

#### XIV

WITH the assurance that he had done all that could be done, Craddock resumed his tranquil life. He felt a conviction that he would either hear news of David, or that he would return before long.

To Godfrey St. Just he gave but a brief account of his visit to London. He resented that desertion of his friend in the hour of trial; he blamed him in a measure for what had occurred. Yet all the time his own mind was convincing him of falsifying his new beliefs.

The human *Ego* is a growing soul, and it gathers experience as it gathers life. It strives for the highest, falls, yet strives again; departs to learn its backslidings; returns to the casual body when the thirst for sentient existence again manifests itself, ascending at last to that higher plane of spiritual satisfaction where conflict ceases, and Eternal Rest begins.

These were the truths expounded to him, and in which he steeped himself with deepening zest. Nothing astonished him more than a request from Godfrey St. Just—a somewhat shamefaced request—to stay on a little longer; to hear a little more of Dharma's Lal's "theories," as he called them.

"Stay as long as you please," said Craddock heartily; "but what of your superiors; your seminary? They would certainly not approve of your dipping into such unorthodox studies; I am not sure that your Church hasn't banned and excommunicated everything appertaining to Eastern philosophies. They go too far and too deep; they prove too conclusively just where the Church stepped in to manage the religions of mankind, and how admirably she has succeeded in doing it! Confusion worse confounded is a mild way of summing up the Tragedy of Sects."

"It is not my Church yet," said Godfrey. "Only—it