

**THE LORDS OF THE  
GHOSTLAND; A  
HISTORY OF THE IDEAL**

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The lords of the ghostland; a history of the ideal by Edgar Saltus

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**EDGAR SALTUS**

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HISTORY OF THE IDEAL**



**THE LORDS  
OF THE GHOSTLAND**

*BY MR. SALTUS*

HISTORIA AMORIS  
IMPERIAL PURPLE  
MARY MAGDALEN  
THE POMPS OF SATAN  
THE PERFUME OF EROS  
VANITY SQUARE

THE LORDS  
OF THE GHOSTLAND  
*A History of the Ideal*

By  
EDGAR SALTUS

“Errons, les doigts unis, dans  
l'Alhambra du songe.”

RENÉE VIVIEN



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MCMVII

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## THE LORDS OF THE GHOSTLAND

### I

#### BRAHMA

**T**HE ideal is the essence of poetry. In the virginal innocence of the world, poetry was a term that meant discourse of the gods. A world grown grey has learned to regard the gods as diseases of language. Conceived, it may be, in fevers of fancy, perhaps, originally, they were but deified words. Yet, it is as children of beauty and of dream that they remain.

“Mortal has made the immortal,” the *Rig-Veda* explicitly declares. The making was surely slow. In tracing the genealogy of the divine, it has been

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found that its root was fear. The root, dispersed by light, ultimately dissolved. But, meanwhile, it founded religion, which, revealed in storm and panic, for prophets had ignorance and dread. The gods were not then. There were demons only, more exactly there were diabolized expressions invented to denominate natural phenomena and whatever else perturbed. It was in the evolution of the demoniac that the divine appeared. Through one of time's unmeasurable gaps there floated the idea that perhaps the phenomena that alarmed were but the unconscious agents of superior minds. At the suggestion, irresistibly a dramatization of nature began in which the gods were born, swarms of them, nebulous, wayward, uncertain, that, through further gaps, became concrete, became occasionally reducible to two great divinities,