CRITICISMS AND DISCUSSIONS.

REFLECTIONS ON IMMORTALITY.

CHAPTER XI OF HAECKEL'S "THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE."

"If a man die, shall he live again?" Job, xiv, 14.

A summer night; an open casement, and near by a candle brightly burning, in whose rays a student ponders over volumes of ancient lore.

"I am so beautiful," says the candle-flame; "I drive away the thick gloom and give light and joy to this lone student in his profound studies. Surely I must live forevermore! What rapture, when freed from this gross candlestick, to soar through the realms of space—transformed, immortal!"

Suddenly, through the casement, came a breath of that summer night, and the bright flame was outblown: student, apartment—all wrapped in darkness!

But hark! what weird music on the rising breeze? Ah, the harp, erstwhile silent, has awakened to Æolian strains, and the night is beautiful with melody; while the swelling blast arouses ever louder, wilder and more exultant minstrelsy:

"Harp of the zephyr, whose least wave o'er
Thy tender strings stealing, is felt by thee—
Harp of the whirlwind, whose fearfullest roar
Can arouse thee to naught but harmony."

"Oh," exclaims the wind-harp's voice, "my music, so fitted to move, to thrill and exalt the soul, can never die. When freed from these clogs of wood and iron I shall fly away, forever rejoicing in aspiring song!"

Meantime increased the gale in strength and fury; when, crash! fell casement-walls, crushing harp and harpstrings, and their triumphant notes—where are they?

And now night and storm have passed. The sun, rising into the cloudless blue, lights up a wide landscape, sloping from mountainside, in hills, and vales, and woodlands, and silvery streams—away to the sea, far-gleaming on the horizon's verge; a landscape all glittering with jewels resting motionless on grassblade and petal, or pendant from leaf and plummy tree-top.

Such calm! Such glory of morn, of earth and sky! Stooping to examine minutely a dewdrop, one of the countless millions around me, I hear it say: "Behold, skeptic and materialist, this graceful form! a sphere of light—clear, undimmed by aught of soil or stain, reflecting the infinite heavens, imaging yonder sun—think you that such wondrous and illimitable powers were conferred only for an hour, a day, or a year? Ah, no; these gifts cannot die. I shall live forevermore!"

But soon the sun has risen midway up the eastern sky; a whiff of air has stirred herbage and foliage; the myriads of dewdrops—tiny ambitious children of the swift tempest—where, O, where are they? Exhaled in the fervid sunbeams, shaken upon the ground, mingled with rivulet and river—and they hastening to mingle with that far-gleaming sea!

C. W. KENDALL.

MT. RAINIER, MARYLAND.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE AFTER DEATH.

WITH REFERENCE TO MR. C. W. KENDALL'S "REFLECTIONS ON IMMORTALITY."

If a light shines in the night and is blown out, shall it ever be lit again or shall it remain extinguished forever? Most assuredly it may be lit again, and certainly it will be if ever it be needed. But the question arises, Would a light lit in the second watch of the night be the same as the light that burned during the first watch? Such was the question which the Buddhist sage Nagasena proposed about 2000 years ago to the Greek King Meleander, called by the Indian people Milindo, as recorded in the Buddhist book, *Milindapañño*. And the answer was that in a certain sense the light of the second watch is, and in another sense it is not, the same light. It is the same in kind but it is different, as it burns at another hour and is feeding on other material though of the same kind.

The question is asked for the sake of solving the vexed problem