’t you know what becomes of us ghosts when we really die?”

“We have plenty of theories—but nobody can prove them.”

“What are we here for?”

“That is an absolute mystery, which no man or ghost has yet solved—to the satisfaction of other men and ghosts.”

“Surely we have learned one thing. We know that death is not the end.”

“It looks that way to some of us. But we had a scientist here once who said that this ghostly existence was no proof whatever of a future life. The next time we died, it would be the end of us. He was the most unhappy ghost we ever had. He numbered, ticketed, and classified us all during the first week, and after that he couldn’t find anything else to do.”

“Not an uncommon complaint in Shadowland,” interpolated a new-comer. “I’m afflicted that way myself. I’ve seen all the sights; now what is there to do? I’m not a poet, or a philosopher, or a scientist; and I never did like to read. I’m just a common, ordinary man, with no scholarly tastes; and what I am to do with myself in this place where there is no eating or drinking to be done, no cards to play, and no money to be made, is more than I can tell. What do you do with yourselves—you fellows who are not faddists or specialists?”

“I know how to sympathize with you,” added the Waiter. “Last month I watched the crowds taking their meals at restaurants and hotels; and last week I went to all the big dinners I could hear of, either public or private. But it grows insufferably dull to see other people eat when a man can’t eat a mouthful himself. I’ve taken to visiting the clothing-stores to see the men and boys get their new suits; and to watching people buy furniture, and groceries, and dress-goods at the big stores, such as my wife was always wanting for herself and the children. You see, I had such a big family to support, and we were always needing things, and the money never would hold out! I can’t seem to get my mind on anything but eating and groceries and furniture and clothes. I saw a stove at the Fair yesterday, just such as my wife ought to have. I wish I could buy it and order it sent up to her.”

“Then your wife hasn’t married again?”

“No; and she is having a hard time. She can’t keep the children together. I ought to have stayed and helped her. I was a fool to come to this place!”

“Go with me to-morrow,” said the Carpenter, “and I’ll take you to see some fine new buildings. There are a dozen jobs of interest on hand at present. The smell of the shavings will do you good. After work-hours we will go down to the university and study with some of the students until they go to bed. I’ve found one that reads history until two o’clock in the morning. After that, we’ll take a walk around the city until daylight. These beautiful June mornings I like to stay in the parks until work begins. Go with me, and I’ll help you get rid of one twenty-four hours.

“Take turns in going around with us until you get over the blues,” remarked the Engineer. “I’ll take you with me the next day. We’ll go the rounds and look at all of the big engines in the city, and I’ll explain how they work. We can put in the whole twenty-four hours in that way.”

“The Experimenter says I need intellectual development. He took me with him one day; but what do I care about walking on air? Stairs and elevators are good enough for me. I’m not interested in sitting on clouds, or riding on the wind. He tried to get me to walk out of an eighth-story window, but I knew I should fall and I wouldn’t try. He said I wouldn’t fall unless I was afraid—that I didn’t need to fall.”

“That is what he told me,” interrupted the Blacksmith. “He wanted me to walk off of a roof—and I did, just to oblige him! I knew I should fall, and down I went right on to the stone walk. When I got up, I told him that any man who weighed two hundred and eighty pounds was a fool to think he could walk on air! He said that was just the trouble! I thought of my weight, and it carried me down. If I had only remembered to think that I was a spirit and was really much lighter than air—which is a coarser form of matter—I could have walked on it all right. The fall gave me such a shock that I haven’t got over it yet.”

“Did it injure you?”

“Not at all. It is not in the power of matter to really *injure* a ghost. But, you see, the idea of falling is not pleasant to a heavy man who has lived on earth a good while. We can’t forget our bodies. But what has become of the Inventor? I haven’t seen him for a week.”

“He’s at Menlo Park now, watching Edison.”

“And the Electrician, where is he?”

“Gone to Würzburg. He and the Inventor and the Experimenter enjoy ghost-life.”

Yes,” said the Pessimist; “the people who were born with a craze to know all the secrets of the universe get on very well over here. But ordinary folks like me, who were just busy trying to get a living, don’t find much to interest them. If one could only sleep half the time! But the days are twenty-four hours long! I never was any hand to think. And if I think now, it is of the family I left behind me, and the grief of my wife and mother.”

“I am more fortunate than you,” said the Optimist. “Nobody mourns for me. My wife is happily married; and no doubt she is glad that I am out of the way, for her new husband has plenty of money—and that I never did have. What I could get hold of never would stay with me long enough for her to get much of it. As for me, I enjoy Shadowland. I am blessed with a powerful imagination. I had expensive tastes without the money to indulge them. Now I am living the idle, leisurely life I always longed for and could never obtain on earth. I spend my days in hotel corridors—the most expensive hotels, too; that is the beauty of it—reading the papers and listening to the news and seeing all the noted people. When some one goes out for a drive in the park, I go too. When there is a big convention or a fine lecture, I attend it, no matter how exclusive the invitations or high-priced the tickets. I was always fond of the theatre and the opera. Now I hear all the great actors and all the great singers. Price of tickets no hindrance. After the opera is over, I call at the depots or at the newspaper-offices and hear what news the telegraph brings, and read the first edition of the morning papers. It is surprising to see how many people are awake and at work after midnight in a great city like Chicago. I enjoy life in Shadowland. I always did like to see other people work!”

“I believe you say you enjoyed everything—even to attending your own funeral,” growled the Pessimist.

“Of course I did! We all want to see how the relatives and friends take it. We all attend the coroner’s inquest too! We are curious to hear the views of the reporters as to why we committed

suicide, and anxious to see the account the papers will give. But it *is* humiliating to find only a paragraph where we expected to have a column at least.”

“But that is a frequent occurrence!”

“And then, some ghosts are inclined to take it a little hard when they find—as some of us do—that our friends are happier without us than they were with us. But that is a pessimistic view of the situation. The true optimist always rejoices in the increase of happiness. Ah! here comes the Experimenter. He’ll say we have talked to you too much. You *do* look more vapory than you ought.”

“They signalled to me that there was a new-comer here,” said the Experimenter, stepping into the fourth-story window near which the ghosts were standing. “Have they been too lavish with your vitality? Do you need rest?”

“I should like to go up and sit on one corner of that cloud you were occupying.”

“Do you think you could?”

“I walked on the water. I must be lighter than the air; so, on the same principle I ought to be able to walk on that. If you will go first, I believe I can follow you. I should like to try.”

“You can do it if you think so. Fear—one of the illusions of the body—is the greatest enemy of both ghosts and men. Come!”

“See them go!” exclaimed the Pessimist, staring wildly at the two ghosts, who slipped out of the window and walked up the air as easily as ordinary people fall through it. “That new fellow must be another Occultist!”

#### CHAPTER IV.

#### SITTING ON A CLOUD.

The streets of Chicago were as full as usual, but no one noticed two ghosts who stepped out of the Court-house window, and walked up the air, as if it contained invisible steps. It was quite a walk to reach even the lowest cloud.

“*What* do you think of it?” inquired the Experimenter, sitting down on one corner of the cloud, and showing the New Ghost where he could obtain the best view of the city below them.

“It is beautiful up here, and I have enjoyed the walk. It gives one a peculiar sensation to feel that the forces of nature are mastered, so that air becomes as solid as adamant beneath the feet. But how strange the city looks! I never realized before that Chicago was so flat!”

“Flat as a pancake—you remember it was built on a marsh.”

“The streets resemble lanes. The parks look like country door-yards with evergreens, and the buildings like dry-goods boxes set on end with an occasional bean-pole for a steeple. And the lake is as calm and blue as a summer’s sky. Who would think it had been so furious a few hours ago?”

“I wish this cloud would sink a little lower, so you could get a closer view of the city.”

“Can’t you control it?”

“Not in the slightest degree. It seems as if I might, but I haven’t yet found out how. Perhaps you will. You must have learned to concentrate on earth. You have more will-power than any other ghost I have met—unless it is the Theosophist or the Occultist, and I am not sure whether they are ghosts or not! You walk on air far more readily than I did when I first tried.”



“The circumstances are different. I saw you sitting on a cloud, and was told that you could walk on air, and that some other ghosts were learning. When you first tried it, I presume they all laughed at you and said it couldn’t be done.”

“Yes; all but the Theosophist and the Occultist—they encouraged me, and said I could do it if I thought so.”

“Then ghosts as well as men measure their own ability?”

“That is about the way of it. There may be limitations. But I am inclined to think that ignorance is the greatest limitation with which either men or ghosts have to contend. We can do what we think we can in Shadowland, as well as on earth.”

“I always had a desire to fly. When I was a boy I used to dream of sailing out of the window and away over the tree-tops and the houses. But I remember it always required a great and continuous effort to keep myself up in the air. The earth’s attraction was too strong. In spite of my best efforts I would find myself slowly descending. When I once reached the ground, it was next to impossible to rise from it, and the attempts I would make to do so would usually awaken me.”

“That partly accounts for your remarkable ability to navigate the air. When I was a boy I always wanted to walk on the water, but I never could do it until I got over here.”

“What experiments are you trying now?”

“I am learning to float on the air, to stop myself anywhere in it, and I should like to be able to sit on it. Theoretically, it is all nonsense—this being obliged to find a cloud to sit down on. Practically, we should sink to the earth, if it were not for the cloud we are occupying. We are lighter than the air, and it should support us. But one of the illusions of earth that we cling to, in spite of everything, is the idea that we must have some visible means of support. Every ghost over here—when I say every ghost I am not including the Theosophist or the Occultist—after he has exercised awhile imagines himself tired, and will look around for some projecting surface to sit on. It is all the force of habit! Of course, when we wore bodies built upon a net-work of muscles and nerves it was somewhat different. But there is no possible reason why a ghost should ever be tired. Yet I’ve seen ghosts walk up the Court-house stairs and go into the reading-room and drop into a vacant chair as if they were exhausted. They really thought they were tired.”

“What success are you having with your experiments?”

“Yesterday I undertook to float off of a cloud. I rolled off the edge, and lay on my back looking up at the sky for as much as two minutes. Then I happened to think, ‘if I should fall, how intensely disagreeable it would be!’ Down I went! I got hung on a church spire, and had quite a serious time to get myself collected together again. Fear is our greatest enemy. While I had no fear I was in no danger.”

“I conclude that this phase of existence is both curious and interesting. But xvhat next? What is there beyond?”

“The next world is not on exhibition. Samples of the future life are not offered for examination with the privilege of returning if not found suitable.”

“But haven’t even you learned anything about it?”

“Nothing worth mentioning. The same impenetrable veil confronts one here as on earth. While there, not all the wealth for which men sell years, would purchase an hour of the future life ‘on trial.’ The ordinary individual can’t even get to Shadowland unless he comes to stay. We all guess—the same as we did on earth. And it amounts to just as much! As far as I am able to

judge, the object of this phase of existence seems to be to continue the intellectual development begun on earth. There is no way of satisfying appetites or passions.”

“What are we?”

“I don’t know. I don’t see as we get much nearer the solution of that problem than the ancients did. Wasn’t it Pythagoras who talked about an infinitely subtle substance, out of which all other substances are constituted?”

“I believe he did write something of that sort.”

“I’d like to meet Pythagoras. He had sensible views on a good many subjects, if he *did* live a long time ago. I’d like to talk things over with him. He said there was the same principle underlying the harmonies of music and the motion of the heavenly bodies. I should like to know whether he has got so he can hear the music of the spheres yet.”

“Do you believe there is a music of the spheres?”

Certainly. Do you think the earth moves through its orbit in silence? I don’t. I believe the moon, and the planets, and all the stars moving through ether with such rapidity cause ethereal vibrations. These vibrations are too fine and delicate to make any impression upon an ear-drum of flesh and bone, so to speak. But if we ghosts could get out into space far enough to be away from the ordinary noises of earth, I believe we could hear the rushing of the planets as they move in their orbits. I believe we could hear a grander melody than if all the instruments upon the face of the earth were united in one harmonious band—the song of the stars as they sweep through space! The future will be full of musical surprises. The swift and rhythmical motions of the heavenly bodies must produce musical tones. Harmony is the law of the universe; discord a crime which has its home upon the earth and cannot rise above it. There is music everywhere and in everything. Do you remember that German investigator who says that the contraction of the muscles of the human body produces musical tones which he has been able to hear?”

“I think I never heard of him.”

“The thing is not so unreasonable. The muscles are nothing but bundles of fibres. Contraction causes vibration. Vibration causes sound-waves. But he must have a remarkable ear, to be able to distinguish sound-waves caused by such infinitesimal vibrations. I want to read more about him and his theories, but I haven’t found anyone else who is interested in the subject.”

“What difference does that make?”

“All the difference in the world. We ghosts read under serious disadvantages. If I want to look up anything in Plato or Aristotle or Schopenhauer, I have to wait until I can find someone else who wants to read what I do. It is easy enough to read the daily papers and the current magazines, but when it comes to studying philosophical or scientific questions, it is different. There are so few people interested in the philosophy of the ancients.”

“I fail to see how that affects you.”

“That is because you have not dwelt in Shadowland long enough to learn your limitations. We ghosts find ourselves unable to lift a sheet of paper or to turn a page. So when we wish to read a book, we have to find someone else who is reading it and who will turn the pages for us.”

“Indeed! that is a serious drawback to scholarship in Ghostland. But how do you manage the newspapers?”

“I usually take the cars mornings, and read with the business men as they go down to their offices. Some ghosts read with certain people who are in the habit of reading at certain hours; but I take my chances on the cars. Most men hold their papers so that a ghost can sit on their shoulders and read almost anything on the first page. When they turn the paper, they are apt to fold it smaller, which makes it less convenient for the invisible reader. There are quite a number

of inconveniences. The holder of the paper is quite likely to read too fast or too slowly. But worst of all are those dreamy readers who permit their minds to wander at the end of a paragraph, and forget to turn the page for half an hour.”

“That must be annoying.”

“It is. The Poet does the most of his reading with a literary friend. The Philosopher reads at the Newberry library. He is there every day as long as it is open, and says that he usually finds someone who reads something in which he can interest himself. The Engineer and the Electrician use the reading-room of the public library. They want papers and magazines about new inventions and electrical devices. The reading-room is the place to read the current magazines. But if a ghost wants to look up something in a back number, he will be ready to swear at himself for being a ghost; for he may have to watch the library for months before anyone else will want to consult that back number. And if someone does call it out, more than half the chances are that said person will not glance at the article the ghost particularly desires to read. Every such experience makes me more determined to find some way to counteract the force of gravity.”

“Is that possible? Gravitation is the force which holds the universe together. Without it the earth would cease to accompany the sun, and there would be a universal wreckage of worlds and planetary systems. It is beyond the imagination of man to conceive what would happen if the force of gravity should be counteracted even for one moment!”

“Oh, I don’t mean to counteract it in any such wholesale manner as to affect the planets. When we walked up to this cloud we counteracted the force of gravity tending to hold us to the earth, by our own will power. Would it wreck the universe if we ghosts should gain the power to lift a sheet of paper and to handle a book?”

“It might. As I understand it, from what I have seen and heard since my arrival in Shadowland, ghosts are mere lookers-on at the feast of life, and not in any sense participants. If ghosts should gain the power to lift books they could probably lift other things, and the material world would be subject to serious disarrangement. If you could carry books, the librarians would be puzzled to know where to find their libraries. Just think what a commotion it would cause if Plato and Aristotle and Epicurus and Zeno, who have been in the habit of sleeping quietly on bookshelves for so many centuries, should take to midnight wanderings about the city!”

“It would furnish some newspaper sensations! Perhaps I should forget Schopenhauer on the Auditorium roof—which would be an excellent place to read on cloudy days! And the Sailor would be sure to leave his book fastened in the rigging of a vessel where he sits half his time. The Poet would forget Tennyson or Browning on a park seat, and No. 206 would be certain to leave his book on the top of some flat tombstone in Oakwoods or Graceland.”

“If the inhabitants of the Invisible Empire could lift and carry material objects, the interests of the two worlds would soon clash. The inhabitants of the lower world would be helpless against the invisibles.”

“But there are so few things that ghosts want!”

“Ghostly desires would increase with the possibility of possession. Avarice and greed would find a new home. A ghost with thievish propensities could carry off all the gold in the United States treasury, and the whole United States army couldn’t prevent him! Nothing would be safe!”

“No ghost wants gold. It is of no possible use in Shadowland. Besides, if he could lift it, he couldn’t carry it through a closed door!

And if he could, what would he do with it? There is nothing to buy or sell!”

“Then here the ‘precious metal’ of earth is useless. But if one can’t turn a page, it must be a serious matter to get a book read through.”

“It is. I don’t often read a book. I had such a time trying to read ‘Trilby’ that it discouraged me. I ought to have read it as it came out in the magazine; but somehow I didn’t hear of it, until it would have bothered me to get the back numbers. When it reached Chicago in book-form, I haunted the stores and looked with longing eyes at a pile of them higher than my head. The first purchaser I saw was a young man. I went home with him to Evanston, hoping he would read on the cars—but he didn’t! He smoked. And when he reached home he put ‘Trilby’ with a package of other books and a croquet set that was to be taken to a sister in Michigan by some member of the family at some indefinite period of time in the future! I went back to the store without even having had a look at the title-page. A white-haired old lady was the next purchaser, and I accompanied her home only to find that ‘Trilby’ was to be mailed to a daughter in Mexico! I went back to the book-store and waited until a stylish-looking girl bought a copy. She began it on the cars and I felt quite encouraged. We read the first chapter and then she put it on the parlor centre-table and took pride in telling her friends for the next two months that she was ‘so interested in “Trilby” but hadn’t had time to read more than the first chapter!’ I know, because I called there and heard her say it. I went back to the store and read the titles of all the new books while I waited for the next purchaser. I rejected two or three that I thought would treat me as the others had. But when I heard a lady tell the clerk that she must read ‘Trilby’ as soon as possible so as to send it to a niece for a birthday present, I thought my chance had come at last.”

“And you accepted it?”

“Yes; I had no idea what a woman with five children has to contend with! If the baby didn’t cry the three-year-old did! If by any remarkable chance those two were both quiet at the same time, the six-year-old would want her dress changed, or her apron mended, or her hair combed, or her doll’s hat fastened on; and she would be sure to want something to eat! When she was disposed of, and about sixteen lines of ‘Trilby’ read, the eight-year-old would cut his finger, or lose his ball, or have the nose bleed, or break his rocking-horse, which mama must help mend at once! By the time his wants were attended to, and another sixteen lines of ‘Trilby’ were read, the ten-year-old would be on hand, and want help about his lessons, or inquire if his jacket was mended, or whether mama wouldn’t go to the store so he could go too! And by the time he was disposed of, and another sixteen lines of ‘Trilby’ were read, the baby would wake up, and the whole process would have to be gone through over again. It reminded me of Cicero’s Orations ; we used to translate sixteen lines a day in high-school; and for that woman, reading ‘Trilby’ was about as slow work as reading Latin is for the average high-school boy. The first three chapters were such a miscellaneous mixture of babies, dolls, kites, balls, cookies, milk, blocks, drums, rocking-horses, and torn clothes, that I gave up in despair. But I heard her tell a friend that she was ‘enjoying “Trilby” so much!’ I went back to look for another reader. The next purchaser was a bald-headed man who didn’t look as if he had ever read a novel in his life. I thought probably he would mail the book to his wife in Maine, or his daughter in California, or his sister in Texas, or his nephew in Florida, so I didn’t accompany him home. The joke of it was, the Electrician met him at the door, saw ‘Trilby’ in his hand, and suddenly made up his mind he’d like to read it. So he followed him home. The man was an architect and his wife read to him evenings while he was drawing. She was a good reader, and all the Electrician had to do was to drop around evenings after supper-time and listen. It was the best chance in the world and I threw it away! However, I succeeded in getting through the book first. I waited until a romantic school-girl made her appearance. I went home with her, and she read until midnight. The next morning she began again at daylight, and we devoured the book in a few hours. But I was more interested in ‘Peter Ibbetson,’ Du Maurier’s first book.”

“That was a sort of a dream-story, was it not?”

“Yes; I had been reading several curious books on mystic and occult subjects until I had come to the conclusion that there might be something in the idea that we ought to be able to recall our past experiences and re-live at will the scenes we have once passed through. There are so many theories, adopted by persons of widely different views, pointing in that direction. Many Christians believe that when we stand before the judgment-bar of God, our whole past life will pass before us, as in a vision. Nothing will be forgotten!”

“And our friends the spiritualists think they will be able to read everything in the astral light.”

“And science declares that the gray matter of the brain contains in its wrinkles a complete record not only of every event of which we have been cognizant, but of every thought. Of what use is the record if we are never to read it? Why is it there? Theosophists look forward to the time when in some future reincarnation they will be able to review all of their past lives. They do not believe that memory is dependent upon the brain and must decay when that organ’s billion cells resolve into their primal elements.”

“Ghost-life in Shadowland proves that bit of physiology incorrect! We have no brains—speaking physiologically—but we remember and we think!”

“Theosophists believe that the history of the world in all ages, not only of great events but of trifling ones, not only of nations but of individuals, is written in the memory of those who make that history. They believe that memory is eternal. Some mental scientists claim that the human will is the most powerful force in the universe. They claim that when properly educated and directed, all other forces, even those which lead to the decay and death of the human body, can be put under its control. I came to the conclusion that if the will is master and possesses such marvellous powers, it surely ought to be able to put me in the way of reading that record of my past life, whether written in my brain or in the astral light. I determined to try it. So I practised concentration with that single purpose in view—I would learn to re-live my past at will.”

“How did you go about it? What did you do?”

“It is simple enough after one has learned to concentrate. I wonder that people never thought of it before. All that is required is patience and perseverance guided by a strong will.”

“But I haven’t the slightest idea how one should go to work.”

“Take an easy, restful position, and forget that you have a body. I used to lie on my back. Make sure that you will not be disturbed, for the fear of disturbance causes uneasiness. I selected for my experiment one of the happiest days of my boyhood—the day when my uncle came to take me with him on a long promised trip to the city, which I had never seen. I knew that day, with its joys and surprises and excitements, must be as deeply impressed upon the gray matter of my brain as any—and yet it took me *six mouths* of persevering effort to bring back that one day! But it came at last.”

“Was it anything more than a vivid dream? By thinking intently upon a subject before going to sleep, one can often cause himself to dream about it.”

“That is true enough. But a dream is different. In a dream things are apt to be jumbled. There is no beginning, no end, and the most extraordinary events are liable to occur. The impossible happens as often as the possible, and the dreamer accepts everything as true, although a subconscious undertone keeps whispering ‘this is nothing but a dream.’ Re-living the past is different. It is not a dream. It is simply reading memory’s record. The past takes the place of the present. The man I had grown to be, forgot himself in the boy he watched with so much interest. Try to recall the scenes and the events of some pleasant day in your life. For instance, take the first day you visited the World’s Fair. Try to recall your first views of the buildings, and the

grounds and the people. My experience is that I can recall buildings, lakes, bridges, and all sorts of scenery more readily than I can people. Think of yourself and your companions, if you had any, and you will soon see them more or less vividly—and yourself with them. But the waking memory of a day long past is indistinct and full of gaps, yawning abysses, as it were, in which nine-tenths or more of the day is lost. Only a few of the most prominent happenings can be recalled. But when one sinks the consciousness of the present and locks himself away from it in sleep, that he may live only in the past—it is all there! One sees the whole. Nothing is lost. The record is continuous and no moment is forgotten or dropped out.”

“A most extraordinary experience!”

“I endeavored to recall other days, but with varying success. It was a year before I gained the ability to read whatever page of my f past life I desired. It was curious and somewhat interesting, but not so satisfactory as I expected. The perfect days in an ordinary person’s life are not numerous. I made the unpleasant discovery that I had been a bad-tempered, disagreeable youth with an unfortunate habit of getting into all sorts of scrapes. Who wants to re-live a childhood full of punishments? Not I! Peter Ibbetson and his Mary had an ideal childhood, which they could take comfort in re-living; but I got so I dreaded to start out on a new day, for fear I should catch myself doing some mean trick I had forgotten all about years ago.”

“Couldn’t you select your days?”

“One must have the memory of some certain event as a sort of key to unlock the past. But in choosing a day from one event I often met with unpleasant surprises. For instance, I once chose my sister’s wedding-day, and found that I had a fight two hours after the ceremony, which cost me a black eye and a lame shoulder. Things turned out that way too often to be agreeable, so I started out on a new set of experiments. I thought it would be a fine thing to learn to leave the body and return to it at will. The result of that was that I got out of the body sure enough, and before I got back in it, they had it buried. So I am a ghost by accident. I enjoyed life in the body, and never would have committed suicide intentionally. The visibles have a better chance to find out the secrets of the universe, than we invisibles have. They can control matter and we ghosts can’t—that is, we ordinary ghosts! But there is something queer about the Theosophist and the Occultist. I more than half believe that they have bodies on earth to which they can go back.”

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ROMANCES OF THE CEMETERY.

“Good morning! Have you been sitting on that tombstone ever since I went away?”

“Probably not, as I have several other occupations. Are you the ghost that came over some two weeks ago and went to visit your relatives after the funeral—the Drexel Boulevard ghost?”

“Yes.”

“How did you enjoy it?”

“I did not enjoy it; I endured.”

“It *is* unsatisfactory.”

“Very unsatisfactory.”

“You are not the first home-sick ghost I have seen. Strange that people will take the trouble to get here, and then wish themselves hack so soon. It is unreasonable! Of course, it is not all sunshine in Shadowland. There are twenty-four hours in a day, and sometimes they seem like a hundred and twenty-four. But, to my mind, sitting on tombstones watching funerals and looking

for new ghosts is pleasanter than walking the streets of the city, hungry and cold, without a penny in one's pocket, looking for a job, when thousands of other men in the same condition are doing the same thing—and there are no jobs to be found! That was what drove me to Shadowland. But I have been down and looked at your home, and what sent you here is more than I can imagine.”

The New Ghost shook his head, sadly, as if it was also more than he could imagine.

“In my case it was a mistake,” he said, wearily. “I see that now. I have friends, and I should have stayed with them.”

“This tombstone is getting a little hard. Suppose we walk over to the bank of the lake and sit down on the hillside, under that big tree. I suppose you came to see if they were doing anything about your monument; but they may not put that up for a year.”

“I am in no hurry.”

“You will be before you get it. Ghosts are always in a hurry to see how their last residence looks. But it is pleasanter over this way to sit and talk. There are not so many graves. Where can you find a prettier place than this on a sunny day in June—or is a July? It is more work to keep track of the months than it is of the days of the week. You can tell when Sunday comes by the looks of the streets. But if you get lost on months you have to go and hunt up a daily paper.”

The two ghosts walked across the soft green grass and paused by a new-made grave, which the mourners had just left.

“Do you know who it is?” asked the New Ghost.

“Yes; Gransen, the millionaire. All the city is talking about his death. Probably you knew him?”

“He was an acquaintance. I would like to see him. I wonder where he is now?”

“So do I. But you see *he* died. That is one reason why I stay around the cemetery so much. I keep hoping that I'll catch sight of some ghost of the other kind. They must be just as much alive as we are—it is only the body that dies. But where do they go? That is what puzzles me! I should think some of them would be enough interested in earth to stay around and attend their own funerals, and visit their graves. But I can't catch them at it, day or night. I camped out here a month the first summer, but there was nothing stirring nights except such things as birds, grasshoppers, crickets, and the fish in the lake. It was so still I could hear every move anything made, even to a mouse hurrying through the grass. The crackling of a twig when a bird moved uneasily, the jump of a frog, the whirl of a grasshopper's wing, the stir of the grass when a cricket crept under a different pebble, the gliding of a fish through the water—all this I could hear! But never the ghost of a sound, nor a sound of a ghost, came from the graves. They were as still as death.”

“Those ghosts must go to some other part of the universe. Evidently they are not earth-bound, as we are. Probably they find the new life so interesting that they have no inclination to come back and look after such trilling matters as funerals and tombstones. What do you do when you are not sitting on tombstones or watching graves?”

“Yesterday I went down to your house. I thought I would like to see how you look.”

“How I look!”

“Yes.”

“How did you expect to find out there?”

“I thought perhaps I could find your picture on the wall, but your folks had taken it away. They had taken the albums, too—though they wouldn't do me any good unless someone was looking at them. I couldn't open one.”

“No; we can’t open anything. I have learned that fact thoroughly,” mused the New Ghost.

“How do I look to you?” inquired the Old Ghost. “Not that I am vain of my personal appearance, but as a matter of curiosity; what do you think I look like?”

“A tall, slim form, veiled in gray mist, so thin and unsubstantial that I could poke my fingers through it—that is what you seem to be. But the sun shines right through you, just the same as if you were not there. You cast no shadow. In fact, you look very much like the picture of a ghost I saw in a book when I was a child.”

“That is just it! Now the ghost I saw in a book, when I was a boy, wore a night-cap and a sheet. And every new ghost I see wears a night-cap and a sheet—until I get acquainted with him. No. 198 says the ghost of his boyhood days was a skeleton, so all ghosts are walking skeletons to him for awhile. And 37 says ghosts all look like nuns with long, trailing robes, and 99’s ghosts are always dressed in black, with their faces hidden.”

“Inexplicable!”

“The ghosts 87 sees are more like a skull and cross-bones than anything else. And 93—he is the one that is always reading Greek and Latin, and quoting Homer and Virgil, and talking about Achilles and Hector and all those ancient fellows—his ghosts are great, big, shadowy figures, usually carrying a battle-axe about with them. The Theorist says that the trouble with us is, we never gave the subject of ghosts any particular thought after we grew up, and so our childhood’s notions in regard to a ghost’s personal appearance have re,imined with us. He, and the Experimenter, and the Scientist, and all the folks that have studied into such things, see us more as we must be.”

“How is that?”

“Oh, thin, and vapory, and mist-like. We are lighter than air; our particles are so fine that we can go through a door or a stone wall in case of need, so there can’t be very much solid substance about us. The Poet says we are beautiful. Our particles shine and sparkle like the dew upon the grass, or new-fallen snow in the sunshine. But then—the Poet always sees beauty in everything. He looks for it.”

“Perhaps that is what poets are for—to find beauty.”

“Some people never know that snow is anything but snow—a cold, white substance that boys use to make snowballs. But I have seen it here in the cemetery, with the sun shining through the trees, when it sparkled like millions of diamonds. Oh, it looks like fairyland here, sometimes! It is pretty now, with the soft green grass, the birds singing in the trees, and the lake there so cool and still. In the winter, as soon as the first snow comes, the whole cemetery is dressed in a robe of white dotted with marble. It makes me think of embroidery, only the pattern isn’t very regular. And when the trees are glistening with white frost or a light snow, their branches bending low with their sparkling weight of jewelry, one could easily imagine himself in an enchanted forest.”

“I believe you love the cemetery.”

“I do. It is pleasanter out here, in this quiet, peaceful city of the dead, than it is up there in the hurry, and bustle, and confusion of that great, greedy, starving city of the living. And Chicago is as good as any city, and better than the most of them.”

“That sounds like a true Chicagoan! But I should think you would find it drill here, and monotonous, and would want something to happen! There is too much peace, and quiet, and silence, for an every-day diet.”

“Things do happen here.”

“The funeral processions come and go—but that is monotonous. I should get tired of watching them.”



“Perhaps not, if you took to studying the mourners. I find it quite interesting. Folks are folks, even at a funeral, and everything goes on here in the cemetery much as it does over yonder in the city. I have seen strange happenings in the city of the dead—as it is called! But I find that it belongs to the living. Nights it is sacred to the dead, but days subject to the passions of the living. If the dead could be disturbed by the acts of the living they would be, for I have seen a bold woman trying to flirt by the side of the open grave, in which a man was burying his wife. Six months later they came to the cemetery together—married!”

“Probably she thought the rights of the living ended with death.”

“Perhaps. We have quarrels here, and courtships, and betrothals, and suicides—everything but weddings and divorces. The romances of the cemetery are quite as sensational as those of the city. We had an elopement—in high life, too, as the papers call it! The mourners came in private carriages. The bride was a cousin of the child they were burying, and rode in one of the last carriages, with her sister and little brothers. The children were anxious to get near the grave, and she slipped away from them and hurried back to the gate, where her lover was waiting with a carriage. She stepped in, and they drove away and caught a train and were on their way to Wisconsin before her parents missed her. I heard the florist and a reporter talking about it the next day; he had bought a bouquet of the florist. It was hushed up so it never got into the papers. I was at the grave watching the mourners while the elopement was going on—or off. It is impossible to be present at all that happens, even in one cemetery.”

“I never supposed people would elope from a funeral procession!”

“Nor I, until I lived in the cemetery. Nor did I suppose people came here to quarrel. One day a man and a woman—both well-dressed—came along a path, talking earnestly. The woman was crying. They proved to be brother and sister, and had been all over the cemetery looking at lots. They stopped under a big tree near the tombstone I was sitting on, to have it out. She told him that, as he was willed two-thirds of the estate, he must buy the lot and pay all the funeral expenses. He said he would pay his proportion—two-thirds and—not a cent more. She must pay her share. If their father was like us, and could be around looking after things, I wonder what he thought to hear his son and daughter quarrelling over expenses before he was buried! There was no need of it, either. They were rich. Poor folks, who have to deny themselves to comfortably house their dead, wouldn’t think of quarrelling over it. The funerals at single graves are often very pathetic.”

“A funeral is always pathetic.”

“Would you think that men would quarrel over a woman out here in the cemetery, and a dead woman at that!”

It seems improbable!”

“There is a great deal of human nature on exhibition in a cemetery. I was sitting under this very tree a few weeks ago, when two men came along that gravelled path, talking in loud and forcible tones. One man was big and fat, and owns a family lot and a mausoleum right over there to your left. He wanted to bury his sister with the family. The other man was small and lean, and declared that his wife belonged in the country cemetery, where their only child was buried. His family was there, he expected to lie there, and she would prefer to be with him. Then the pent-up bitterness of years broke forth, and I thought they would come to blows. The big man said that it was enough for his sister to be separated from her family through life, by her marriage with a poor, low-bred, ignorant foreigner. She should not be separated from them in death, and to all eternity! She had regretted her marriage as bitterly as her family did, and she should never be taken to a cheap country cemetery! They went on down the path, and pretty soon a handsome

carriage came along the drive, empty. The coachman was keeping watch of the men. Half an hour later the carriage drove back. The two men were sitting in it as stiff and silent as the marble monuments they were passing.”

“Was the sister buried here?”

“No: the little man must have won his point and taken her to the country cemetery.”

“I am glad.”

“We don’t know enough about it to be glad either way. There was a suicide in one of the cemeteries only a few weeks ago. I think they managed to keep that out of the papers, too, A young man shot himself by the grave of his sweetheart.”

“Do husbands ever shoot themselves by the graves of their wives?”

“I don’t know of a case.”

“Of necessity, the romances of a cemetery must be tragic.”

“You forget the elopement! Or do you look at marriage as a tragedy? There was a very pretty courtship going on in this cemetery all of one summer.”

“A courtship!”

“Yes.”

“But a courtship in a cemetery!”

“Certainly! and a betrothal, too!”

“Impossible!”

“Oh, no! only a little out of the ordinary. Such things do not happen every day—but they happen!”

“I thought cemeteries were for the dead!”

“I used to think so, too; but they are for the living. The betrothal—I don’t know what else to call it—occurred at the funeral of the bride’s mother. I was sitting on a flat-topped tombstone, near by, looking on, not expecting anything unusual from that set of folks. Just at the end of the ceremony, a young man, who had stood apart from the mourners, stepped forward and took the hand of a weeping girl, and drew her to his side with an air of protection. ‘As you all know, I asked Marie to be my wife a long time ago. Her mother gave her consent last week, and desired me to tell you all, by the side of her open grave, that there may be no more opposition,’ he said, in a clear, firm tone. I nearly slipped off the monument with surprise, and a young man among the mourners stumbled over a foot-stone and looked so aghast that I concluded it was upsetting some of his arrangements.”

“I am curious to hear about the courtship.”

## *PART II.*

### CHAPTER VI.

#### THE COURTSHIP.

“One sunny day in April there was a small, unpretentious funeral—a young widow burying her husband. She was a sweet-faced, yellow-haired girl. I liked her appearance. She came to her husband’s grave every Sunday, bringing a few flowers; nothing expensive, just a bunch of pansies, or a rose or two, and, as soon as she could find them, wild flowers from the prairie. Usually she came on foot, and would seem tired, for it was a long walk. I went home with her one day to see. I suppose she couldn’t afford the car-fare. She lived with her mother, and they

seemed to be alone in the world. The older woman sewed, and the younger gave music lessons and helped about the sewing. There are so many music teachers—almost more teachers than—that I think they saw hard times.

“In May there was a funeral from the boulevard—sixty carriages; I counted them, for somehow I felt interested in that funeral from the first. And flowers—you should have seen them! There was an arch you could walk under; and a gate ajar you could walk through; and pillows enough to cover the grave; and roses and lilies by the bushel! A man of about thirty-five was burying his wife. The next day he was there in his carriage, and the next, and the next. He seemed to take a little comfort in rearranging the flowers and bringing fresh ones. Sunday he brought nearly a bushel of roses, which he arranged on the grave. While he was doing it, my sweet-faced girl and her mother came with a little bunch of wild-flowers for their grave. The two graves were just across the path from each other, only a few feet apart. The women lingered longer than the man. As they turned to go, they noticed the newly made, rose-covered grave, and paused before it.

“The next Sunday the girl was there first, and she sat down by the grave and talked to her husband in a way that would have brought tears to the eyes of anything but a ghost. I never could see why they do it, but a great many people will talk to a dead body as if it could hear—if they think there is no one around! It seemed to comfort her. While she was talking, the man came with his roses. The coachman took the dried ones away in a basket, and the man arranged the fresh flowers. As soon as the girl noticed him she went home. The next Sunday they both came earlier—with the idea of being out of each other’s way, I thought. And the next Sunday both tried coming late, and after that they just seemed to come when it happened, and sometimes met and sometimes not. I had fallen into the habit of loitering over that way every Sunday afternoon. They never said anything to each other, but whichever stayed the later always looked at the other’s grave. One Sunday the man did not come, but the carriage appeared with a ten-year-old boy in charge of the roses. As he sprang out of the carriage and passed her, he dropped some of the roses without knowing it. She watched him as he tried to arrange the flowers on the grave.

“ ‘Here are your roses,’ she said, enjoying their sweetness for a moment.

“ ‘Don’t you want them?’ he asked. ‘Mama has so many, I am sure she wouldn’t miss those, and your grave needs them,’ he added, with the brutal frankness of a child.

“ ‘Is it your mother’s grave?’

“ ‘Yes; but I can’t get the roses right. John says they are not the way papa has them; but he is so stupid he can’t show me how. My papa has gone to Buffalo, but he will be back before next Sunday,’ the boy chattered on, glad to find someone to talk with.

I have seen it so often, I know how your papa likes to have it,’ she replied. ‘I’ll come and help you’; and so the two worked together and arranged flowers on both the graves. The next Sunday the man was there. As she stepped into the path to go home, he lifted his hat and spoke to her for the first time.

“ ‘Thank you for your help last Sunday. My boy told me.’

“ ‘You are welcome,’ she answered, gravely, and passed on.

“The next Sunday she did not come, nor the next; but the third Sunday she came again, looking pale and tired. She brought a few sprays of the early golden-rod. The man lingered until after she started, and then stepped into his carriage and told the coachman to follow her at a distance. Evidently he wanted to see where she lived. That week they put up the monument at his wife’s grave, and the man was down every day. We’ll go over and take a look at it some time; according to my notion, it is as fine as anything here. The next Sunday, early, I was loitering around the gate, when I saw the man. I followed along, and what was my surprise to see the girl

by her husband's grave, weeping bitterly. He saw her before I did, and stopped the carriage and got out and walked, telling the coachman that he would attend to the roses later. He went to his wife's grave and looked at the beautiful monument a few moments, but the weeping girl across the path seemed to annoy him. At last he walked over and stood beside her.

“ ‘Why do you cry? It will not help him—or you.’

“ ‘I know—but life is so hard without him. Sometimes I can't help crying. He was good, and I loved him. I know it is well with him. It is for myself that I am crying.’

“ ‘I see. A case of self-pity. Is that always the way of it, if we were only honest enough to own it? Do we weep for ourselves instead of for the dead?’

“ ‘Yes, that is it,’ she replied, more calmly. ‘I found that out weeks ago. It is myself that I am sorry for, now. At first I was sorry for Charlie, to think that he had missed so much of life—that he had to die young when he would have liked to live. But now—he is used to the new life, and he is happier than he would be here. Now I am not grieving for Charlie, but for myself. You have put up that beautiful monument for yourself—not for her!’

“ ‘I wonder if that is true?’ he said, musingly. ‘I supposed I was putting it up for her!’

“ ‘You are putting it up for yourself, that you may show all the world how you loved her. And I—I was crying because I have nothing to bring to show my love for Charlie but those poor little flowers that will fade in an hour. That marble will tell of your love for centuries to come. And I cannot have even a stone at my Charlie's grave. It is hard, very hard.’ She was weeping again, but more quietly. There was a silence of some moments.

“ ‘If it is, as you say, only for ourselves that we bring flowers and put up monuments, doesn't that fact help us to bear it when we can't do those things?’ he asked. ‘How much harder it would be if you thought he was grieving as you are over the lack of a stone.’

“ ‘He knows that I would if I could! He knows I love him, and that I have not forgotten and never will forget. But it is hard to have his friends think that I neglect him. It is almost more than I can bear. If his mother had not owned a lot here, he would have had to be down there among the single graves, and it seems as if that I could not have borne.’

“ ‘They talked awhile longer, then the coachman drove up, saying the horses wouldn't stand. The girl walked away and did not come again for three weeks, but the man came every Sunday and put roses on her Charlie's grave. The fourth Sunday she came and saw the faded roses on both graves. In a few moments the man appeared and brought her a bunch of beautiful roses.

“ ‘My wife would gladly share her roses with you to help ease a heartache,’ he said.

“ ‘Thank you; it is kindly meant, I am sure, and I accept. But they are not my roses, and you will not think me ungrateful if I ask you not to bring me any more.’

“ ‘You are not speaking from the heart now. You are thinking of mere conventionalities.’

“ ‘Perhaps; we are so much the slave of conventionalities that we hardly know how we would act, were we free. But—I cannot continue to accept your roses.’

“ ‘H my wife were here, she would give them to you. She was a beautiful, noble woman—as good as she was beautiful, which is not always the case. The earth has contained but few who were her equal.’

“ ‘Then your marble yonder tells the truth?’

“ ‘Yes.’

“ ‘I am glad. It is too beautiful to be a lie.’

“ ‘She did not come again until the next spring, but the man drove out every Sunday with roses for his wife's grave. It was a beautiful June morning when I saw them together again. They were standing in the gravelled path, and he was talking.

“ They are not forgotten. They will never be forgotten. We shall never cease to love them; but they are of the past. The future is ours. Let us spend it together. To some it might seem strange that I ask you here; but here was where we first met, and here it was that our hearts turned toward each other for sympathy in our grief. We have mourned together. But now let us put aside sorrow, and try to find peace and joy. My darling, I love you dearly! Will you be my wife? I think if our dead could speak they would bid us be happy.’ He held out his hands, and she put hers in them, silently, and they walked away together.”

“And were happy ever after, as the story-books say?”

“I think they are happy. I made up my mind I should go to the wedding, but, as they didn’t send me an invitation, I had quite a time to find out when it was to be. However, I went; it was in the little church she attended. I also went to the big reception held afterward. And what do you suppose he gave her for one of the wedding presents?”

“I don’t know. And yet—perhaps I could guess! They do such strange things in the cemetery. Perhaps it was a monument for her husband’s grave!”

“Exactly. We will go over and look at it some day. Probably you knew him.”

“I did. I have recognized him—but we never knew that he found his wife in the cemetery. I went to that reception—but I didn’t see you there.”

“I suppose not. It is a busy day down at the club, to-day, so nearly all the ghosts will be in. It will be a good time for you to be introduced, and then you will not be so lonesome. I think we’d better go down, don’t you?”

“Perhaps so. I am in no hurry, but if you want to go I’ll go with you.”

“We will go. It is time you were introduced and given a number.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### GHOSTLY DIFFICULTIES.

“ There are several ways of getting from Oakwoods to the library which is the headquarters for the club,” remarked the Cemetery Ghost. “If we want to ride we can take the train or a cable car. but I prefer walking. We have no muscles to get tired, and we could start out and walk around the earth, if we chose.”

“Walk around the earth!”

“Yes.”

“The very thought of it tires me.”

“Exactly—tires your imagination! Remember that there is nothing else about you to get tired.”

“Possibly a tired imagination may be as serious a matter for a ghost to contend with, as tired muscles and nerves are for a person who wears a body.”

“Perhaps! But it should be easy to overcome a tired imagination when one knows that is all there is of it.”

“I acknowledge that it should be—but is it?”

“The cars are apt to be too crowded for the comfort of ghosts— unless one rides on top! I do that quite frequently; it is better than being walked over and sat upon, and the women carry so many parasols nowadays that a ghost is in constant danger of being speared. I don’t get used to it! Long as I have lived in Shadowland, I still object to such experiences.”

“So do I. The day of my funeral, just after I left the cemetery, I was run over, and by my own carriage, too! They were waiting for some one at the corner. Of course John wouldn’t have done

it if he had known! I was standing in front of the horses, hooking right at him, and I forgot for a moment that he couldn't see me. It almost seemed as if the horses did see me! John had to touch them with a whip before they would start, and then they snorted and swerved to one side, and the front wheel struck the curbstone, nearly upsetting the carriage. Before I knew it I was under the horses' feet, and it really seemed as if every bone in my body was breaking. It was some little time before I could get my wits together enough to remember that I had left all my bones back in the cemetery, and had none with me to break. My sister was shocked. She thought the coachman must be drunk. And of course it was unusually dreadful of him to be drunk the day I was buried! I felt sorry for John. I don't think he was ever drunk in his life."

"Here we are at the cemetery gate. Which way shall we go? Through the park and down Drexel Boulevard, past your house?"

"I would rather not. Isn't there another pleasant route? That is a familiar carriage drive, and I don't feel like walking over it now."

"There are a dozen routes. I strike new streets almost every time I go down. How would you like to go over to the lake shore and follow that?"

"Can we? There are so many car tracks, a stray engine will be sure to take us unawares."

"We can look out for that."

The two ghosts sauntered slowly out of the cemetery, finding themselves, as is always the case with the invisibles, obliged to give all of the sidewalk and to dodge all of the teams.

"I don't like this at all!" said the New Ghost. "We ought to have a sidewalk of our own. The visibles positively crowd us right into the street among the horses and bicycles. They will not give an inch."

"That is why secluded streets are the most popular with ghosts. The Experimenter says the proper way for us to do is to build imaginary sidewalks ten to twenty feet above the real ones, and walk on them."

"Up in the air?"

"Certainly."

"And walk above people's heads?"

"Even so."

"Can he do it?"

"Yes."

"Can you?"

"No; I haven't made much of a success of it."

"Why?"

"Because I lack will power, I suppose. That is what the Experimenter says—and imagination! I was one of those practical folks, and it takes me a long time to get over it."

"Walk on an imaginary sidewalk in the air! And you say he can do it!"

"Yes; but he doesn't even need an imaginary sidewalk. He can walk up to a cloud and sit down on one corner of it. As we are lighter than the air, it is a solid to us, and if we only think so, we can make our way through it, or walk on it, as we choose. The Philosopher says that the ether filling all space beyond the earth's atmosphere must be a solid to us, and he thinks we ought to be able to make our way through that."

"Then we could visit the moon and the planets! I have always wanted to do that! I'd like to know whether those big hollows on the moon contain water, and I'd like to get to the top of those high mountains. The scenery on the moon must be very picturesque. When my business matters

get settled here I believe I'll take a trip to the moon. I think I would enjoy it better than sitting on tombstones and watching funerals as you do."

"But there are a few little drawbacks to a trip to the moon—the distance, for instance."

"It is quite a way to walk! When I was a boy, I believe they called it 240,000 miles to the moon, and the sun was 95,000,000 of miles away. But the astronomers have figured both distances down a good deal since then. As we ghosts do not need air to breathe, the lack of an atmosphere at the moon wouldn't make any difference to us. Don't you want to go?"

"No; thank you! The earth is good enough for me. Even the Experimenter has not been any farther up than a high cloud. You see none of us know just what would happen to us, when we got beyond the earth's atmosphere. It may be that the pressure of the air is necessary for the preservation of this ghostly body of ours. We don't know how that is. It may be that when we got out into the ether our particles would float apart from each other, like a gas, and we might lose even this farce of a body. So far, no ghost has felt like trying the experiment; but if you are bound to go, very likely you can find some venturesome spirit at the club that will go with you. The rest of us will stay on earth and wish you good luck in navigating space."

They were crossing a business street. While attempting to dodge the heavy wheels of a coal wagon the New Ghost found himself in front of a cable car which had just started up. Confused at suddenly finding himself in so perplexing a situation, he obeyed his first impulse and jumped to one side, regardless of the fact that it brought him directly in front of a street watering cart which had just turned the corner. He had no time to make another escape before the heavy wheels were upon him. The Cemetery Ghost stepped across the street with an ease born of experience, and turned to watch his unfortunate companion, whom he was unable to assist even by advice. He leaned against a lamp post to escape the crowd who would dodge that—but not a ghost.

"I feel as if I was drenched," said the New Ghost, trying to shake himself, "but I suppose I am not. Probably I went between the molecules of those drops of water, the same as I do when I go through a door or a stone wall. It is convenient sometimes to have the ability to penetrate matter. It is also convenient to be able to get up and walk after one has been run over, and not have to wait for a doctor to set bones. And if one must have a barrel of water thrown over him it is a convenience to not be wet by it. But, take it on the whole, when I am crossing a busy corner like this I think a body that people could see would be a greater convenience! I don't see but this corner is just as bad as the down-town crossings, where policemen are stationed."

"You will not have so much trouble if you will only learn to remember that you must do all the dodging. The police never help us ghosts, even if we are in the most crowded part of the city. They are as blind to the invisibles as other people. We might have crossed elsewhere, but I forgot your inexperience."

"If I had known that things are as they are, I should certainly have kept my body! A man without a body is at a serious disadvantage—in Chicago."

The ghosts slowly sauntered through Jackson Park, remarking upon the personal appearance of the Goddess of Liberty, looking at the buildings, and speaking of the changes which had occurred since the White City stood there in all of its beauty.

"Some ghosts spend a good deal of time at the museum attending the lectures and looking at the crowds and the curiosities, but it is too gloomy for me! I like blue sky and sunshine and clouds over my head; and I would rather look at live flowers and birds than at dried or stuffed ones. I prefer the cemetery."

“How still the lake is to-day; I have seldom seen it so quiet. Not a ripple disturbs its surface. It makes one think of a sea of glass. Those boats out there with sails flapping will hardly be able to get in until a breeze comes up.”

“We might walk out there and board one—shall we?”

“What! walk on the water?”

“Yes.”

“Well, of course we ought to be able to, if we can walk on air!”

“So we could start out and walk across Lake Michigan, could we?”

“Certainly.”

“It seems as if I should get my feet wet.”

“Come down to the beach and try it. There are no waves to-day. You will never have a better time to learn. You know you really have no feet that are substantial enough to get wet.”

“I never supposed water was so hard! It is just as solid as ice or a stone sidewalk. But I don’t care to go where it is too deep; I might slip through an air-hole or something that corresponds to it in Shadowland, and I fear I shouldn’t know how to swim without my body. I believe I prefer solid earth—even if one does have to dodge.”

“There is hardly anyone on the beach. We will follow that awhile. Did you enjoy visiting your relatives?”

“No; I utterly failed to make them see me or understand me. Things are all in a tangle. The worst of it is, I don’t know how to help straighten the tangle out.”

“All we ghosts can do is to look on.”

“I may have to look on and see somebody hung for murdering me—when I did it myself!”

“Is it as bad as that?”

“Yes.”

“An unpleasant prospect, certainly!”

“When I saw you at my funeral I didn’t understand the situation. The doctor knew from the first that I was poisoned, and it has not occurred to him that I did it myself. He put the matter in the hands of a private detective two hours after he found me dead. The detective advised him to say nothing until after the funeral, for they didn’t know whom to suspect. They waited and watched, and now both are positive that they know exactly who murdered me.”

“Indeed! Can they get proof enough to make mischief?”

“That is what they are trying to do. The doctor lies awake nights studying on it—he thinks it is his duty. And the detective is laying all manner of cunning plans to entrap the one they suspect.”

“And who is it?”

“The butler.”

“I don’t wonder the situation makes you feel uncomfortable. Very often when people step out secretly they leave trouble behind. What evidence can they get against the butler?”

“Nothing but circumstantial of course. I took \$5,000 in gold from the bank about two weeks before my death. They have found that the butler has possession of that \$5,000 and is about to marry and buy himself a home with it. They think he stole it and poisoned me to conceal the theft. They are hunting the city over to find out where he bought that poison. As I bought it myself in Detroit, they are not likely to succeed.”

“How did the man come by your money?”

“It was his.”

“Can he prove it?”



"I don't know. He inherited \$4,000 from his father, which I had invested for him, and the other \$1,000 was wages due him.. There ought to be something among my papers to show the transaction, but I am not sure that there is."

"Have they arrested the butler?"

"Not yet."

"Perhaps they never will."

"I hope they will not—but they probably will! Do I see a ghost up there by Douglas's Monument? A shadowy figure seems to be looking across the water!"

"Probably. Shall we go up and see?"

"Yes; I wouldn't object to resting a few moments."

"How earth habits do cling! In spite of the fact that there is nothing about us to get tired we imagine we are 'tired almost to death,' as we used to say when we lived in bodies."

"I am tired. I know I am. You can't argue me out of it. I haven't walked so much for a number of years. And besides, this vapory body I am living in now is a new piece of mechanism that I am not used to! If I could only go to sleep, perhaps I might get rested."

"Ghosts do not sleep."

"So I conclude from my own experience, but it seems as if we might learn how."

"Perhaps we might, but the most of us are afraid to try it. If we went to sleep we might never wake up. We might never be able to find ourselves again. We are so thin and vapory that it seems as if there is nothing to hold us together but will power, and if we should lose consciousness in sleep we don't know what might happen to us."

"So there are some things which ghosts fear?"

"Yes; several things. We are all a little afraid of fire. The Chemist says we are more like some of the invisible gases than anything else he knows about; and so many gases burn or explode when brought into contact with fire that we like to keep at a safe distance. We are waiting until some ghost wants to commit suicide. Then we will persuade him to walk into a fire. Perhaps he will come out unharmed, but we don't know. I never heard of a ghost that was willing to try the experiment. That is the Weather Prophet by the monument. He has some curious ideas."

"Why do you call him the Weather Prophet?"

"We are too near for an explanation; he would hear—as shades hear. I will introduce you."

The Weather Prophet was leaning against the monument, gazing intently at the sky.

"No. 85," said the Cemetery Ghost, courteously, "this is the Drexel Boulevard Shade who came over a couple of weeks ago—perhaps you remember?"

"Yes; the millionaire. I remember reading about you in the papers. They called it 'heart failure,' I believe."

"It was—of a certain kind."

"What is the weather likely to be?" inquired the Cemetery Ghost.

"There is a storm brooding, a terrible storm! An unusual amount of suffering in the city is causing black clouds of despair to hover like a pall between us and the azure depths of space which men call the blue sky. Do you see them?" asked the Weather Prophet, extending a ghostly hand to the northwest.

"Here are clouds of hatred coming from the criminal district—they are black, with an occasional gleam of dark red, like the fires of hell! Despair and hatred are drifting swiftly toward each other; they will soon meet, and then woe will befall the city! Do you not see them, those heavy, dark clouds, freighted with the evil thoughts of men?"

"I see nothing but blue sky, with a few fleecy-white clouds floating over the lake," replied the Cemetery Ghost.

"It is strange, strange, that you see things only as the living do. Shadowland is a new world to me. What I dreamed of while in the body, I can see now. Those white clouds formed of goodwill, and noble aspirations, and prayer—clouds freighted with love, must come quickly and fill the sky, and dissolve the fierce clouds of despair and hatred, or the city will be destroyed! Such a hurricane as Chicago has not known within the century will sweep across the surrounding prairies. Buildings will be wrecked, lives lost, and I can see the angry waters of the lake dashing through the streets! The destruction will be terrible if help does not come soon! See the gray clouds of sorrow and the brown fumes of anger rising from that desolate part of the city, where women weep and children starve! Will no one extend a helping hand to these sufferers, and cause them to send forth grateful, loving thoughts! O, if men on earth but knew the power they have over the elements! If they could but see what I see! The breath of the hurricane is but the breath of man's evil passions! If no evil thoughts ascended to the sky to create discord among the elements the rain would descend as gently as dew, and refresh the earth, instead of coming down in torrents, which ravage it. Nature undisturbed works peacefully and silently, while the discordant passions of men are disturbing forces which nature cannot readily subdue. But see! Help comes! Once more the city will be saved. Do you see?"

"Where?"

"See that white cloud rising like a white-winged angel of peace and filling the space between the dark clouds of despair and hatred! See how at its approach they shrivel up and disappear! Some one has done a good deed in the dark district, and many hearts are filled with gratitude and love. That love which is strong enough to prompt to action for the good of the race, is a universal solvent, in which anger, hatred, and all evil passions disappear. A new chemical combination results, which tends to produce harmony. Again I say, even the elements are subject to the will of man—if he but knew it!"

"Don't some of the orientals claim the power to make it rain?"

The question was unheeded.

"Furious storms are caused by the clashing of evil thoughts! If men would but fill the whole atmosphere of the earth with kind and loving thoughts, they could destroy even the cyclone before it was born. The war of passions causes the war of the elements. But men are blind and cannot see,—will not see! I told of these things while I was living in the body, but no one listened; no one believed! Men called me an enthusiast, a fanatic. That is their usual way of treating those who can see more clearly than themselves. Because, forsooth, I was one of the bearers of a new interpretation of the invisible forces by which the universe is governed, an unpleasing interpretation to many, I must of necessity be a fool! But the dreamer whom his own generation casts out, and calls fool, is often revered as a genius by the next generation. Many can follow; but few can break the paths and lead! What the visibles still under bondage to the physical nature denominate folly and madness should be plain to the invisibles, who have cast off flesh and its burdens—is plain to those who are not earthbound! This conflict of the passions in the clouds is highly interesting to me, and should be to you."

Without giving further heed to his visitors, the Weather Prophet walked to the top of the monument, in order to obtain a better view of the sky. The New Ghost regarded the accomplishment of this feat with curiosity.

"So that is what you call walking on air, is it?" he inquired.

“Something near it. But probably he would like the place to himself just now. Perhaps it will be as well for us to go on—if you are not too tired.”

“I had forgotten all about being tired. Is he always like that?” inquired the New Ghost, as they continued their walk.

“No; he is hardly ever twice alike, and so some ghosts find him exceedingly interesting. He can walk up a monument or the side of a house, or any perpendicular wall, in a most dignified manner, but he can’t walk up the air as the Experimenter does.”

“What is the difference?”

“All the difference between something and nothing. I can walk up a low tombstone myself—if I just know there is something solid to press my toes against, I can get up all right. But the minute I try to walk on the air I slip right back to earth. The Experimenter says I must imagine I am climbing invisible stairs—but it won’t work Down I go!”

“Curious.”

“And the last time I saw the Weather Prophet try, he couldn’t do much better.”

“I should think he would be anxious to learn, so as to go up and visit the clouds.”

“I presume he is practising. He went up the monument steadier than usual.”

“How did he come by that name?”

“We called him the Weather Prophet because he is always studying the clouds, and knows more about Chicago weather—which, perhaps, you remember, is an uncertain quantity—than any one else. A signal station man can’t begin to equal him! I never knew the Weather Prophet to make a mistake on Chicago weather. If he says it will rain, it rains! If he had told us that hurricane was really coming, It should have taken the first train out of the city to get away from it.”

“Any man or ghost who can foretell Chicago weather with certainty must be superior to his race.”

“If you care to cultivate his acquaintance you will usually find him somewhere along the lake shore—where land and water meet! He hardly ever visits the club, and is called unsocial, but I like him pretty well.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE HARDEST WORK IN THE UNIVERSE.

“Isn’t this about where the anarchists used to form their processions and make their speeches?” asked the New Ghost, as the two shades sauntered slowly across the short grass of the park, avoiding the paths which were filled with the visibles, hurrying by to catch a coming or departing train as if their lives depended upon their success.

“I don’t remember about processions, but this is where the anarchists used to hold meetings and make public speeches. About every opinion ever held by a mortal has been given publicity here.”

“The air must be full of strange ideas, unless the lake breezes blow them away and scatter them over the world. Is there another spot on the shores of Lake Michigan where so many scenes of varied interest have been presented to the beholders? The life of the city centres here and Chicago is cosmopolitan.”

“One may sit on a bench and see much of the life of the visibles without stirring from one’s seat. All races, all peoples, meet here by the lake, and all languages representing all ideas known

to man may be heard in this park. It is a favorite resort for many of the invisibles, who enjoy watching the hurrying crowds. But life here is artificial. Most of people wear masks. I prefer the cemetery.”

“I have seen masks worn in the cemetery.”

“But not so often! Many people are unmasked at a funeral who never unmask at any other time. There is a friend of mine sitting on that empty bench. Suppose we walk that way. I would like to hear the Shadowland news.

“Some visibles are walking toward that same bench. They will sit down on your friend!”

“He sees us and is coming this way. It is fortunate for us ghosts that in some places the visibles are not allowed to walk on the grass, or they wouldn’t leave us an inch of footing on the face of the earth!”

“The visibles are certainly very inconsiderate in regard to such matters.”

“Good morning, No. 128. Permit me to introduce the Drexel Boulevard ghost who was buried at Oakwoods the day you were down last. What is the news?”

“Which news?”

“Shadowland news.”

“Nothing special, unless it is an unusual number of new arrivals.”

“Have you seen the cemetery ghosts from Rosehill or Graceland lately?”

“I was out at Rosehill yesterday. I never saw a ghost so blue as that fellow out there! I believe if he knew how, he would commit suicide over again.”

“Suggest that he try fire.”

“No; I wouldn’t advise any ghost to commit suicide until he knows what comes next.”

“Nor I; but what is the matter?”

“He can’t find his wife or children and it works on his mind.”

“Where are they?” inquired the New Ghost.

“That is a question ghosts are no more able to settle than men. You see he killed them in a fit of desperation.”

“Killed them!”

“Yes; and he was not a bad man either.”

“Are actions judged by a different standard of morals in Shadowland?”

“Not necessarily. I think you will say as we do that he was unfortunate rather than wicked. He was a good mechanic, but he couldn’t get work. He tried and tried. They were buying a cottage on monthly payments. That had to go; and then the furniture went a piece at a time to buy food. His wife did sewing until from overwork and the lack of nourishing food she was taken ill. And then—it is a sad story—he couldn’t get money enough to buy the medicine the doctor ordered for her. And so, after his credit was all gone at the groceries, and he had walked the streets of the city a week looking for work and only earned 25 cents, he went back to the little room they had moved into, took his revolver and shot his wife and their two little girls who were on the bed beside her—and then himself! He loved them too dearly to see them starve, he says. Some people may call that a curious kind of love, but I think I can understand it.”

“I don’t blame him,” said the Cemetery Ghost.

“Nor I,” remarked the New Ghost. “I don’t think any one should be blamed for coming to Shadowland.”

“Perhaps not—except the criminal ghosts.”

“Who are they?”

“Oh, the robbers, and murderers, and criminals of all sorts, who killed themselves to avoid the consequences of their crimes on earth.”

“But you do not call the Rosehill Ghost a criminal.”

“No; we consider the motive that prompted the action. He did what he thought was the best he could do for wife and children. There was no selfishness in his act. He found himself in a dreadful situation. Those he loved were suffering for the necessities of life, which he was unable to provide for them. His friends had been generous, but they, too, were having a hard struggle to live. He felt that he had no right to ask them to take bread from their own mouths to give to him any longer. It was a terrible situation for any man. He took what seemed to him the best way out of it. He had come to the conclusion that there was no room in the world for him and his family. They would leave it—together! But now he finds himself separated from them and he is heartbroken.”

“But if murder doesn’t make a man a criminal in Shadowland what does?”

“A selfish motive put into action to the detriment of others. People who commit suicide to escape punishment for the crimes they have committed on earth are criminals here just as they were there,” replied No. 128.

“It is a matter of personal character everywhere, among both visibles and invisibles,” remarked the Cemetery Ghost. “I sometimes wonder if that is the whole purpose of the universe—to form character.”

“I should be inclined to call destroying the body of another an action to that person’s detriment,” observed the New Ghost.

“That may be,” answered No. 128. “But if the destroyer is doing what he considers right and best for the person destroyed, and is acting from an unselfish motive, Shadowland does not feel called upon to condemn him.”

“Then selfishness is the crime of crimes, is it?” asked the New Ghost.

“That individual who thinks he is the hinge of the universe is out of place everywhere. The only fit home for him would be an uninhabited, isolated star,” added the Cemetery Ghost.

“Shadowland is not much fonder of self-centred characters than is the earth. Those who consider the interests of others are better citizens for both countries,” continued No. 128. “You remember in the frontier wars with the Indians many a loving husband and father who fought to protect his home and in vain, saved the last bullets for wife and child that he might not see them fall into the hands of an enemy who would kill by slow torture. Do you condemn those men?”

“No.”

Our friend at Rosehill was similarly situated. His beloved were in the hands of a pitiless enemy—starvation. A cruel, merciless enemy, whom hundreds, yes, thousands, find themselves unable to conquer. Starvation is slow torture. Lie saved them. Do you condemn him?”

“Starvation in a land of plenty is unnecessary.”

“Should be unnecessary. Quite true. But it is a hard and unwelcome fact that men, women and children do starve right here in America. And others—hundreds of them—give up the battle with an enemy they are unable to overcome and forsake the world which refuses them food. Did you know that there were 6,600 suicides reported in the United States last year?”

“No.”

“It is a fact.”

“That there were 6,600 people who decided that life was not worth living?”

“Not at all. Under suitable conditions everybody would find life worth living. Life is interesting. Life is beautiful. We all enjoyed it. But conditions are such under the present

competitive system of society that the sustaining of life is rendered impossible among an increasingly large number.”

“If that be true, it is a powerful arraignment of the present social system.”

“It is true. The world is richer than it ever was before. Everything that human beings need or want can be produced or manufactured more easily and more abundantly than ever before in the world’s written history. And yet the number of families which suffer for the necessities of life through no fault of their own is yearly increasing. I believe that the lack of money or its equivalent—the inability to make a comfortable living and share in the benefits of civilization is the cause of most suicides. How was it with you? The papers reported you as a millionaire. But I saw afterward that you had met with heavy losses and your fortune was not so large as was expected. In fact, if some mining stock had not taken a sudden boom there would have been only enough to pay debts and funeral expenses.”

“Did my mining stock take a boom?”

“Yes.”

“If I had only known!”

“Perhaps if you had known you wouldn’t have taken the trip to Shadowland”

“Perhaps not!”

“That goes to prove my case that the lack of money is at the bottom of most suicides. And you were not in the clutches of starvation, either!

“I wonder which stock it is? How can I find out?”

“I don’t know. You might spend a month in a newspaper office watching the files, and then no one would read the paper you wanted to look at, when it is a back number.”

“But you haven’t told me the Shadowland news yet,” remarked the Cemetery Ghost, who was not fond of long discussions in which he had no part.

“Don’t know that there is any of much importance. No one has seen anything of No. 4 for a month. His friends think he has gone on. There have been several new arrivals; the sailor has brought in three. Water seems to be the favorite route just now. Perhaps we are through with the epidemic of revolvers and poison.”

“Water is usually a favorite route in summer.”

“But you should have seen the class in gymnastics the other day! We asked the Experimenter to build us an imaginary sidewalk down State street—it is always so crowded—and from the court house over here to the new library building. So he started out of the Washington street entrance and walked up in the air, as if on invisible steps, to the height of about 20 feet, marked out a platform and told us to come. Some of us managed to struggle up there, and some of us fell back every time we tried. So we decided to go to the nearest elevated station to practice and start from the high wooden platform which the visibles use. The Experimenter and the Professor walked off of the platform and I followed next, looking at their heads, and not thinking much about my feet or of the crowd on the street below me. I walked as much as half a block, when all of a sudden I looked down. You don’t know how it feels to see yourself up in the air over people’s heads without any visible means of support. If I had been wearing a body I should have thought my heart had gone into my boots. It sank as lead—and so did I! Down I went as swiftly as an arrow! And you should have seen the others! Some of them slipped down to the ground the moment they stepped off of the platform.’ Others struggled along a few feet and then dropped like bullets. Three who were getting on finely a few feet behind me looked around wildly when I so suddenly disappeared. On reaching the same place, they hesitated a moment and then plunged down as if they had walked off of a precipice! No. 131, who was an athlete and a fine swimmer

among the visibles, threw out his arms, plunged off the platform and swam—actually swam through the air! It looked as easy as it looks for a fish to swim in water! He says it is a glorious sensation! And he can float! He swam up to a cloud and floated down like a bird.”

“I believe I will go up to Rosehill,” said the Cemetery Ghost, “if you will take charge of our new friend here. Introduce him to the Experimenter as soon as convenient, and if there is a chance perhaps it would be well for him to get his number to-day, so we will know what to call him.”

“O, he will probably be dubbed the Millionaire. I suppose you will not object,” continued No. 128 turning to the Drexel Boulevard shade. “Not that it will make the slightest difference if you do, for that is what you will be called.”

“Then I may as well make a virtue of necessity and accept the name—but I don’t like it! Why do we not keep our own names that we had on earth?”

“The most of us prefer to have our names buried with our bodies. An earth name would serve to recall the earth life, and its incidents, and might enable all Shadowland to learn our past history, which some of us would prefer to have forgotten. Remember that all the inhabitants of Shadowland are persons whose earth history ended in a tragedy! Here comes No. 33. Ask him why people commit suicide.”

“They are having an animated discussion over yonder on the increase of happiness among the visibles, provided the distribution of wealth was equalized. Why are you not there?” inquired No. 33 sinking wearily down on one end of the bench.

“For the simple reason that I find it impossible to be in more than one place at once.”

“Money won’t make folks happy! I had oceans of it—more than I knew what to do with!”

“Money alone may not be sufficient to make people happy. But it is equally true that the lack of it will make them miserable—in the present artificial state of society. You had too much! More than enough is almost as bad as less than enough. The distribution of wealth should be equalized. One should not be permitted to revel in oceans of it, while another starves for lack of a reasonable amount. If you had less money there would have been an incentive to work; life would have had more interest and you would probably be stirring around among the visibles now. If I had a little more, I should be wearing a body, instead of trying to learn how to get on without one.

“I shouldn’t have enjoyed work; I was too tired.”

“Aren’t you rested yet?”

“No; I never expect to be.”

“Never is a long time. Come and join the class in gymnastics.”

“The very sight of the Experimenter tires me! He is too energetic. He is always busy, always doing something! I can understand why the visibles work, when it is work or starve. But why should invisibles exert themselves?”

“You will find out after you have been over here a few months. You will be more tired of doing nothing but watch waves twenty-four hours in a day, than you ever were of exerting yourself.”

“Watching waves is a fascinating employment. The first day or two I thought I should like it for at least a century. But after a week I concluded it was work to keep track of all those big waves and little wavelets, and it wore upon me. They mix themselves up so; and then there are the white caps! I stopped. I was born tired—constitutionally tired.”

“Shadowland will cure you, even if you are like that Englishman who committed suicide because he was tired of buttoning and unbuttoning his clothes.”

“I was tired of eating three meals a day; it was too monotonous.”

“And I was tired of living three days without a meal. That was too monotonous.

“What are you arguing about?” inquired a newcomer who had glided up behind them unobserved.

“We are not arguing, but merely expressing our sentiments.”

“Same thing. Arguing does as well as anything else to fill up the time while we wait until our turn comes to move on. ‘When a man is weary with playing his part he may be comforted by remembering that the door is open,’ one of the visibles called a philosopher says; but that doesn’t apply to Shadowland. We ghosts are not able to find the door opening into the next life. Shadowland is a vast and airy prison. Though its walls are invisible we are unable to escape.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### VARIOUS VIEWS.

“There is one thing that puzzles me,” said No. 33: “Why is it that Boston people find life so much more satisfactory than New Yorkers? Only one man in 25,000 kills himself if he lives in Boston. In New York one man in 7,200 commits suicide. Can you explain that?”

“No; suicide statistics are inexplicable. In Russia, the home of poverty and degradation, where they have but an excuse for a government, and where thousands upon thousands never have what an American would call ‘a good square meal’ from the beginning to the end of their lives, only one person in 49,000 commits suicide! While in Pennsylvania, where I used to live—and it’s a good State, too—there is a suicide in every 15,800. Three times as many!”

“That sounds as if what No. 128 has been saying is true—that folks are contrary, and the harder work it is to live the more they want to,” remarked No. 33, wearily.

“The ancients declared suicide cowardly,” continued the newcomer, who seemed happy to think he had found listeners. “The Epicureans said suicide was ‘death by the fear of death.’ Socrates declared, ‘We men are, as it were, on guard, and it does not become any one to relieve himself from his station.’ ”

“Socrates knew a thing or two if he *did* live when the world was younger. I wonder where he is now?”

Epictetus took his time to say the same thing. I rather like his way of putting it: ‘Remember that you are an actor in a play of whatever part the Master of the company pleases; if He assigns you a short part, then of a short one; if a long, then of a long one; if He chooses you should personate a poor man, or a lame man, or a magistrate, or a private person, see that you perform your character to the best of your power; since this is your business, to act well the character assigned you; but to choose it belongs to another.’ ”

“That was the old theory,” observed No. 128. “We moderns are claiming that man chooses for himself—that he has the power to rise superior to both heredity and environment.”

“Zoroaster has the whole thing in a nut-shell: ‘It is forbidden to quit a post without the permission of the commander. Life is the post of man.’ And we have all quit our posts without permission! And there is not one of us who has been here a month but would go back if he could. I see the Sailor coming with a new arrival. I’ll go and help welcome him.”

“Be thankful that you are spared the rest,” said No. 33, as the last-corner passed out of hearing. “I am always tired, but he makes me more tired—and what must it be for you shades that have been over here a year or two?”



"I thought him quite interesting," remarked the New Ghost.

"He is—at first. But that string of quotations gets monotonous at the twentieth repetition. And he always drags them in! You have heard only about half of them. You will hear these again, and the other half, too, the next time he sees you. The fact that you have not been introduced will not help you any."

"What were they doing over at the library when you came away?" inquired No. 128 of No. 33.

"Oh, the philosophers and the scientists were up in Memorial Hall holding a discussion."

"Together?"

"No; the philosophers were at one end of the hall and the scientists at the other."

"What were they talking about?"

"The philosophers were discussing vortex-rings and the fourth dimension of space, and a new atomic theory. I listened awhile to see if they think we shades are occupying the fourth dimension of space, but I didn't find out."

"What did they say about atoms? When my father was a schoolboy an atom was a hard particle of matter, so small it couldn't be divided. He used to think of them as fine shot, too little to be seen. When I studied about atoms they were nothing but centres of force, or centres of attraction. I wonder how the next generation will define an atom?"

"They were talking over there about atoms being vortex-rings, and vortex-rings seem to me to be very much like smoke—invisible smoke—but then I am not a Philosopher! Then they talked about Dalton's atomic weights and Heckert's theory. Heckert thinks that instead of there being some 65 or 70 elements, as I learned in my chemistry, there are only seven elementary substances! For aught I know the next man they mentioned would claim there was only one—or none! It was more perplexing than waves, so I left."

"What did the scientists talk about?"

"Disease germs mostly, and laboratory experiments. One has been to Washington watching Professor Gates, and another has just returned from Menlo Park. But he didn't find Edison there. He was off watching one of his machines that he has recently invented to eat up mountains. They were even less interesting than the philosophers, so I didn't stay. The very thought of Edison tires me! A man living in a body who will go thirty-six hours without a wink of sleep doesn't appreciate his privileges. I can better understand the Methodist bishop who said that when he got to heaven he should put his head in his wife's lap and rest for a thousand years!"

"That bishop had travelled the world over, and exhausted his strength working for the good of others. It is no wonder that his idea of heaven was embodied in the word rest. I knew a chair-bound invalid whose home was a noisy railroad crossing. His idea of heaven was a place of perfect silence."

"I'm willing to hand him my share of silence. As for me, I'd be thankful for the vocal organs of a rooster. The inability to make a noise is one of the most exasperating features of Shadowland I envy a small boy with a drum. If I could I'd join a brass band or run an engine—anything to make a noise! There comes the Experimenter."

"A beautiful day! I just met No. 206 and he told me there was a new arrival here."

"Yes," replied No. 128, giving the usual introduction.

"Have you seen the Sailor to-day?"

"No; he told me yesterday that he thought he would go to the coast and take passage on some battleship that is going to Cuba."

"I'd like to see him before he starts."

"Probably he has gone."

“And there is no way of reaching him?”

“No; can't even send him a message.”

“If we could use the telegraph lines and telephones of the Visibles it would be a great convenience.”

It certainly would. In an emergency we realize our helplessness. If we had a chance to try life in bodies again, we would have a better appreciation of the privileges of flesh and blood.”

“Very likely. But it seems to me that we are not making the best use of our opportunities as ghosts. There are so many things that we need to know. It may be possible for us to find a medium of communication with the Visibles, through thought-transference. The mere fact of our existence and power to think proves that thought is not a mere secretion of the brain, as some physiologists have taught. It must be a matter of vibrations.”

“It certainly seems so.”

“There are theorists who maintain that man is the creature of his imagination; that his power is limited only by his ignorance; and who insist that he is a part of the creative force, and can do what he will, as soon as he fully recognizes himself and knows his own power. If that be true, if ignorance is our only limitation, it is all that prevents us from communicating with our friends on earth, and doing a thousand other things that we all wish to do.”

“It has always seemed to me that we could make our friends understand if we only knew how,” said No. 128.

“As soon as I found myself a ghost, it seemed as if I might travel through space untrammelled. Why is it that we shades cannot go wherever we can send our thoughts? Why are we not able to follow our thought, though it be to the farthest limit of the visible universe?” asked the New Ghost, eagerly.

“Perhaps the visible universe has no limits. I find it as difficult to conceive of a limited universe as some people do to conceive of an unlimited one.”

“As to that, either conception is inconceivable. The mind of man is incapable of understanding how the universe can be either limited or unlimited”

“Trying to think of it is enough to drive a man, or a ghost either, distracted. Is there an insane asylum in Shadowland?” inquired No. 33.

“No; I suppose if there was we should all be in it. According to the well-to-do Visibles, anybody who commits suicide is crazy,” answered No. 128.

“We ought to organize ourselves into sections for the study of the various departments of science. The Professor is up in Memorial Hall now, talking the matter over with the philosophers and scientists. We could do so much more toward enlarging the boundaries of knowledge if we would get together and form some definite plan of work. It will also help to relieve the monotony of Shadowland life and give those unhappy ghosts, who sit in the dumps all day because there is nothing worth doing, an incentive to work.”

“But suppose we don't care to work?” inquired No. 33.

“If you don't care to you needn't until you do. You will get tired of doing nothing soon enough.”

“I am tired of doing nothing now; but I am more tired of work.”

“I believe I've heard of you! Are you the shade that came over because you were tired of having to get up and dress or be dressed every day?”

“Yes.”

“And you sat out there on the lighthouse and watched the waves for a week without stirring?”

“Yes.”

“How do you like Shadowland?”

“I’m tired of it. If I knew how, I’d go on and try the next world. I’d like to find a phase of existence that is not tiresome.”

“Then there is your incentive to work! You will be experimenting with the best of us soon. You were an unfortunate victim of too much money while on earth, without an idea of the corresponding duties connected with it. Never having learned the pleasure of doing something, you failed to learn—even by experience—that doing nothing is the hardest work in the universe! That leaves you entirely dependent upon your own intellect for amusement! Of course you are tired! Anybody would be! You are really working very hard. When you get tired of it and want something easier, come to me.”

“What is your plan for work?” inquired No. 128.

“We thought we would call a sort of public meeting and get all the suggestions we could. A rough outline of the work we wish to accomplish would be something like this: the inventors, the astronomers, the chemists, and the laboratories should be watched. We want the earliest news of every important discovery in the physical world. We want a committee appointed to read all the important philosophical and scientific articles that come out in the magazines; also a committee to read the noteworthy books as they appear, and report on them. Any of you who have tried to read will know about how much work that will take. It is not as if we could pick up a book and sit down and turn the leaves and read it. We must wait until we can find some of the Visibles reading it. Then we ought to make a greater effort to find all the ghosts that come over. It must be inexpressibly lonely for those we do not find. They think they are the only ghosts and that somehow there has been a catch in the machinery of the universe and they have been dropped out, or left behind, or forgotten. Then we should try all manner of experiments to see how much we can learn of the laws which govern us—or whether we are indeed superior to the law.”

“Who will appoint the committees?”

“Everybody will appoint himself. We will meet in a sort of a convention and talk over the work that needs doing, and each one will choose what he prefers to do. Our new friend here wants to climb the mountains of the moon. The lack of an atmosphere or of water will not disturb him in his present condition, and perhaps he may find a lake in some of those deep valleys. No. 201 wants to go to Mars. He is curious about the leaves and grass—wishes to know whether they really are red. They should get together and try experiments in regard to overcoming distance.”

“I gave up going to the moon when we figured out that it would take me about a thousand years to walk there!”

“It is too far to walk. If we are ever to visit our planetary neighbors we must find a swifter mode of travel than that! I believe that ignorance of the laws that govern the universe is all that prevents us from visiting our nearest neighbor, the moon, or Mars, or in fact any planet. After we have learned how to travel through our own solar system I fail to see what is to prevent us from visiting the stars.”

“Lack of time perhaps, the distances are so great.”

“We must learn to overcome time and distance. One can think of Paris as quickly as of New York, although it is farther away. We must learn to travel with the speed of thought. I will go on and tell as many of the ghosts as I can of the convention. You all help to spread the news. If it is pleasant we will meet on the lake front. If not, in Memorial Hall.”

Here for the present we will leave the ghosts, busily engaged in trying to solve their problems—which are also the problems of the race, the problems in which we all are interested.

But perhaps Shadowland may be visited again at some future time and the events occurring among the Invisibles be again chronicled.