

# THE CRAFTSMAN;

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### THE GARDEN OF IREM.

BY A. T. FREED.

"The old order changeth, giving place to new."—TENNYSON.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Al Ammin, bowing his head to the stroke of the king, closed his eyes expecting never to open them more. But the expected stroke did not fall, and, looking up, he found himself surrounded by almost complete darkness, but in front of him he dimly discerned through the gloom a shadowy and awful form, in the image of pictured death. Then his arm was suddenly clutched in a vice like grip, and he felt himself descending through gloom and a damp chill air. He could not readily shape any thought in his mind, but indistinctly he wondered if the unfelt blow had not fallen, and if he were not descending to hades and the dark domain of the infernal gods. He believed in a splendid but dimly-defined Theism. He had been taught that there was one sole Governor and Ruler of the Universe supreme over all things in life. Of course he believed in inferior deities, but regarded them as the ministers or servants of the Supreme, doing his will and waiting his command. But of the dark sovereignty of the pale realms of death he had very inadequate notions. He had assisted in the imposing ceremonies of the solemn Bacchic mysteries, had been a helper in the grand drama of the passage of the Sea of Edom by Moses, his death, burial and resurrection; he had learned from Egyptian and Phœnician pilgrims to the shrine at Mesa that these ceremonies differed but little from the celebrations of their countries, the name of the hero only being changed; and he had a dim perception that though the ceremony was mainly intended to perpetuate historic facts and the memory of a real personage, there yet was involved in it a sublimer teaching, a monition to the reflecting mind that Moses was but the representative of Man, and that the mystery—substantially the same in all countries of which he had knowledge—was but a parody of the wondrous mystery played to its tragic close in the death, and, as he believed, in the apotheosis of every man who, by initiation into the arcana of divine knowledge, had prepaid himself for a higher life. But, while his views