

THE SPIRIT WORLD.

AN INDIAN TRADITION.

It is related by an elegant writer, once greatly admired, that there is a tradition among a certain tribe of our Indians, that one of their number once descended in a vision to the great repository of souls, as we call it, the other world; and that upon his return, he gave his friends a distinct account of every thing he saw among those regions of the dead.

He stated that after having travelled for a long space under a hollow mountain, he arrived at length on the confines of the world of spirits, but could not enter it, by reason of thick forests, made up of bushes, brambles, and pointed thorns, so perplexed and interwoven with one another, that it was impossible to find a passage through it. While he was looking about for some track or pathway that might be worn in any part of it, he saw a huge lion couched under the side of it, which kept his eye upon him in the same posture as when he watches for his prey. The Indian immediately started back, while the lion rose with a spring and leaped towards him. Being wholly destitute of all other weapons, he stooped down to take up a huge stone in his hand; but, to his infinite surprise, grasped nothing, and found the supposed stone to be only the apparition of one. If he was disappointed on this side, he was much pleased on the other, when he found the lion, which had seized his left shoulder, had no power to hurt him, and was only the ghost of the ravenous creature which it appeared to be. He no sooner got rid of his impotent enemy than he marched up to the wood, and having surveyed it for some time, endeavoured to press into one part of it that was a little thinner than the rest; when again, to his great surprise, he found the bushes made no resistance, but that he walked through briars and brambles with the same ease as through the open air; and, in short, that the whole wood was nothing else but a wood of shades.

He immediately concluded that this huge thick-
et of thorns and brakes was designed as a kind of fence or quick-set hedge to the ghosts it enclosed; and that probably their soft substances might be torn by these subtle points and prickles, which were too weak to make any impression on flesh and blood. With this thought he resolved to travel through this intricate wood; when by degrees he felt a gale of perfumes breathing upon him, that grew stronger and sweeter in proportion as he had advanced. He had not proceeded much farther, when he observed the thorns and briars to end, and give place to a thousand beautiful green trees, covered with blossoms of the finest scents and colours, that formed a wilderness of sweets, and were a kind of lining to those ragged scenes which he had before passed through.

He had no sooner got out of the wood, than he was entertained with such a landscape of flowery plains, green meadows, running streams, sunny hills, and shady vales, as were not to be represented by his own expression, nor, as he said, by the conceptions of others. This happy region was peopled with innumerable swarms of spirits, who applied themselves to exercises and diversions, according as their fancies led them. Some of them were pitching the figure of a quail; others were tossing the shadow of a ball; others were breaking the apparition of a horse; and multitudes employing themselves upon ingenious handicrafts with the souls of departed utensils. As he travelled through this delightful scene, he was very often tempted to pluck the flowers that rose every where about him in the greatest variety and profusion, having never seen many of them in his own country; but he quickly found that, though they were objects of sight, they were not liable to his touch. He at length came to the side of a great river, and being a good fisherman himself, stood upon the banks of it some time to look upon an angler that had a great many shapes of fishes, which lay floundering up and down by him.

The tradition goes on to say, that the Indian had not long stood by the fisherman when he saw on the opposite side of the river the shadow of his beloved wife, who had gone before him into the other world, after having borne him several lovely children. Her arms were stretched out toward him; floods of tears ran down her eyes; her looks, her hands, her voice, called him over to her; and, at the same time, seemed to tell him that the river was impassable. Who can describe the passion, made up of joy, sorrow, love, desire, astonishment,

that rose in the Indian upon the sight of his dear departed. He could express it by nothing but his tears, which ran like a river down his cheeks as he looked upon her. He had not stood in this posture long, before he plunged into the stream which lay before him; and finding it to be nothing but the phantom of a river, stalked on the bottom of it till he arose on the other side. At his approach, the loved spirit flew into his arms, while he himself longed to be disencumbered of that body which kept her from his embraces. After many questions and endearments, she conducted him to a bower, which day by day she had embellished with her own hands from these blooming regions, expressly for his reception. As he stood astonished at the unspeakable beauty of the habitation, she brought two of her children to him, who had died some years before, and who resided with her in the same delightful dwelling; imploring him to train up those others which were still with him, in such manner that they might hereafter all of them meet together in that happy place.

THE PROPER TREATMENT OF INFANTS.

WIDELY different is the physical state of an infant from that of an adult; the newly-formed bones of the former are soft and flexible, and may easily be made to assume any form, especially when the body is in a diseased state. This accounts for the common origin of such irregularities of forms as are not congenial, but occur at an early period of life. In proportion, therefore, to the delicacy of the infant, will be the care required in its rearing. Much has been effected in this way by constant and persevering attention; and many weakly and unpromising children have, by judicious treatment, been raised to maturity, and have passed through life in the enjoyment of a considerable share of health and vigour. A finely-formed body is favourable to the enjoyment of sound health. Every one is struck with the commanding figure, the graceful appearance of a person so formed, but few inquire into the reason why all are not so gifted. If parents would have their offspring free from personal defects, if they would have their limbs moulded into the form indicative of grace, activity and strength, they must commence their attention to them from the time of birth; and although they may not always succeed in securing for them the highest state of physical perfection, yet, they will generally be able to effect such an improvement in their constitution, and will form the basis of future health. Children should not be too early set upon their feet, but should rather be placed on their back, upon the floor, that they may exercise their limbs with freedom; the former practice is a frequent cause of malformation in the lower extremities. Especial care should be taken that the spinal column, so tender in young children, may not take a wrong direction. The manner in which a child, and especially a delicate one, is suffered to sit on the nurse's arm, should be very carefully attended to: and until it has acquired sufficient strength to keep itself erect, its back ought to receive proper support. By being suffered to sink into a crouching posture, with the head and shoulders inclining forwards, and the back projecting, a bad habit is soon contracted, which often leads to distortion of the spine. Neither is it in the arms alone, that this attention is required; the effect is not less injurious, if the child be suffered to sit upon a chair, as, when fatigued, it will naturally adopt that position which at the moment affords most ease. Here, it may not be irrelevant to notice the very common and reprehensible practice of raising a young child by its arms, in such a manner, that the sides of the chest being pressed by the hands, or rather the knuckles of the nurse, its cavity is diminished, the sternum or breast-bone pushed out, and the deformity produced in delicate children, commonly called "pigeon-breasted."—*Dr. Hare.*

FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD.—When I see withered leaves drop from the trees in the beginning of autumn, just such, thinks I, is the friendship of the world. While the sap of maintenance lasts, my friends swarm in abundance; but, in the winter of my need, they leave me naked. He is a happy man that hath a true friend in his need; but he is more truly happy that hath no need of his friend.

PERSEVERANCE.—When you set about a good work, do not rest till you have completed it.

THE TRAVELLER.

THE NESTORIANS, OR THE LOST TRIBES.

BY ASAHEL GRANT, M.D.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from the Patriarch's. Journey through the Mountains. Visit to a Koordish Chief. Scenes in the Castle. Arrival at Ooroomiah. Patriarch's Letter. Return to the Mountains. Visit to Julamerk.

INSTEAD of retracing my long and weary route, I resolved, after much deliberation, to proceed through the country of the Hakary Koords, by way of Salmas, to Ooroomiah. This would require me to visit the Koordish Chief who had put to death the unfortunate Shultz. If I could secure his confidence and favour, it would be an important acquisition in connexion with our Missionary prospects among the mountain Nestorians, and perhaps open a safe channel of communication between them and the station at Ooroomiah. In anticipation of such a visit, I had provided myself with letters from the Turkish and Persian authorities. The patriarch also kindly offered to send one of his brothers to introduce me in person. Learning that Shultz had fallen a victim to the jealousy and cupidity of the Koords, I took special care not to awaken these dominant passions of a semi-barbarous people.

My scanty scrip contained little more than medicines, and these I hoped, in any event, to be able to retain. To provide for the contingency of losing my purse, I had secured some small gold coin in the centre of a roll of blister salve. I had no other articles which I was unwilling to expose. I visited none of their mines on my route, and, though passing through a most interesting geological region, I procured scarcely a single specimen, lest the ignorant Koords should suppose I had come to spy out their land with ulterior designs, as was intimated in the case of Shultz. I was also careful to avoid his habit of noting observations in public, and I took the bearings of my compass unobserved.

With such precautionary measures as these, I made my arrangements to proceed on my way. The parting scene was truly Oriental. The patriarch presented me with a pair of scarlet shalwars, the wide trousers of the country, trimmed with silk, and one of the ancient manuscripts of his library. It was the New Testament, written on parchment seven hundred and forty years ago, in the old Estrangelo character. His favourite sister Helena furnished us with a store of provisions sufficient for a week, and sent me a pair of warm mittens, made by her own hands from the soft goat's-hair of the country.

Finally, a thousand blessings were invoked upon my head, and ardent wishes were expressed that I might return with associates, and commence among these mountains a similar work to that in which we were engaged upon the plain. Our last repast was finished, the parting embrace was given, and I set off towards the residence of Nooroolah Key, the famous chief of the independent Hakary Koords. He had removed from his castle at Julamerk, the capital, and was now living at the castle of Bash-Kalleh, nearly two days' journey from the residence of the patriarch.

A report that robbers were on the road occasioned some alarm as I pursued my way along the banks of the Zab. But no robbers made their appearance; and I passed on without molestation to the strongly-fortified castle of the chief, which was distinctly visible, long before we reached it, from the mountain spur on which it rests.

Most unexpectedly, I found the chief upon a sick-bed. He had taken a violent cold about three days before my arrival, which had brought on inflammation and fever. I gave him medicine, and bled him, and then retired to my lodgings in the town, at the foot of the mountain on which the castle was built.

In the evening the chief sent down word that he was very sick, and he desired that I should do something to relieve him immediately. I sent him word by his messenger that he must have patience, and wait the effects of the medicines I had given him. About midnight the messenger came again, saying that the chief was still very ill, and wished to see me. I obeyed the call promptly, following the long winding pathway that led up to the castle. The sentinels upon the ramparts were sounding the watch-cry in the rough notes