

A LETHEAN APOCALYPSE.

BY W. H. G.

I HAVE been under fire more than once during the late war and in "scraps" with the Apaches and Sioux since then. I had once suffered a dislocation at the right shoulder joint by dismounting too hastily from a kicking broncho; and in El Paso I inadvertently stopped a revolver bullet that was intended for a less peaceful man. But those incidents occurred years ago when I was young and lusty, "full of red blood and blue veins" and willing to take my chances on almost anything.

Then I could ride day in and day out with any trooper in the command and had no fear of apoplexy, heart failure, or loss of appetite. Now I was a good way on the wrong side of fifty; my chest measure was only forty inches while my waist was forty-two. Both my cheeks and my nose were a very pronounced pink; I had a manifest tendency to develop a double chin; my eyebrows were still black but my hair and mustache were more than slightly grey; my nervous system was by no means run down but I felt the cares and worries of life more than I did formerly, and was more careful about the fit of my shoes, having them made broader across the toes and particularly loose over the great toe joints. I was very intolerant of pain, and, like all physicians, disliked to take medicine; but after being on my back more than a week going through the whole gamut of agony and setting my household frantic in their efforts to give me relief, my wife took the matter in her own hands and sent for Dr. Ryeon, who came in, quite by accident *of course*, and after many leading questions and a careful examination of my anatomy, he informed me in his pleasant *degagé* manner, that I had "appendicitis" and must be operated upon *at once*.

To say that I was surprised and shocked hardly expressed my feelings. I was dumbfounded; I did not know how to take it. I

felt that it was a punishment I hadn't deserved. It was the irony of fate. I had always been careful of my diet; never in my life had I swallowed seeds of any kind. I had an excellent set of natural teeth and always chewed my food carefully, and why my *appendix vermiformis* at this late period of its career should behave in this dreadful manner was to me a mystery. Might the doctor not be mistaken? I was a surgeon myself and I well knew how possible it was for surgeons to make mistakes, and I hoped Dr. Ryeon might be mistaken in *my* case. I had known of good reliable dentists extracting the wrong teeth by mistake many times, and I once heard of a surgeon in the excitement of battle amputating the *left* leg when he should have cut off the *right*; but this was not Dr. Ryeon. I knew *him* to make but one mistake in his whole life, and that was when he married the wrong wife. Still, many physicians make that mistake; they run across some young lady patient early in their professional career who is nervous and hysterical and minister to her real and imaginary ills; the physician is young, enthusiastic, and sympathetic, the patient is morbidly grateful and dependent; they marry, and the physician is handicapped for life.

I had known Dr. Ryeon all my life; we were born in the same town and were classmates at Columbia in '57, though I had seen but little of him after the war closed and he went to Chicago to practice his profession. Our lives had drifted apart, and since I came to live in the city I had seen him only two or three times until my wife sent for him to see me professionally; and now he told me I had "appendicitis" and must be operated upon at once.

I had no especial fear of death, for my life was insured for quite as much as it was worth; my will was properly made out, signed, and witnessed, and my wife and family were amply provided for in case of my death. I did not believe in a material hell, nor a malignant human devil with such a disagreeable *rôle* as a perpetual tormentor; nor could I believe in an anthropomorphic personal deity, who balanced the debit and credit accounts of poor weak mortals every twenty-four hours and punished by inconceivable torture all their inherited weaknesses and frailties. Then too I had grown into the habit of balancing every day's accounts myself, and it seemed to me that if I could not be set down as "one of those who loved God" yet I might be classed with *Abou Ben Adhem*, for I did love my fellow man. I was rather quick-tempered, I knew, but I honestly tried to deal justly, love mercy, and walk as humbly as my rather portly figure would permit. I never coveted renown as a philanthropist, nor headed subscription lists, nor gave

alms that they might be seen of men, but I gave ungrudgingly my time, counsel, and labor, and what of my means I could spare to assist the sick and needy.

But none of those thoughts made the thought of death less unpleasant; this world was good enough for me, even if it was Chicago. I could still enjoy and digest a good dinner and a glass or two of good wine quite as much as when I was only twenty-five. My palate was not yet sated with the taste of reed-birds, canvas-backs, or terrapin, and I did not require to be instructed about the bouquet and flavor of any brand of Champagne and Burgundy. I loved to hear a good opera and could appreciate a good play, and I did not want to die. I couldn't ride with the "boys" as well as formerly, nor stay on the floor as long at the hops, nor quite "keep up with the procession" without getting "blown," but still I got a good deal of enjoyment out of life, and I could appreciate what rational enjoyment was better than I could twenty-five years ago.

Then too there was a good many people who had come to depend on my judgment in the management of their affairs; not only my wife and family and my dear little ward Allie, but old Judge Graham, Mr. Farquason, Col. Brinkerhoff, and the poor little widow Hastings. What were they all going to do in case I died under the operation, or in consequence of it? I pitied them all from the bottom of my heart, for I knew more about their affairs than any one else did, or than they did themselves. Still I pitied myself the most, for they could find some one else to help them bear their burthens in case I went "over to the majority"; but no one can help a patient stand the shock and pain and danger of a severe surgical operation when the injury is sudden and the operation has to be done at once. When an operation is foreseen and time allows, the body in a measure can be prepared for it by soothing and toning up the nervous system and placing the heart, blood, and secretory organs in a healthy condition. But there was no time for preparation in my case, it seemed, nor even to do any of the many things I had intended to do when I was taken sick. My article on "Chemical Affinity as a Vital Force" must be revised before it was sent to the publisher; I had not told my assistant how to use the *cerebrin* in the case of Mrs. Caruther's little epileptic boy, and my lecture on "The Hygiene of Dwellings" was to be delivered before The Sorosis the next Saturday. I had a thousand things to do that I had postponed "till a more convenient season," and I really felt that I had no time to be sick.

Thus my mind maundered on while Dr. Ryeon sat in the arm-

chair at my bedside with his fingers on my pulse and his thermometer under my tongue ; until another great wave of pain commenced in my right side and surged over me, convulsing my whole being in such a delirium of agony that I scarcely felt the prick of the needle in my arm where the doctor had injected morphine. I was, of course, often forced to give morphine to my patients and knew its effects upon others thoroughly well, but I had rarely taken it myself, and the few times I *had* taken it it acted peculiarly ; but I had no time to discuss the matter with Dr. Ryeon, for I was in such torture that I would have taken anything for relief, and before I could tell him anything about its action upon me every quivering nerve-fibril that but an instant before had pierced like a red-hot stiletto through my body eased off gradually into a not unpleasant tingling that vibrated from the ends of my fingers and toes clear up to the tips of my ears. In a nebulous mist, like a blurred photograph, I saw the anxious face of my wife as she bent over to wipe the perspiration from my hands and brow ; and like the far-off sound of a voice remembered from a dream, I heard the Doctor say : " There is no doubt whatever, madam, about the diagnosis, and we have no time to lose ; the operation must be performed this afternoon." Then a delicious languor crept over me ; sounds became confused and indistinct and soon ceased entirely ; external objects appeared as dim silhouettes, then faded away. There was no more anxiety, nor care, nor pain ; nor any emotion, nor sensation ; the sensorium was benumbed, dead. The spirit was freed from the cares and trammels of the body with its earthly needs and longings and soared into the realms of space, where there seemed no fixed point, nor bound, nor direction, nor time ; nothing but illimitable infinite space. I was conscious of neither limbs nor wings nor other means of motion ; but volition became motion, and I soared through the abyss profound, at will, as I listed. As my spirit floated on, its sight became quickened, and at the farthest verge of vision I could see a deep blue, steely dome, seemingly of condensed ether, surrounding and marking off the limitation of space above, below, and on all sides around. Set in the blue vault, whichever way I turned my eyes, were myriads of shining points that waxed and waned in brilliance, from the tiniest phosphorescent glimmer of the glow-worm to the fullest glories of the noonday sun, and as each point gained in splendor and effulgence it shot out coronal coruscations dyed in richest rainbow hues, that sped on in wavy motion until the undulations from one point impinged upon first one and then another, and then mixed and

blended in every shade of color like the ever-varying tints shown by some vast stereopticon.

Anon at these luminous vortices appeared whorls of beautifully colored flowers of every shape and hue, and some of even more wondrous forms and colors than mortal eye had ever seen. At one point stately roses with brilliant diaphanous petals of adularia, garnet, or ruby, and stems and leaves of malachite and emerald; at others rosettes of dainty marguerites in topaz, chalcedony, and pearl, or gaudily colored tulips, dahlias, or peonies, with petals and leaves of precious gems, mingled in grand bouquets and garlands with violets, Eschscholtzias, carnations, and lilies; all pregnant with resplendent colors, as if their glowing petals had absorbed the richest tints of the rainbow, or the gorgeous hues of the dying sun. With the genesis of these wondrous light-born flowers, I perceived a subtle perfume: at first faint and evanescent, like the scent of some far-off field of clover blossoms borne on the fitful breeze; then gaining substance and strength, every flower breathed out its own fragrance, and I could detect the odor of roses, violets geraniums, lilies, and carnations, and myriads of others unknown to me; each odor separate and distinct, yet so sweetly blended as to unite into one ravishing harmony of perfume.

Scarcely had my spiritual sense grown accustomed to these marvellous revelations of light and odor, when I also perceived that the vast abyss was instinct with a divine harmony, as if hundreds of thousands of voices and instruments had united into one gigantic choir attuned to hymn the music of the spheres. Not only could I detect the tones of all the instruments I had ever seen or heard before, but many others that were the especial gifts of the gods to man in the infancy of the world. The golden notes of Orpheus's lyre rose and fell with the same ravishing sweetness that had charmed to sleep hell's wrathful sentinel, and lured Eurydice back from the nether world; then clear and silvery as the sorrowing voice of Syrinx could be heard the wailing of Pan's pipe and the soothing dulcet tones of Æolus's harp, as if its strings were touched by the gentle fingers of Zephyrus; while solemn and majestic as the awful roar of some great cataract deep organ tones joined in to swell the divine harmony. No articulate word was uttered, human language was inadequate to convey through the bodily ear the idea of such celestial music, but as the mighty chorus swelled and vibrated and resounded throughout the vast concave, there was borne to my spirit the thought of Rook's beautiful motet,

“Rest! Spirit, rest!”

And then as the divine chorus lapsed into musical silence, the gorgeous light-flowers and their wondrous perfume faded away, and every atom and attribute of my being sank into rest; physiological, psychical; perfect rest of body, mind, and spirit. There was no sensation nor emotion; not a quiver nor tremor of a muscle or a nerve-fibril; the ruddy blood no longer bounded through its accustomed courses, the life-giving air had ceased to swell the heaving chest, the throbbing heart was at rest, and all the body was as still and motionless and inanimate as if it were an insensate form of clay into whose nostrils never had been breathed the quickening breath of life.

How long this "death in life" lasted I could not count nor reckon; it might have been but an instant; it may have been, for aught I know, many hours. Feebly and slowly the heart once more resumed its labors, and gradually life crept back into parts of the brain, but there was not yet rational self-consciousness with a recognition of personal identity and surroundings. There was still no physical pain but neither was there power to move nor will; the motor tracts seemed to be benumbed by the opiate, while the ideational centres were stimulated into a wild delirium, in which long dead memories, scenes, and ideas, arose in the mind, lingered an instant, then faded away, to be followed by others in never-ending succession, but in no more logical sequence or with no more dependence one upon another, than some fantastic association of ideas or casual resemblance between the sounds of words.

First there came to me the impression of a dull, confused rumbling and roar—probably the noise of the animals and vehicles in the street—and at once memory reproduced a picture from my former life on the plains away back in '69, when our camp was nearly overrun by a herd of buffalo.

We had marched over forty miles across a dry, alkaline plain one seething day in August, and late in the afternoon went into camp at a place called "The Buffalo Holes." There was no wood to cook our suppers and the water was so foul and alkaline that not even a pack-mule would drink it. Animals and men were tired out and soon sought oblivion in sleep; but scarcely had the camp gotten quiet when we were awaked by a dull, muffled rumbling, roaring and bellowing, quickly followed by the sharp peal of the trumpet sounding "boots and saddles" and as we hastily seized our arms; we saw in the bright starlight an immense herd of buffalo making straight for the water-holes. For more than an hour we sat in our saddles firing into the dense black moving mass before their course

was turned and the thunderous noise died away in a cloud of stinging dust.

As this vision faded out it was at once replaced by a spirited painting (of Stanley's, I think) of a pack of wolves attacking a buffalo, and then I found myself repeating Byron's lines in "The Siege of Corinth":

" As the wolves that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth or tosses on high
The foremost who rush on his strength but to die ;
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent."

And then by some fantastic mental thaumaturgy the words "backward bent" reminded me of Holmes's charming little poem entitled "The Last Leaf," and I remembered :

". . . . a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.
I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here ;
But the old three-cornered hat
And the breeches and all that
Are so queer !
And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling."

Without a moment's intermission the scene in this wonderful phantasmagoria again shifted and memory recalled a visit I had made to Mammoth Cave many years before. I was accompanying a young lady from New Orleans ; and just after the door was unlocked and we were about to pass through, we espied a peculiar looking object clinging to an old rotten bough of a tree near the door ; the lady reached up and touched it to find out what it was, when to her amazement and disgust, it *mobilised* into a bat and flew away. Instantaneously all the wonders and beauties of this great *lusus naturæ* came back to me, and again I saw the groined arches and domed ceilings with their graceful pendants of stalactites, the giant's huge coffin with its petrified pall ; peered down the yawn-

ing throat of the bottomless pit ; crossed the dark and silent Styx, and once again witnessed the beautiful mimic effects of sunset and sunrise in the grand star-chamber. The lapse of time had not added to or taken away one object or point of interest ; even old "Mat"—the guide, and his dog "Brigham" were presented in memory just as I had seen them a quarter of a century before. Then I remembered that as we came back from the cave, the sun was setting over the western hill tops and the cows were coming home to be milked, and as memory recalled their clover-scented breaths and the klinge, klangle, klinge of their bells—presto!—the scene shifted again and I was attending "High Jinks" at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco and Mr. B—— was reciting for the entertainment of his fellow Bohemians :

" When klinge, klangle, klinge,
 Far down the dusky dingle,
 The cows are coming home ;
 Now sweet and clear and faint and low,
 The airy tinklings come and go,
 Like chimings from the far-off tower
 Or patterings from an April shower
 That make the daisies grow ;
 Ko-ling, ko-lang, ko-linge-linge,
 The cows come slowly home,
 And old-time friends, and twilight plays,
 And starry nights and sunny days,
 Come trooping up the misty ways,
 When the cows come home.
 With jingle, jingle, jingle,
 Soft tones that sweetly mingle.
 The cows are coming home—
 Malvine and Pearl and Florimel."

At the name *Florimel*, Bohemians and club-room dissolved into mist, and there came before me the image of a dear friend, long since dead ; she was as lovely in person and character as her sweet prototype whom Spenser has idealised in his *Faerie Queene*.

It was a gorgeous evening in May, the sun had gone to rest enwrapped in gauzy clouds of rosy fleece, and we were reclining on the ramparts of the old fort at St. Augustine waiting for the moon to rise. The wind had died out and the waters of the bay were so still that scarcely a ripple tinkled against the foot of the old coquina wall ; the fireflies had lighted their tiny lamps among the oaks and cedars, bats were flitting around the dilapidated watch tower and away to the southeast the beacon light on Anastasia Island warned the mariner of the shoals and quicksands that guarded the entrance

to the harbor. Anon the eastern sky grew brighter ; then on the watery horizon appeared a rounded line of burnished silver, and soon the full-orbed moon emerged resplendent from the watery deeps, and as her bright beams danced over the sleeping waves and glorified Florimel's fair face, she repeated almost in a whisper :

“ We watched toward the land of dreams,
The fair moon draw the murmuring main ;
A single thread of silver beams
Was made the monster's rippling chain.

“ We heard far off the siren's song :
We caught the gleam of sea-maids' hair,
The glimmering isles and rocks among :
We moved through sparkling purple air.

“ Then morning rose, and smote from far,
Her elfin harps o'er land and sea ;
And woodland belt and ocean bar
To one sweet note sighed—' Italy ! ' ”

Gladly would I have lingered in the sparkling, purple air, and been lapped to rest by syren's song and elfin harps ; but in that hurrying, weird phantasia, there was no halt nor lingering ; directing will power was in abeyance and the thoughts and images that were developed on memory's plate came without warning or warrant ; each one remaining only long enough to be recognised and appreciated, and dying in giving birth to another ; as if every separate cell of the brain was a distinct dynamic centre which only waited to make connexion with a centre of opposite polarity to discharge its quota of energy.

At the word “ Italy ” the fair moon, the murmuring main, and Florimel's dear face, vanished into nothingness—and I was standing beside a condemned murderer on a rude scaffold in the prison yard of a small town in western Texas looking down into the faces of a crowd of men who had assembled to witness his execution. He was a swart, beetle-browed Italian, lithe and muscular, with black eyes, hair, and beard, and with the same malignant expression upon his dark, cadaverous face that one sees in the face of a serpent about to strike its prey. His real name was unknown and he had been arraigned, tried, and convicted, under the *soubriquet* of “ Italy ” for brutally stabbing to the heart an inoffensive companion for no other inducement than was held out in an old pipe and bag of tobacco. I had been ordered to be present at the execution of the sentence of the law, and, in company with the Catholic Priest, Father O'Regan, followed the prisoner and sheriff upon the

scaffold, where the sheriff read him the sentence and asked him if he desired to say anything, to which he surlily replied: "No, I killee de Irishmans, you killee me, dam quick." Father O'Regan then came to him and begged him to repent of his crime and presented the crucifix, from which he turned with a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders and a sardonic grin upon his face and stepped on the trap under the fatal noose, which was adjusted around his neck, the black cap was drawn over his face, the signal was given by the sheriff, and the bolt was sprung; the body shot down to the end of the rope, then swayed back and forth two or three times in the fierce March wind, the knees were spasmodically drawn up to the body, the chest heaved convulsively, and then—all was still—the neck was broken; I placed my fingers on the pulse, the heart had ceased to beat—"Italy" had expiated his crime.

What association or connexion there could have been between the execution of the Italian murderer and the phantom that followed I can form no conjecture; but as the rude pine coffin with its dishonored clay was placed in the cart, the scaffold and its dreary surroundings faded away, and out from chaotic darkness I beheld an *eye* fixed upon me; large, calm, and beautiful, but with a weird, mysterious beauty that was neither human nor earthly. It was self-luminous, and by its phosphorescent glare I could distinguish the round, full pupil, the brown, lustrous iris, the pearly conjunctiva, the pink-tinted lids, and the black brow and lashes; yet it was not a shining, radiant luminosity that lighted up other objects, but rather a vitreous sheen like the eye of some gigantic feline seen through the thick blackness of a fathomless cavern; though in its expression there was not a suspicion of the ferocity or malignity of the feral animal; it was the passionless embodiment of judicial power, superadded to the detective vision of the all-seeing eye of the Omnipotent. Its gaze never changed nor wavered, but whichever way I turned it was still fixed upon me. I placed my hands before my face to shut out the mystic vision, but its cold, fateful stare was as irremovable as the sphinx. Then I saw that its gaze was not focussed upon my face, but *through* my face, as if it were a diaphanous mask, its piercing vision looked into my soul: and I knew that it read not only the *present*, but the *past* and *future* as well—the sins of deed, word, and thought—sins of omission as well as commission; as if my whole life—what had passed, what was still to be, and the present, was spread out as a written scroll. Laboriously I pondered upon the cause and meaning of this won-

drous vision, but neither thought nor imagination could give me a clue to its significance. My memory buried no secret crime; my acts feared no just judgment; yet I felt that I was being tried and judged and being weighed in the balance; and every moment I feared to see a phantom hand write on the wall of darkness, in letters of fire:

“*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.*”

In my distress I cried out in the words of Job:

“Let me be weighed in an even balance
That God may know mine integrity.”

And as this sorrowing plaint left my lips, the menacing eye fled away, and there came before me a parchment scroll with the following words of Bryant’s “Thanatopsis” printed in large Roman characters:

“ . . . Yet a few days and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears;
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth to be resolved to earth again;
And lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements—
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And the sluggish clod which the rude swain
Turns with his share and treads upon.”

While my eyes were still fixed upon the scroll, the words became less and less distinct, and soon between the *printed* lines appeared *written* characters; at first dim and hardly decipherable, but quickly becoming distinct enough for me to see that the scroll was an old Greek manuscript. The parchment had lost its sheen and freshness, and was sallow and crinkled with age; and the characters were in that crabbed archaic Greek, termed by palæographers—*uncial*. Slowly constructing the blurred and half-effaced characters into meaning, I discovered that the words were a part of an ancient copy of the Apocalypse where St. John the Evangelist tells the seven churches of Asia of the vision he had seen in his cave in Patmos on the Lord’s day. All I could decipher were the following verses:¹

¹Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὠ, λέγει Κύριος, ὁ θεός, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ.

Ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης, ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὑμῶν καὶ συνκοινωνὸς ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ βασιλείᾳ καὶ ὑπομονῇ ἐν Ἰησοῦ, ἐγενόμην ἐν τῇ νήσῳ τῇ καλουμένῃ Πάτμῳ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ. ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ ἤκουσα ὀπίσω μου φωνὴν μεγάλην ὡς σάλπιγγος λεγούσης Ὁ βλέπεις γράψον εἰς βιβλίον καὶ πέμψον ταῖς ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησίαις, εἰς Ἐφεσον καὶ εἰς Σμύρναν καὶ εἰς Πέργαμον καὶ εἰς Θνάτειρα καὶ εἰς Σάρδεϊς καὶ εἰς Φιλαδέφειαν καὶ εἰς Λαοδικίαν.¹

As this curious Greek palimpsest faded out, there came into mind Byron's lines :

“ The isles of Greece ! the isles of Greece !
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all except their sun is set.

“ The Scian and the Teian muse
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse ;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west,
Than your sires' ' Islands of the Blest.' ”

As the tintinnabulum of the rhyming verse fell upon my ear, the hand on the dial of time moved back more than a dozen cycles, the curtain from the past was raised, and memory again brought up a glimpse of the blue Ægean. Athens, the Piræus, the watery labyrinth through the verdure-clad “Cyclades.” The granite rock of Delos with its ancient ruins and sterile Patmos with its sacred cave all passed in quick review, and I was standing in the bell-tower of the grand old monastery of Nea-Moni on “Rocky Chios,” the (probable) birthplace and home of Homer. It was a lovely morning in December ; the soft south wind blew gently from rocky Patmos and rugged Nicaria and tossed the mimic waves in sparkles of sapphire and pearl at our feet, and tuned the palms and olives to melody and song. The bright warm sun was nearly in the zenith and not a flake of cloud marred the pure azure of the sky.

I have given the excerpt here in modern Greek characters, as it is impossible for me to reproduce the appearance of the original. In the English version these verses are translated as follows :

“8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

“9. I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

“10. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.

“11. Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last ; and What thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia ; unto Ephesus, and Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicia.

Steamers, and graceful sailing vessels, dotted the blue Archipelago in every direction ; and off Ipsera the black hull and frowning guns of a big war ship loomed up through a cloud of smoke. Brother Felix—one of the monks—showed us the rare treasures of the monastery, its relics, antique manuscripts, and costly vessels, and gave us in classic Italian the history of the house from its founding in the eleventh century down to the terrible earthquake of 1881, which caused such fearful loss of life and property on the island. Brother Felix was a Greek, old and bowed, and his gaunt emaciated frame showed that he was no stranger to vigils, penance and fasts, but when he spoke of the uprisings of 1822 and '27 and the terrible punishments the Chians had received at the hands of "the unspeakable Turk" his sunken eyes gleamed and his waxy face showed plainly that even in *his* beatified soul there was one small spot that still harbored hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

As we turned to leave the tower the bell struck the hour of noon. Brother Felix bowed his head in prayer and then—Nea-Moni, Rocky Chios, and the blue Ægean vanished, and I was in the operating-room of a hospital looking down upon an operation about to be performed. The patient was in deep lethean slumber, motionless on the wheeled table, the surgeon and his assistants, clad in linen robes, with arms bared to the elbow, stood near him, and deft-fingered nurses in snowy gowns and caps were in their appointed places. The evening sun shone brightly in through the domed skylight and high windows, and was reflected back in sparkles from the crystal vases of medicaments and polished instruments carefully arranged on the shelves and tables. As the surgeon turned to take the keen scalpel from his assistant I recognised the bald head, fearless blue eye, and kindly face of my friend, Dr. Ryeon, and, turning my eyes toward the table, I saw that the patient lying there was *myself*; still it was not my conscious self, but an *alter ego*, or rather a shell or cloak of myself, as if my sensory, perceptive and thinking being, had shirked the torturing knife and left only its material envelope upon the operating table. As I saw the keen blade part the living tissues no wounded nerve quivered, no alarm of pain smote the sensorium, no failing heart-beat told of loss of blood. To my quickened vision the integument and enveloping tissues became as transparent as glass, and through them I saw the bones, muscles, viscera, veins, arteries, and nerves. I saw the slow, rythmic actions of the lungs, and the busy throbbing of the heart as it dilated and contracted to send the blood on its life-giving mission. Even the vital processes of the brain were dis-

closed, and I saw the dormant nerve centres lying still and motionless in the power of the subtile lethean, like wearied sentinels asleep on the post of Duty. Quickly Dr. Ryeon reached the diseased "appendix" and with wondrous gentleness and skill separated the inflamed tissues from the healthy, and then with practised fingers the divided structures were again united, the dressings were applied to the wound, the patient was removed from the operating-room—and I awoke to consciousness to find the Doctor's genial face beaming upon me and his fingers on my pulse.

As soon as I was recovered sufficiently to tell Dr. Ryeon of the wonderful spectres and visions that had been conjured up in my brain by the morphine and ether, he laughingly waved his hand around my head and repeated Coleridge's lines :

" Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."