

# AUTOMATIC SPEAKING AND WRITING:—A STUDY

BY C

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“Do ye know our Voices  
Chanting down the Golden?  
Do ye guess our Choice is  
Being un beholden,  
To be harkened by you yet again?”

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING



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# Automatic Speaking and Writing:—A Study.

## CHAPTER I.

### AUTOMATIC SPEAKING AND WRITING.

WE propose to start from the assumption that Automatic Speaking and Writing are ascertained facts. That is to say, that under certain circumstances, the human mouth will speak, and the human hand will write, without any conscious exercise of will power. By far the greater part of what is thus spoken and written has manifestly an intelligent source. The first great problem to be solved is—Who, or what, is the intelligence at the back of the phenomena? No one who has made even a superficial study of the subject will be disposed to question the fairness of the above statement of the case.

Among the great variety of phenomena broadly classed as psychical, there is no other that appears to be so easily elicited as that of automatic writing. It would be rare to find a group of five or six persons in which a moderate amount of patience and perseverance would not develop the "faculty" or "gift" in one or more. Hence it affords great facility for study. The simplest plan is for a person to take a pencil and a sheet of paper, and sit down as if going to write a letter, but to sit passively, and see whether the hand begins to move, apparently of itself. The most frequent experience is that illegible scribbles, or endless convolutions, are made, often with considerable energy. It is as if a new force was trying to control the hand. After a few trials, definite letters, words and sentences are frequently evolved out of the chaos. A commencement is often facilitated by the hand of another person being gently laid on the hand of the person holding the pencil. Planchette, and various other mechanical contrivances, are merely

means and devices for development, and possess no virtue in themselves. The present writer has seen far more interesting results from the use of the pencil alone than from any of these helps. The automatic writer who has once fairly started is generally soon convinced that his own unaided normal intelligence is not sufficient to explain all that flows from his hand. Though whether the intelligence springs from some hidden and unsuspected source in his own being, or whether its origin must be looked for outside, is a question which may remain unanswered for many a long day.

Automatic writing, when it can be practised with facility, is a very fascinating pursuit. In this direction some danger lies. In every fascinating pursuit there is the danger of practice being carried to excess, and of time and attention being absorbed which ought to be devoted to other matters. The well-balanced mind must always be on the watch for this, in regard to a variety of studies and recreations. But there is a further and special danger in automatic writing, and here a word of warning is necessary. It is exceedingly common for automatic writing to take the form of messages and communications from deceased relatives and friends, signed with the names of the professed communicators. The question whether such messages are what they profess to be is not now under consideration. But if the automatist believes them to be so, and if, under the influence of such belief, he allows them to obtain an influence over him, a situation is produced which may lead to serious results. Even granting that such messages emanate from their professed source, their intrinsic value is still another question. An almost irresistible impulse arises to invest what is said or advised with authority. Whereas a great and gratuitous assumption is involved in concluding that the advice given is necessarily sound, and ought to be implicitly followed. Judgment should be as much exercised as in receiving advice from any ordinary friend or relative. We would say plainly, that if the automatist finds himself getting to look upon the messages as being in any sense infallibly inspired, he is in a dangerous position, and his only safe course is to give up the practice of automatic writing, at all events for a time. In one or two recent books a grossly exaggerated view of the danger attendant on investigations of this kind has been put forward. To counteract such, the two following opinions are quoted. The first is from Mr. F. W. H. Myers, and the second is from an automatic, or, as the spiritualists would say, a "trance" speaker of much experience.

During twenty-seven years I have personally observed at least fifty cases where there was every reason to suppose that the writing was genuinely automatic. . . . This number is sufficient to enable me to generalise as to the effects of this practice on healthy persons, rather less inadequately than writers who generalise from mere hearsay, or from observations of hospital patients. In two cases, I think that the habit of automatic writing (carried on in spite of my warning) by persons over whom I had no influence, may have done some little harm owing to the obstinate belief of the writers that the obvious trash which they wrote was necessarily true and authoritative. In the remaining cases no apparent harm was done ; nor, so far as I know, was there any ill-health or disturbance in connection with the practice. Several of the writers were persons both physically and mentally above the average level. . . . So far as my experience goes, I do not see that planchette-writing has any connection with disease of mind or body, or any tendency to evil of any kind, except in a few cases of great crudity—which it is to be hoped—is now becoming somewhat less common.\*

The other writer says :—

My advice has been sought regarding a sensitive, who has developed as an automatic writer, and has become so absorbed in the exercise of her powers that she seems to think of hardly anything else. Ordinary duties are performed in a perfunctory and absent-minded way, and little interest is shown in other people, or the affairs of daily life. Naturally her friends are becoming anxious. . . . If I could speak to the lady I should probably say to her :—

You are acting unwisely in devoting so much time and thought to your writing, and your spirit-friends must be either thoughtless or indifferent, or unaware of the effect of their influence upon you. In any case it is your duty to others as well as to yourself to act more discreetly and temperately, and not to shut yourself off from *this* world, and your friends here, as you are doing. . . . In future, more definite, regular, and limited periods of time for the seances must be agreed upon. Except at such times, there must be no writing. . . . Let your intercourse with your friends "over there" be a series of happy interludes in the doings of this life, and do not seek to make it continuous. . . . This is God's world as much as the next. . . . He calls us to service. . . . Use your mediumship temperately, and it will bless you. Further developments will come as the result of conserving your energies, and working understandingly and wisely. Something of the sweeter spiritual life will glorify this world, and round out your spirit in joy, so that you will not take less but more—because deeper and truer—interest in everything and everybody here. Life will then be full of delight, for you will be strengthened to fulfil its duties by ministering spirits who seek to help you to be "faithful over a few things" here and now, that they may welcome you into the fuller life of usefulness in the beyond.†

\* "Human Personality," Vol ii. pp. 118 and 423.

† *Light*, July 16th, 1904. (110 St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.)

The views expressed in these sentences may be useful in other cases than that which called them forth.

A large proportion of the communications given by automatic speaking and writing cannot be considered to possess any intrinsic value. This is not to be wondered at from any point of view. A large proportion of what is spoken and written in an ordinary normal manner is equally devoid of value. The interest of communications of a different character is not diminished in either case.

We shall proceed to consider the communications by means of automatic speaking and writing which seem deserving of study, in three Groups :—

(1)—Those in which definite facts are stated, or in which information is conveyed, unknown by any normal means to the automatist.

(2)—Those in which the intelligence claims to give evidence of its identity with a deceased person.

(3)—Those as to which the principal interest consists in the character of the communications.

Cases belonging to Group I will be familiar to nearly all who have given any attention to automatic speaking and writing. A large amount of evidence has demonstrated that definite facts have been stated, and that knowledge has been conveyed, which were unknown to the speaker or writer. The explanation may be the possession of abnormal power by the "medium"—the capacity to receive telepathic messages from other embodied intelligences, for instance; or, as is generally alleged in the communications themselves, it may be that they really are messages from disembodied intelligences. At any rate, the facts are proved. We therefore devote a small amount of space only to Group I.

We also hold it to be demonstrated, though by a much smaller amount of evidence, that in some cases the intelligence is that of the disembodied individual which it professes to be. But the amount of evidence in support of so momentous a conclusion needs multiplying many times over. A larger amount of space seems therefore demanded for Group II.

But little attention of a critical character, either literary or scientific, has been given to communications comprised in Group III. If, however, we are justified in believing that the genuineness of cases belonging to Groups I and II is established on reasonable grounds, the interest attaching to communications

usually dismissed in a summary manner as "non-evidential," is greatly enhanced. Much more than this. The intrinsic interest of Group III is vastly superior to that of Groups I and II. Facts belonging to mundane affairs are essentially of trivial importance. It is also of secondary importance to be assured that A, B, and C, whom we knew in mortal life, are communicating with us. From the standpoint of this present life only, it may be regarded as of vast importance. But from the standpoint of a different life to this, it is conceivable that it may seem a small matter whether it is possible or not to communicate with any particular person still living for a brief space of time in a material body. Wisdom and Philosophy belong to a far higher kingdom than any mere knowledge of facts or personalities. It is claimed that truths belonging to that higher kingdom are imparted in some of the "non-evidential" communications from the Unseen.

When we speak of the "character" of communications, another difficulty confronts us. On what are we to base our estimate of character? The difficulty is, however, not really a new one. No standard exists by which the writings of such men as Carlyle or Ruskin, or any of the mystical poets, can be judged. The position accorded to their work depends upon the degree in which their "communications" affect the souls, or the aspirations, or the inmost feelings of their contemporaries. In the same way there is no standard by which the character or value of such communications as we are now considering can be judged. In both cases, what appeals in a high degree to one mind, excites no emotion in another mind equally honest and sincere in the pursuit of truth.

Automatic writing possesses some advantages superior to those of any other class of psychical phenomena. It can be practised by a large proportion of intelligent persons. It can be produced alone or in association with congenial friends. It requires no elaborate apparatus, or arrangements, or set seances. One thing is clear. The automatic writer frequently finds himself in the presence of an intelligence which he feels compelled to recognize as superior to his own normal intelligence. Whether his studies lead him to the conclusion that the intelligence manifested is that of beings external to himself, or that it resides, in an undeveloped or latent form, in the unknown depths of his own constitution, the problem is one of extreme interest. In either case he should look upon himself as the privileged possessor of a faculty unshared by many of his fellow-men, which should be devoted to the acquisition of knowledge and the pursuit of truth, and be highly cherished.

## CHAPTER II.

COMMUNICATIONS IN WHICH DEFINITE FACTS ARE STATED, OR IN WHICH INFORMATION IS CONVEYED UNKNOWN BY ANY NORMAL MEANS TO THE SPEAKER OR WRITER.

“**W**HERE the message written fails to convey any facts which demonstrably are not known to the writer, and never have been known to him, there is no need to assume that any intelligence but his own has been concerned in the Message . . . There is really no line which can consistently be laid down beforehand as demarcating self-inspired from extraneously inspired messages, except the presence in such messages of definite pieces of information, such as in a Court of Justice it would be considered possible to prove that the writer or speaker had never possessed.”\* This clearly expressed view is from the opening paragraph of Mr. Myers’ second article on Automatic Writing.

In the two previous volumes of this series several cases are described where information is given by means of speaking and writing, some which it is difficult to explain without admitting the presence of an intelligence other than that of the persons concerned.† A large number of similar cases, supported by good evidence, will be found scattered through Psychical and Spiritualistic literature. Instead of quoting any at length, we will content ourselves with giving the general nature of, and references to, a few cases which originally appeared in the publications of the S.P.R.,

\* Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. III., pp. 1, 2.

† Society for Psychical Research (Vol. I. of this Series). Remarks on Automatic Speaking and Writing, pp. 32-35—“G.P.” as controlling Mrs. Piper, p. 50—Dr. Van Eeden’s friend controlling Mrs. Thompson, p. 51—“Blanche Abercromby” controlling Mr. Stainton Moses, p. 52. Twenty Years of Psychical Research (Vol. II. of this Series)—Experiences of Miss L. D. Summerbell—of the Rev. H. P. Newnham—of Lady Mabel Howard—of Miss Dorothy E. Howard—of Sir Redvers Buller, K.C.B.—and of Professor Moutonmier with Mrs. Thompson, pp. 41-46.

the evidential value of which has received the additional endorsement of being included by Mr. Myers in "Human Personality" :—

MISS A.'S EXPERIENCES.—Miss A.'s experiences in automatic writing extend over a number of years, and include "thoughts in the minds of persons present," facts relating to illness and "medical advice which has often been successful, though she is ignorant of medicine, and often does not know the names either of diseases or drugs mentioned." Miss A.'s experiences, which embrace a very wide range, are vouched for by the Countess of Radnor and others.—*Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix., pp. 73-92.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., pp. 447-457.

MR. HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD.—A planchette communication from a missionary who had been "dead 143 years." This belongs as much to our Group II as to Group I.—*Journal*, S.P.R., Vol. iv., p. 319.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., pp. 457-8.

SARA A. UNDERWOOD.—Remarkable and varied experiences of planchette writing described by Mr. and Mrs. Underwood.—*The Arena*, August, 1891.—*Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix., p. 107.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., pp. 461-6.

A CASE FROM *The Holy Truth* by HUGH JUNOR BROWNE.—The author's daughter, aged eleven, "has frequently been influenced to write messages to strangers from their spirit friends, giving them particulars about things of which she could not possibly know anything."—*Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix., pp. 124-127.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., pp. 482-4.

A CASE SENT BY DR. R. HODGSON.—Remarkable trance writing by Miss A., a young lady.—*Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix., pp. 67-8.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., p. 445.

A CASE FROM DR. ERMACORA.—"Automatic writing informed us of facts entirely unknown to our ordinary consciousness."—*Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix., pp. 68-70.—*Human Personality*, Vol. ii., 446-7.

The following hitherto unpublished case will conclude this Chapter :

SOME INCIDENTS IN A BUSINESS TRANSACTION.—Many years ago the writer and his wife paid a visit to Miss Lottie Fowler, then holding seances as a professional medium in London. It was the first time either had met her, and the visit was not pre-arranged. Miss Fowler soon went into the trance condition, and presently her "control" began to talk. She first spoke about a relative, a lady, who had recently died under an operation, leaving several young children. Two of these in particular were mentioned correctly by name, and appropriate messages, as from the mother, were added. After referring to some other matters, and mentioning details unknown to the sitters, but which were afterwards found to be correct, Miss Fowler went off to the private business affairs of the

writer, respecting which it is absolutely certain she could have known nothing.

The writer was just then, in conjunction with three or four friends, engaged in the purchase of a piece of freehold property. Terms had been agreed upon, a deposit had been paid, and it had been arranged for the purchase to be completed at Michaelmas, in three months time. Miss Fowler began talking about "buying a piece of land" in this style:—"It will not answer if one man has anything to do with it," plainly indicating which one of the group of friends she meant, but without giving any name. "He is a snake man." This was repeated several times with emphasis. "You will not get it at Michaelmas." "You will not meet your engagements. Perhaps about Christmas you will get it."

No action could be taken, for there was nothing to act upon. The writer said nothing to anyone. Time went on. Owing to lawyers' delays and other circumstances, Michaelmas came and the transaction was not completed, but went dragging on in the succeeding weeks. Then a strange thing happened. One of the party, whose suspicions had been aroused in quite a different way, and who knew nothing of the seance, went to the man who had been indicated, and boldly accused him of having arranged with the vendor for a private commission to a considerable amount on the transaction. He was unable to deny it. The result was that the purchase was made for the sum agreed upon, less the amount of the commission, and the business was finally completed the day before Christmas Day.

## CHAPTER III.

### COMMUNICATIONS IN WHICH THE INTELLIGENCE CLAIMS TO GIVE EVIDENCE OF ITS IDENTITY WITH A DECEASED PERSON.

**I**N a large proportion of Automatic Speaking and Writing the Intelligence asserts itself to be the surviving personality of some friend or relative of the persons present, or else gives the name of some literary or historical character, or of some unknown person said to be deceased. In the majority of cases no evidence is adduced in support of such assertions. But apart from all such cases, a very considerable number remain, as to which evidence is forthcoming, of a kind which the student in pursuit of truth cannot afford to ignore or lightly dismiss. What may be called the moral evidence which carries conviction to the minds of relatives and friends, as to the source from which many messages come, lies entirely outside the scope of this enquiry. We are here concerned only with the evidence of facts, so far as we are able to ascertain them. Our study of the subject is confined to what may be called a higher branch of Natural History, extending the meaning of the phrase beyond its usual limits. The question is, as Professor J. H. Hyslop expresses it,—Is there evidence of a “unity of the stream of consciousness” between the intelligence as it was known “here,” and the intelligence as it professes to manifest “there”?

We cannot do more than merely enumerate four cases which have already claimed attention:—Abraham Florentine, “George Pelham,” Dr. Van Eeden’s friend, and “Blanche Abercromby.”\* The curious circumstances attending the production of writing very similar to that of Professor H. Sidgwick, and the

\* See Vol. I of this Series—“The Society for Psychical Research,” pp. 48-53. The references to the four cases in the *Proceedings* of the Society are:—Abraham Florentine, Vol. xi., pp. 82-85; “George Pelham,” Vol. xiii., p. 330 and pp. 405-6; Dr. Van Eeden’s friend, Vol. xvii., pp. 77, 78, 82, and 83, 84; “Blanche Abercromby,” Vol. xi., pp. 76-99.

effect on the minds of some of his friends and relatives, are very striking.\* But the evidence of identity is not at all on a level with that furnished by the other four cases. We now proceed to new matter.

#### MR. J. J. MORSE AND THE "STRANGERS."

We turn first to a long series of cases claiming to afford the evidence we are seeking. Most of our readers will be acquainted with the name of J. J. Morse—"Trance Medium," in the language of the Spiritualists—"Automatic Speaker," in the language of Psychological Researchers. A brief sketch of his very remarkable career was given in the first volume of this series.† Within the last few months, shortly after his return from a two years' lecturing tour round the world, he has accepted the editorship of the "Banner of Light," Boston, U.S.A. For some years, commencing in 1870, he held a large number of seances in London. On these occasions he was usually "controlled" by two Intelligences who gave themselves the names of "Tien-Sien-Tie" (a Chinese Philosopher) and "The Strolling Player." In addition to two addresses, a special feature of the evenings was generally the introduction of some "stranger," who gave name and address, some biographical particulars, both before and after death, and perhaps a message to friends. Notes were made at the time, and correspondents and friends were asked to obtain verification or otherwise. These cases bear no resemblance to the "clairvoyant" descriptions now so frequently given at meetings and seances. Still less do they bear any resemblance to Mrs. Piper's experiences. The only published reports of them are scattered through several volumes of "The Medium and Daybreak." That periodical has long ceased to exist. Complete sets of it are scarce, and it is hardly known to the present generation. The records of these cases are thus practically unpublished and inaccessible. In the opinion of the writer they form an absolutely unique series, the interest of which has been strangely overlooked. There appears to be no reference to them in recent spiritualistic or in psychological literature.

One objection raised at the time, and it will be the first thought that will arise in some minds now, was this. How do we know that Mr. Morse did not privately make himself acquainted with the facts of the cases beforehand, and then pass them off on the audience as

\* Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. xviii., pp. 236-7.

† The Society for Psychical Research, pp. 34-5.

“spirit-communications?” The first answer to this is, Mr. Morse was at that time intimately associated with Mr. James Burns in his printing and publishing business. It is inconceivable that such a scheme could have been carried out without Mr. Burns’ co-operation. The present writer was well acquainted personally with both Mr. Burns and Mr. Morse, and attended some of these seances. He feels confident that no intelligent person who was acquainted with the circumstances would seriously entertain, as a valid explanation, that Mr. Burns and Mr. Morse were the concoctors of a complicated conspiracy to deceive the public, involving a large amount of cautiously-conducted correspondence. Not an atom of evidence justifying the suspicion of such a conspiracy was ever brought forward. Mr. James Burns was a peculiar man, but no one ever doubted his honest and enthusiastic devotion to the cause of Spiritualism, and Mr. Morse is one of the very few “mediums” against whom there has never been either a just or unjust accusation of any sort of unfairness. Again, and we think this consideration is entitled to some weight, if an elaborate system of deception had been planned, intended to gain popularity, much more pains would have been taken to obtain confirmations, and to make such confirmations prominent. As it is, more than half the cases are not again referred to, although Mr. Burns incidentally remarks that nearly all were verified. Also many of the confirmations are so inconspicuously printed that they may easily be overlooked, especially as the periodical is unprovided with an Index. The very discrepancies which, in some cases, enquiry brings to light, may even be regarded as in favour of genuineness. They are such as would be more difficult to account for, on the theory of deception. Fraud, as an explanation, may be regarded as untenable.

Few of the “strangers,” who number altogether nearly one hundred, are public characters, either professional or literary. The great majority represent themselves as ordinary persons, belonging to the middle or working classes, with no claim to distinction. Another feature is that, with few exceptions, they appear to have been personally unknown to and unconnected with Mr. Burns and Mr. Morse, or with those present at the seances. They do not purport to be friends of the sitters to whom the particulars communicated would be known. This entirely separates these cases from the recent illustrations of “clairvoyance” to which we have

referred. The explanation, Telepathy from the living, is therefore, entirely inapplicable.

The following selections from the statements of these alleged "strangers," and from the confirmatory evidence, give a fair idea of the whole series. For brevity's sake "The Medium and Day-break" is referred to as "The M. and D."

JOHN BEST.—The control spoke through the medium in a low, faltering, gentle voice. He said :—"This is the first time I have controlled a medium. I have nothing new to say, but would state that the scene which presented itself to me as I entered spirit-life was grander than I had conceived of. I come to add my testimony to the truth of spiritualism. I heard little of it while in the flesh ; and though I did not like it outwardly, yet inwardly I liked it. I died the second week of February in this year. My name—John Best, Chriselton Lodge, Chester." The reporter had written the name of the Lodge "Crystallon," when the medium felt his right arm and hand so severely cramped that he could not move them. He motioned for a pencil, which was placed between his contracted and rigid fingers, when he wrote out automatically—"Chriselton Lodge, Chester."—*The M. and D.*, 15, iv., 1870.

VERIFICATION.—The *Cheshire Observer* quotes the above message and says :—"Mr. Best did not die in the second week in February, but in the fourth ; the name of his residence is spelt 'Christleton.'" With these exceptions the spirit's account is quite correct.—*The M. and D.*, 6, v., 1870.

"A Gentleman in Chester" writes :—"The statements about the gentleman you name are very nearly but not perfectly correct as reported in *The Medium* of April 15. He died suddenly on the night of the 22nd or 23rd of February at Christleton Lodge, Chester. His way of speaking was as described, 'hesitating and gentle.'"—*The M. and D.*, 13, v., 1870.

HANNAH REEVES.—On July 8th, 1870, a control who gave name and address, Hannah Reeves, Hayden Farm, near Swindon, Wilts, made rather a long communication describing her feelings at the time of death and after ; how her body grew weak, and her powers of thought intensified. She became unconscious and felt as if floating away somewhere. When she came to herself she found herself in a strange country, but could not see husband or children. She felt free and well. A friend asked if she recollected dying. She ridiculed the idea that she could be dead and feel so well and happy. Her companions proposed they should visit earth. She could not understand it, as she thought she was on earth already. Away the party floated, and she could see nothing for some time, but at last they came down to the old farm and she saw her husband. See spoke to him, but he did not hear. She tried to touch him, but an influence seemed to push her away. This was the result of the deep grief which her husband experienced and which repelled her. The party returned to their spirit home. They talked of spirit-communion, but she did not understand it. But she

remembered that when in earth life she had mesmeric power, and thought she might be able to influence a medium. She had scruples as to its being right to attempt it ; but as God had given her such a power she thought it would not be wrong to use it. She said she died about a month ago, and was 43 years of age. This is only an abstract of the report in *The Medium*, which states that she spoke "in a low voice, in a precise, chaste, style, indicating considerable exaltedness of character."—*The M. and D.*, 15, vii., 1870.

VERIFICATION.—Several efforts were made by correspondence to obtain an authentication of the message, but they elicited no response. Some months afterwards, Mr. Morse, when under control, said that "Mr. William Wheeler, Chippenham, could give information, as he was a relative." A letter was written, but no reply received. After another considerable interval, a lady from Corsham, a Mrs. Boucher, who was in London, offered her assistance. She found out Mr. Wheeler at Chippenham, and learned from Mrs. Wheeler that Hannah Reeves died on the 9th of June, 1870, exactly one month previous to the day when the original message was given. She also learned that Mr. Reeves had been greatly distressed by the loss of his wife, and had also been annoyed at the letters he had received in reference to the communication in *The Medium*.—*The M. and D.*, 9, vi., 1871.

JOHN HUCKWORTH NELSON.—In a positive masculine voice the control concluded a few rather dogmatic sentences by saying :—"My name was John Huckworth Nelson, 9, Marlborough Hill, St. John's Wood. I died in the latter end of March, 1870, and was nearly fifty-four years of age.—*The M. and D.*, 12, viii., 1870.

VERIFICATION.—In *The M. and D.* for October 7th the Editor inserts a letter signed "L. N.," of which the following is a portion :—"Finding in No. 19 of *The Medium* a description of a seance in which Mr. Morse personated a man with whom I was acquainted many years ago, I wrote to you enquiring if anyone was present at the sitting who also was acquainted with him, and received your assurance that no person present had ever heard the name, which, however, is not quite correctly given. It should have been Duckworth John Nelson. I recognise the 'positive masculine voice' as characteristic of the man. The date, age, and address are correct."

HENRY FAIRFIELD.—A control gave a rather curious address in the form of a narrative, saying that he "found many new things in the spirit world." He found himself "very inferior in knowledge to many that were beneath his position in earth-life." He "went neither to Heaven nor Hell, but to a country something similar to what we have on earth." He found he "had to work and strive." He found "it was a reality, and gradually got to like it." "My name was Henry Fairfield, and I left your life in October, 1869. I lived at Mount's Terrace, Cox Street, Walsall. I was sixty years of age."—*The M. and D.*, 9, ix., 1870.

VERIFICATION.—Mr. Thomas Blinkhorn, 30 Stafford Street, Walsall

writes to Mr. Morse :—" In *The Medium* of September 9th I read of Henry Fairfield, departed spirit from Walsall. I have made enquiries and find it correct. May I ask you if any person was present at the circle from Walsall?" No one was present from Walsall, nor was anyone present who knew anything of the facts stated.—*The M. and D.*, 7., x., 1870.

REV. WALTER EDWARD BIRCH.—"At the close of the seance (December 9th, 1870), the 'Strolling Player' gave way to a strange spirit, who quietly took possession of the medium's organism, and spoke in a low, quiet voice a few words as follows :—"I have been again here waiting to speak through this medium. I was here last week, but could not get an opportunity to speak. I want my friends to know that I am well. I can say no more at present. At some other time I will come and give some account of my experiences in spirit-life. I passed away in August of this year, aged 71. My name, Rev. Walter Edward Birch. Lived at Westow Villas, Upper Norwood."—*The M. and D.* 16, xii. 1870.

VERIFICATION.—A few weeks after the above communication was made "a letter was received from a lady in the country, asking if we could again get into communication with Mr. Birch, and if we knew him. We replied that we were not aware such a man had ever lived, further than that his spirit communicated the statements made in *The Medium*. At the same time we begged the lady to acquaint us with what information she could, either in corroboration or in opposition to the report given in *The Medium*. The lady thus replied :—"I am not a spiritualist, and never attended a seance in my life [giving some objections]. But it is very strange—first, that the Rev. Mr. Birch, with whom I was acquainted, should come uncalled for, and that he should announce that he was 'well.' What a strange expression for a spiritual being ! I do not see how they can be in or out of health. It would interest me very much if he wishes any further communication. He resided, as he said, at Westow Villas, Upper Norwood, and it is quite true that he died in August of last year."—*The M. and D.* 17, iii. 1871.

WILLIAM JAMES LAY.—At a seance, December 30th, 1870, "The medium stood up and spoke in an ostentatious forcible way. He coughed and said :—"As a spirit I claim the privilege of saying a few words. I must say that I am destitute of spiritual knowledge, which I find is a very general predicament amongst those who enter the spirit-world. This new life suits me ; but there is an utter absence of everything we have been taught to believe or expect. It makes me feel that in these matters of spiritual life all men are liars, and that the people are being humbugged, and that it is kept up to fill lazy people's pockets, called ministers. I am well contented where I am, and if I never get to heaven, I shall not be in a hurry to move. One of my wishes is to get a knowledge of man's future life and spiritual destiny. Law and logic are the two worst things that men labour under. All are suited here and dropped into their proper places. The next world picks you up where this one leaves you. It is merely a change of carriages on the railway of existence, and the telegraph of progress runs along the side.

The country where I am is the most beautiful imaginable. It could not be improved. I left your world in May last, and found a multitude on this side to welcome me. I lived in Addington Square, Camberwell, and my name was William James Lay, a solicitor."—*The M. and D.* 6, i, 1871.

VERIFICATION.—In *The Medium* for the following week is a letter signed J. G. Robson, 24 Lower Stamford Street, Blackfriars, saying that he has referred to the Law List, and finds the following among the list of London solicitors:—"James Lay, 44 Poultry; 24 Addington Square, Camberwell."—*The M. and D.* 13, i, 1871. In *The Medium* for the week after is a letter signed Thos. A. Reed, 37 Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, in which he says:—"I see a communication in your paper with reference to a message at a spirit-circle from a Mr. Lay, who stated that he was formerly a solicitor living at Addington Square, Camberwell. You inquire whether anything is known as to the decease of this gentleman. Permit me to say that I knew him when in the flesh, and that I have before me his memorial card, which states that he died at Addington Square on May the 16th, thus confirming the statement made at the circle. I may add that a relative of his informs me that the sentiments expressed in the message are in remarkable harmony with those which he entertained in his earthly life."—*The M. and D.*, 23, i, 1871.

REV. JAMES MARTIN.—"The spirit made the medium stand up, and spoke in a quiet, refined style. 'Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It was my intention to have spoken to you last Friday evening, but an occurrence prevented me from doing so. I should be glad to have the time and power to speak to you of my experiences, but I have not been long in this new world, and shall defer many remarks till I get more experience. I was for many years one of the teachers of the people. I tried to follow the light I received, yet I taught many strange things which I did not believe, but I was backward to set myself up against what I was taught to consider the wisdom of God. I could not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment for those who were not saved by the merits of Jesus Christ. When death came, the change was very different from what I had expected. I asked, Where is Heaven? God? the Saints? But I found none of these things, but men and women inhabiting a real country. As I have been in that country but a short time I cannot give you much of its history. I find that the teachings of my earthly life were wrong in many respects, and without foundation in the facts of spirit-life. To make amends for the error I taught, I mean to seize every opportunity of teaching to mankind the truths I have become acquainted with since I left the body. My name was the Rev. James Martin, Rose Cottage, South Hackney, and I passed away on the 4th of December, 1870, 72 years of age.'"—*The M. and D.*, 10, ii, 1871.

VERIFICATION AND FURTHER MESSAGE.—At the seance on March 17th a visitor stated that the age of the Rev. James Martin had been erroneously given through the medium. He was told that the matter would be investigated, and corrected if possible. It would appear that the

communication was in the main authentic.—*The M. and D.*, 24, iii. 1871. At the next seance, March 24th, the "Rev. James Martin" again "controlled," and said :— "Mr. Chairman,—In obedience to a wish expressed to me by your friend, I have come here this evening to answer a question which I could have done by deputy but I prefer to do it myself. A question has been raised as to my age. I said it was 67." [Note.—It is printed 72 in *The Medium* No. 45, which corresponds with our notes taken at the seance.—*Ed. Medium.*] "The person, a friend of mine, who has raised the question, has investigated this matter rather attentively, and has come to two conclusions—one he makes public and one he keeps to himself. He made a statement of the public one the other day to the effect that the facts were true, but that good and evil spirits came indiscriminately, and he warned his hearers to have nothing to do with it, else they might in consequence go to hell. This he did on Sabbath day last ; but, privately, he knows that spirit-communion is true, and is the most rational—the best proof of immortality. I give him a word of advice. He is of opinion that I communicate in this way, so I give him my word of honour that there are not two conditions in spirit-life. He would not like to be shut off from God for ever, and others are not subjected to that which would be so obnoxious to himself. I have investigated eagerly, and failed to discover any foundation for the theological hell. So far as other parts of theology are concerned, it is not my province to speak now, but I am more of an intelligent being than when I was on the earth-plane, and have more power to appreciate my surroundings. I know there is much for me to learn, and this is true of all I am acquainted with, and these include many who were connected with my ministry when on earth. Immortality is a continuation of mortality. I commend these remarks to him. He is a minister in the same field. You will remember me as the Rev. James Martin."—*The M. and D.* 31, iii. 1870.

In a note, and in an editorial paragraph (see *The Medium* for March 31 and for April 7) the Editor says that at a subsequent sitting the controlling spirit stated that the above referred to the Rev. Reuben Seddon, of Victoria Park Congregational Chapel. He did not then know that such a gentleman as Mr. Seddon existed, or that he had visited the circle. Mr. Morse was equally ignorant. On the visitors' book being referred to the name was found. The Editor adds :—"From several sources we learn that the Rev. R. Seddon preached a sermon as indicated in our issue of the 31st. We make these statements that the reader may be more certainly impressed with the clearness with which the controlling spirit spoke the truth of that of which no person in the flesh at the circle had any knowledge."

DELIAH STRINGER.—At the close of the seance on April 28, a "control" spoke as follows :—"Mr. Chairman—The early part of December, last year, I was released from the mortal frame after two years bodily suffering, sustained by my faith and confidence in the love of our great Creator and His Son Jesus Christ—ever wishing for my release, yet willing to bear the Cross for the sake of the Crown. Watched over lovingly and attended by my dear husband, I passed at last to that brighter land

across the river, and I now return to console him with a message of love and sympathy that may perhaps repay him for his watchful care, urging him to fulfil his duties as a Christian and a man. His name is John Edwin Stringer; my name Deliah. He lives at 40, Fleming Road, Walworth, 37 years of age. Commending him to the care of God and the Son, Farewell!"—*The M. and D.*, 5, v. 1871.

DISCREDIT—AND VERIFICATION.—In *The Medium* for June 2 the Editor says, in reference to the above :—"We have received several confirmations of the message, and one discrediting it."

The two following letters are then given :—

"Dear Sir,— . . I read the account given (May 5) of one Deliah Stringer. . . I have written to the address given. . . The reply received this morning is that the person's name is not 'John,' and that it is a tissue of lies. Now there is something wrong somewhere. . . I am not a Spiritualist, neither am I one to cry out 'Bosh' ! . . Respectfully yours,

"11, Great Howard Street, May 18, 1871. DANIEL THOMPSON."

"Dear Sir,— . . I have made enquiry of some persons living in Fleming Road, who knew Deliah Stringer for some years previous to her departure to the better land, and in answer they said it was perfectly correct except in two particulars, viz.:—"Deliah" should be 'Delliah' and 'John' should be 'Thomas.'—Yours truly,

"May 23, 1871.

C. P. ALLEN."

The Editor adds these words :—"The Spirit is not responsible for the spelling, which is that of the reporter. Mistakes often occur in the giving of proper names."

JOHN SUTHERLAND.—In the report of the seance on May 12 we find this in *The Medium* :—"In respect to the first observation of this spirit we may state that the 'Strolling Player' was asked what kind of company he kept in the Spirit-world, when he replied—"I have just been in the company of a very decent sort of hangman.'" The control said :—"A friend of mine informs me that he has told you who I am. Sixty years ago—aye, quite sixty—I was alive here away down in the North—though I don't talk Scotch—in Glasgow. I was well known in Glasgow at the time. There was a piece of poetry that I used to know a verse of—

Hark to the sounding of hammers,  
List to the driving of nails;  
It's the workmen building a scaffold  
In front of His Majesty's jails.

I went to the Spirit-world, and met those whom I had duly and legally strangled—hung. Oh, they soon knew 'Hanging Jockie' again. They didn't forget hanging—oh, no ! I was very unhappy for a dozen years or so. I was a miserable weasen-faced spindle-shanked old fellow, and was not much better when I got to the other side. Everybody hated me. No

one loved me, and I knew no peace. Things went on like this for a long while, when one day, after running away from a man, and having sat down by the wayside as heart-broken and God-forsaken a creature ever you saw, a missionary came along—as good-hearted a fellow as ever I saw. He took me away with him. Consciousness left me as we went along. When I came to myself again, my old rags were gone, and I was clothed in a robe of grey. Flowers, handsome, splendid, beautiful flowers, kind faces, kindly words,—and ‘Hanging Jock’ did what he had never done before, cried. I wanted to hide away from their kindness; it was worse than cruelty. Their love worked its way through my very heart, and ‘Hanging Jock’ began to alter, and became as quiet as a little child. I began to know what it was to have someone to care for me. I saw no more of the hung creatures for a long while. Having gained strength, I was taken out for a ramble with those who are the teachers of this place, and I met several of those poor creatures, altered like myself, but in place of the revenge that once existed between us, there was a different feeling, one of forgiveness, for we felt we were the victims of circumstances. So in the case of this community, who call themselves the ‘Association of Reclaimers,’ ‘Hanging Jock’ continues to improve himself. I am John Sutherland, the Glasgow hangman. Some other time I will give you more particulars of my after-life.”—*The M. and D.* 19 v., 1871. The Editor makes a special appeal for corroboration, if possible, of this “very extraordinary communication.”

VERIFICATION.—In *The Medium* for June 24th, the following letter appears:—“Dear Burns,—Having seen in *The Medium* a communication purporting to come from a spirit calling himself John Sutherland, a Glasgow hangman of the olden time, . . . I questioned some of the old men in the institutions where I am employed. From them I learn that such a character used to be hangman in Glasgow; that he was very ungainly in his person, wore a cocked hat, and was mortally hated by the townspeople. Moreover, that the last . . . execution performed by ‘Hanging Jock,’ as he was called, and by which name his memory is kept alive in the minds of the older inhabitants, was that of McKean in 1811.” (Signed, James Nicholson, Glasgow, May 25th, 1871.) Mr. Nicholson writes again, a few days later, to say that on consulting a list of executions in Glasgow, he found the date of McKean’s execution was 1797. But he is unable to ascertain how long “Hanging Jock” lived after that event. Mr. Nisbet Winter, 164 Irongate, Glasgow, also writes, saying:—“John Fraser, Esq., New Field House, near Johnstone, says he remembers the Glasgow hangman quite well.”—*The M. and D.*, June 2nd and 9th, 1871.

WILLIAM MITCHELL.—Sitting on May 19th.—As soon as the control became a fact, the manner of the medium exhibited indications of pain and astonishment. After a while he gasped out the following words, making considerable pauses at times, and again speaking very hurriedly:—“It’s so strange—so strange. Can’t make anything of it. Yesterday afternoon—boiler bursted—and I don’t remember more, William Mitchell, 50 years of

age.—Was at work at Whitnash, near Leamington—Mr. Reading was my master's name—I drove his thrashing machine—blowed up yesterday—I have a wife and three children—can't stop—no more!"—*The M. and D.*, 26, v. 1871.

VERIFICATION.—"From the newspapers we observe that the statement of the spirit given in last week's *Medium*, that he had met death by the explosion of a boiler at Whitnash, near Leamington, was correct. A friend had written to the coroner, whose letter confirms the statement."—*The M. and D.*, 2, vi. 1871.

REV. WALTER GALE TOWNLEY.—This control, in a calm and dignified manner, gave an address, in the course of which he said there had been "some enquiries in that room as to redemptive agencies in the after-life." He had held and taught beliefs, "which a residence in the world of the newly arisen had banished from his mind." "Finding these . . . fallacious, as a Christian and a man, I am bound, in the cause of eternal truth, to record my testimony against them." "The subject of spiritualism hath engaged the attention of some of the inhabitants of the town close to where I lived, and perhaps my brief communication here will arouse interest in that direction." "I left the mortal frame in September, 1869." "Rev. Walter Gale Townley, Hayle's Place, near Maidstone."—*The M. & D.*, 2, vi., 1871.

VERIFICATION.—Thomas Grant, Shirley House, Maidstone (a very well-known resident), writes that the first name should be William. That the clergyman was rector of Upwell, Norfolk, and died while on a visit at Hayle's Place, and was buried in the neighbouring churchyard of Tail. The inscription on his tombstone is as follows:—"William Gale Townley, Rector of Upwell, Norfolk. Born 6th November, 1827. died 4th September, 1869, aged 41 years."—*The M. and D.*, 9, vi., 1871.

MARGARET ANN POTTER.—As a third "control" at a seance on September 22nd, the medium spoke as follows in a low, quiet voice:—"I have but a few words to say, and they are to my father. First, let me thank him for his kind attention to me during my illness, and tell him that in the happy land of which I have so often spoken, I have found all that he in his goodness told me of; and humble as were my labours amongst those who sadly wanted them, yet these labours have been blessed a hundredfold. To all those kind and dear friends who are ever willing to receive me, I shall cherish kind regards. I left the earth the end of last year, in the beginning of the last month. My name is Margaret Ann Potter. My father's name is William Potter. I lived at Howbridge Hall, Witham. I was 49 years of age."—*The M. and D.*, 29, ix., 1871.

VERIFICATION.—In the *Medium and Daybreak* for October 20th, 1871, the following is reprinted from the *Surrey Comet*, under the title of "Extraordinary Coincidence." (After quoting the above communication, and describing the circumstances under which it was made, the *Comet* proceeds):—"Mr. J. G. Pilborough, of this town, . . . wrote to the above address, and received the following reply:—"Sir,—Agreeable to your

request, in answer to yours, I beg to inform you I had a dear, beloved daughter, Margaret Ann, living with me at Howbridge Hall, Witham, whom it pleased the Lord to take from me November 14th, 1869, aged 49 years. An explanation of your writing me will oblige yours truly, W. POTTER.

"Howbridge Hall, Witham, October 4th, 1871."

The Editor of the *Medium* adds a Note in which he says :—"It will be observed that the spirit makes an error of thirteen months in the date of decease."

JACOB TWIN.—At a seance on December 8, 1871, a "control" spoke as follows :—"In accordance with a request conveyed to me by the guide of the Medium that I would manifest myself, I have done so this evening. It is a great many years ago since I left the earth-life, and you may perhaps ask why I should return on the present occasion. I trust you will excuse my deferring my answer to a future time. Let it suffice for the present that I am not only a searcher after truth, but a proclaimer of that truth which I do possess, and that in my earthly efforts for the promulgation of that truth I suffered severely, so much so that death was the only expiation I could afford to the injured majesty of the law, which I need not say was the law of aggression—a law which bound the utterance of the soul of man, and one which might exist at the present day. I was tried, condemned, hanged, drawn, and quartered, in the month of October, 1686, for the printing of a seditious book. My name was Jacob Twin, and I lived in Cloth Fair, Smithfield."

The Editor of the *Medium* adds this note :—The spirit uttered his thoughts with clearness and precision, but had scarcely power to finish them. We shall be glad if our friends will aid in searching the records of the past to see whether such a person as Jacob Twin lived and suffered as stated.—*The M. and D.*, 15, xii., 1871.

VERIFICATION.—In the following issue of the *Medium* a correspondent who signs himself "Dryasdust" writes thus :—"In Cobbet's 'State Trials,' Vol. VI., p. 514, there is given the full account of the trial of one John Twyn, on the 20th of February, 1663, at the Old Bailey, before Chief Justice Hyde, for printing "a scandalous and seditious book, entitled 'A Treatise for the Execution of Justice.'" . . . In the course of the trial a Mr. L'Estrange gave evidence . . . that a press had been at work for several nights in Cloth Fair. At last he had notice 'that they were then at it as hard as they could drive. . . . He proceeded to the house of Twyn before daylight, and demanded admittance. . . . Twyn was found guilty, sentenced, and executed, as stated in the *Medium*, refusing to the last to reveal the writer of the book.' But the name in the 'State Trials' is John Twyn, not Jacob Twin, and the date 1663, not 1686. There is no other 'State Trial' under this name."—*The M. and D.* 22, xii., 1871.

THOMAS E. MILLER.—At a seance on April 26th, a "control" said, after a few serious remarks :—"It was my duty to speak of immortality—to proclaim that doctrine to the people. I have longed to be able to say

I know, and it would have been more effective if I could have proclaimed a simple knowledge of the life hereafter. The Church lacks this very important form of knowledge, which would give efficiency to its teachings. I cannot say much now, as this is new to me, and were it not for friendly assistance I should not be able to control. I have been six days in the Spirit-world realising the actuality of my fondly cherished hopes, and to Him, the giver of it, may glory and praise be given! My name is Thomas E. Miller. I passed away from earth at Ebor House, near Wells, Somerset."—*The M. and D.*, 3, v., 1872.

VERIFICATION.—The following appeared in the *Medium* for May 10 signed "A Country Clergyman" :—"I was considerably startled on reading my *Medium* on Saturday last to see a message from 'Thomas E. Miller, who 'passed away from earth at Ebbor House, near Wells, Somerset. The seance at which he gave the message was on the 26th of April, and I had attended his funeral on the 25th, he having died on the 20th. He was my dearest friend, and if anything could console me for the loss of such a one, it would be the receiving of such a message as this. . . He was a clergyman of the Church of England, but on account of ill-health and having ample means, had not held any cure for many years." The writer adds some further biographical details, and a high appreciation of his character.

JOHN SAMUEL WARRINGTON.—At a seance on June 14 a "control" spoke as follows :—"Twelve months have passed by since I entered into the Spirit-world. Passing through the natural life, I travelled long and laboriously, using my efforts to advance myself more perhaps worldly than spiritually. Liked by some and not liked by others, I held steadily to my opinions. Tenacious on points of doctrine, I was oblivious to methods of reasoning. Clinging to old faiths, I would not give in to new ideas. At last I became worn down and took a low fever, and the mortal form succumbed to its insidious attacks, and I passed through the change of Death. As the time approached I awaited with interior fear and dread the consummation of the fact. But after a period of unconsciousness I found myself a real, disembodied soul. . . To my friends, particularly the members of my family, I desire to say that I still live and remember. If they are desirous of hearing more from me, as doubtless they are, they had better personally seek the information that I cannot impart in this meeting. My name was John Samuel Warrington, aged 68. I departed this life from West Cholderton, Wilts, June last."—*The M. and D.*, 21, vi., 1872.

VERIFICATION.—WEST CHOLDERTON (slight difference in spelling) was found to be a very small village a few miles from Andover. In the *Medium* for July 5th Charles Lock, 10, East Street, Andover, thus reports a conversation with a person who knew J. S. Warrington well :—Q : "Did you know any person of the name of Warrington?"—A : "Yes, very well." Q : "Is he living?"—A : "No."—Q : "When did he die?"—A : "About a twelvemonth last May or June."—Q : "Do you know how old he was?"—A : "I should think between 60 and 70."—Q : "What was his

complaint?"—A: "I do not know; the people say he died of a broken heart. He was a very stubborn man, and would have his own way, and things got very bad with him "

SARAH SHARP.—At a seance on July 5th, the Spirit controlled the medium quietly and spoke in a gentle voice :—"Brought up in the faith of the Orthodox Church, and living in it for 80 years, it may be imagined how surprised I was on entering into the life hereafter. Losing my husband but a few years previous to my departure, I could only look forward and desire the day to come when I should go to be with him in the other life. He was a minister of the Church of England. . . Judge of my surprise to meet the partner of my former life in all respects the same as in his better and younger days. The world I found myself in was so natural and real that I could scarcely believe I had passed over the river. . . The life here is reunion with those who have gone before. I resided at Lee, in Kent—No. 6, Dacre Park. My name was Sarah Sharp. My husband's name was the Rev. Lancelot Sharp. I left earth-life about two years ago in my 81st year. Good night."—*The M. and D.*, 12, vii. 1872.

VERIFICATION.—In the *Medium* of July 26, S. Parker, Clapham, writes that Mr. and Mrs. Sharp were well known by residents in the vicinity, and the particulars given are fully corroborated.

MARY DAYNES.—Seance September 6th. The control spoke in a low affectionate voice :—"Father felt it very hard when he knew that his eldest daughter could not live. He had been a kind, loving father to me the twenty-four years of my earthly life. . My two other sisters were sad and sorrowful to think they must lose a playmate and friend. I have come back to assure my dear father that I still live and watch over him. And that if he will form a circle at home I will be able then to communicate with him much more fully. He has dreamed about me—at least he called it dreaming. but he saw me faintly. My name was Mary Daynes. Father's name is William B. Daynes. He is a draper living in Brentwood. Good night."—*The M. and D.*, 20, x. 1872.

VERIFICATION.—The *Essex News* thus notices the above, at the same time verifying the facts :—"A considerable amount of disgust has been excited in this town during the last few days through the circulation of an obscure Spiritualistic Organ called the *Medium*, which contains a fanatical article upon the doings in 'Spirit-land,' . . concerning a most respectable young lady, who died here in 1868, and whose father is well known as one of the most influential tradesmen of the hamlet. The names of the parties are there given in full, but we of course suppress them here. The rubbish runs as follows. . . We are informed that the publication of this 'bosh' has caused considerable pain to the bereaved family, and that legal proceedings are likely to ensue in consequence."—*The M. and D.*, 18, x. 1872.

WILLIAM FULLER.—The seance (October 4) closed by a strange spirit effecting a very quiet control. He spoke thus :—Mr. Chairman,—I

have not a great deal to say. I feel strange in this new position. It is but a few weeks since I left this life worn down by age and sickness. The main purpose of my communicating is relative to the distribution of my property. I have but one word to say on that head, which will be amply sufficient, that is, I distributed it justly, and they must abide by it. I passed from this life in the second week in August. My name was William Fuller. I resided at Kingston-on-Thames at Tolworth Farm. I was 68 years of age. That is all I can say now.—*The M. and D.*, II, x., 1872.

VERIFICATION.—“A correspondent at Kingston-on-Thames writes :— I have made enquiries and find the communication from William Fuller correct, except that the age should be 87, not 68. He died on August 14.” Another correspondent informs us that the expression in the communication respecting dissatisfaction at the distribution of Mr. Fuller's property is singularly correct.—*The M. and D.*, 18, x., 1872.

REV. FRANCIS BENJAMIN GRANT.—At a seance October 25, the Medium said in a calm, measured voice :—“ . . . I have left this earth nearly three months, and my return will produce a strange feeling in the minds of my family. It is for their special benefit that I come to ask them to form a circle, and they will hear from me on several important questions. I passed away from this life in the evening time when it was least expected. I resided at the field of my labours, Vicarage House, Cullompton, Devon. My name was the Rev. Francis Benjamin Grant.”—*The M. and D.*, 1, xi., 1872.

VERIFICATION.—The following letter was forwarded to *The Medium* by Miss Kislingbury (a lady well known to the writer and many others at that time) :—“ Madam,—In reply to your inquiry of the 2nd inst., it is true that the Rev. Francis Basset Grant (not Francis Benjamin Grant) died at the Vicarage here on the 15th of August last, not suddenly, being attended by Dr. Potter, of this place, and a physician from Exeter, for a week or more previous to death. Cause, old age and heart disease, and was not less than 76 years old.

Your faithful servant, S. MITCHELL, Postmaster.

Post Office, Cullompton, November 4th, 1872.”

—*The M. and D.*, 8, xi., 1872.

THOMAS WALLERS.—A RECENT VERIFICATION.—As we have said, there are a large number of messages from “strangers” reported in the *Medium*, no verification being recorded, and of which there is no further mention. A sceptical objector might make two remarks on this, (1), that the message had been found to be false, and that therefore silence was wise, (2) that a number of the messages were concocted on speculation—or at a guess—by the Medium's conscious or unconscious self, and that consequently there was no reality behind them. With the view of making an experiment on one of these, the case of THOMAS WALLERS was selected from the *Medium* of 19th August, 1870. As a “stranger” he gave rather a long

address purporting to describe his feelings after death, his experiences, and the society among which he found himself—rather prosaic and humdrum. He concluded by saying:—"On earth I was a flour-dealer—Thomas Wallers, of Chorlton Road, Hulme, Manchester. I died in May of this year, and was over 60 years of age."

An application to the Registrar of Deaths of the District made last December, brought in due course a certified copy of an entry of which the important items are :—Died on May 22, 1870, at 33, Chorlton Road, Hulme, Thomas Waller, aged 66, Master Baker. The only discrepancy between the message and the certificate is that the former gives the name Wallers, the latter Waller. If it is remarked, as the first person to whom the certificate was shown actually did—"Oh, but Mr. Morse might easily have got these particulars," the answer is—of course he might, but then why was not the verification published?

HENRY BAWTRY—AN INCORRECT STATEMENT.—A message purporting to come from Henry Bawtry, Colchester, contains this sentence:—"I feel it my duty to just say a few words in this manner to my friends ; but if the possibility of such a thing had been mentioned to me in my natural life I should have been horrified." Three correspondents wrote as to the correctness of the main facts given in the message, except that the name was Bawtree. One of them, Mr. C. H. Harrison, Norfolk Street, Strand, who described himself as a relative, after quoting the above sentence, which "surprised" him, says :—"Now, I have had many a conversation with Mr. Bawtree on the subject, and he has even been with me at four or five seances, and has admitted the fact of spirit communion. This circumstance has engendered very grave doubts as to the reality of the communication." The letter was read at the next seance, when Mr. Morse was under the control of the "Strolling Player." But he did not throw any light on the matter. The only suggestion made was that the reporter might have been in error. See *The M. and D.* 23, viii., and 13, ix. 1872. This is, apparently, the only instance of a mis-statement being made, apart from inaccuracies of name, date, and age.

Mr. James Burns, as Editor of *The Medium and Daybreak* says\* that "the spirits who thus communicate their names and late addresses are generally entire strangers, not only to the medium, but to the whole company. Mr. Morse is in an unconscious state when he communicates, and he has no idea of what transpires. We publish these messages weekly, without knowing whether they are true or false, trusting to the vigilance of our friends in the localities to confirm them. On only two occasions has a spirit been discovered endeavouring to promulgate falsehood." A correspondent having suggested the possibility of the "messages" being concocted

\* *The Medium and Daybreak*, February 24, 1871 ; also April 14, 1871 ; also May 26, 1871.

from information previously acquired, Mr. Burns, in an indignant editorial, says :— \*

“ The supposition that these messages are wilfully fabricated becomes more and more absurd the closer it is examined. . . Mr. Morse’s trance is real, as any experienced psychologist must know who investigates the phenomena. This of itself precludes the possibility of fraud. Then the messages are accompanied by impersonations much more indicative of identity than even the facts expressed in speech. . . The cases are scattered all over the country, as well as various parts of London. One week a spirit comes within thirty hours after his physical body was blown up by a boiler explosion in Warwickshire, and before the fact had transpired in London, as far as the parties concerned were aware. At least, the report was first noticed in the *Echo* of the day after the seance. The previous week the test message was from a spirit who had left earth-life sixty years, and of whom it was exceedingly difficult to obtain any information.”

It appears to us that only three hypotheses can be brought forward to account for these messages :— (1) Fraud ; (2) Telepathy from the Living ; (3) That they are what they profess to be. For “ Fraud ” there is not an atom of evidence. “ Telepathy from the Living,” even stretched to the utmost limits which recent research would justify, would be wholly inadequate. Is there any other alternative with stronger claims to acceptance than that the messages are from the personalities of deceased men and women continuing their individual existence after the death of the body ?

In a letter which the writer received from Mr. J. J. Morse, under date December 15th, 1904, on the eve of his departure for America, written in reference to the proposed re-publication of some of these cases, he says :—“ You state the facts quite correctly. That I was entirely unconscious of the entire incidents, as reported, is absolutely true ; as is the other fact that the communications were in no way the result of any knowledge of mine—but, as I was and am still firmly convinced, the work of the spirits. . .

(Signed)

“ Cordially yours,

“ J. J. MORSE.”

#### AN S.P.R. CASE.

A TEST-MESSAGE PLANNED BEFORE DEATH.—The following case is, so far as we know, the only one where a test, or rather two tests, arranged before death, have been carried out afterwards with perfect success. The case is printed in full in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R., and also in “ Human Personality.” We give an abstract. At Kingston, in Massachusetts, a brother and sister of the name of

\* *The Medium and Daybreak*, June 18, 1871.

Benja lived together. The brother was fatally consumptive, and knew he had not long to live. Having a firm faith in the power of the spirit to return, and being aware of the difficulties of identification, he arranged two tests with his sister, so that she should have satisfactory proof of his return to her. The first test was as follows: He took a piece of soft brick and carved it into a slender oblong form, and, taking it to his sister, broke it into two pieces, giving one to her and saying he would take care of the other himself. The second test was this: He wrote a letter to his sister, and sealed it, and gave it to her, saying that it was not to be opened, but that the contents of the letter were to be told. For months after his decease the mother and sister got nothing satisfactory. They then commenced sitting at the table at home. After some little time, it commenced tipping, and at last this sentence was spelled out by calling the alphabet:—

“You will find that piece of brick in the cabinet under the tomahawk.”—  
BENJA.

The sister went to the room where the cabinet was, took the key and unlocked the cabinet, which had not been touched by anyone after he locked it and put away the key. There she found the piece of brick exactly under the tomahawk, and it exactly fitted the piece which she had retained. With regard to the letter, by calling out the alphabet and table-tipping, these words were spelt out:—

“Julia! Do right and be happy.”—BENJA.

This was correct. These words were just the contents of the sealed letter.

The mother is deceased, but the sister, who had become Mrs. William A. Finney, wrote several letters to Dr. Richard Hodgson, Secretary of the American branch of the S.P.R. giving all particulars of the case. Dr. Hodgson also has a letter from the Rev. C. Y. de Normandie, of Kingston, Mass., saying that to the best of his knowledge and belief Mrs. Finney's word could be implicitly relied on. Dr. Hodgson has also had the pieces of brick and the original letter in his possession. Mr. Myers showed his sense of the evidential value of the case by including it in a Paper he read to the S.P.R., and also in “Human Personality.” To these reports the reader is referred for all the details and the confirmatory testimony.\*

\*Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. viii., pp. 248-251, and “Human Personality,” Vol. ii., 182-185.

## PROFESSOR JAMES H. HYSLOP'S OBSERVATIONS.

The sixteenth volume of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* is devoted exclusively to "A Further Record of Observations of certain Trance Phenomena," by Professor J. H. Hyslop, Ph. D. of Columbia University, New York. This record consists of detailed reports of seventeen sittings with Mrs. Piper at Boston, a discussion of the possible explanation of the facts, and various other notes and comments. The special interest of the Report in connection with this chapter lies in the position which Professor Hyslop assigns to the problem of personal identity, or, as he expresses it, the evidence of "unity of consciousness" before and after death. He says:—

Personal identity is the first and only problem to attack at the outset. All others, if soluble at all, are infinitely more complex and difficult to determine. Personal identity is hampered by nothing but the conditions of communication, which, of course, are numerous enough. It can appeal to a veritable past.\*

In dealing with possible arguments in favour of "the Spiritistic Hypothesis," Professor Hyslop places first:—"The unity of consciousness exhibited by the communicators, or the satisfaction of the criterion for personal identity." He says:—

I can even demand the assent that the facts in this record perfectly satisfy the criterion for personal identity on any theory whatsoever. . . . Our criterion must be facts that force the supposition of the unity of consciousness between the past and present existence of the alleged communicator.†

Professor Hyslop believes that in a number of alleged communications from various deceased relatives he has obtained evidence of "unities of consciousness" which are "perfectly simple on the spirit hypothesis," and that the "only rational interpretation" of some of the phenomena is the "spiritistic." That is to say, he believes that automatic communications through Mrs. Piper do really proceed from the personalities of some of his relatives, continuing in a future life, and that they have given evidence of their identity. The detailed reports of the sittings do not lend themselves to quotation. There are but few striking incidents which will bear detaching from their context, and yet retain their full force as evidence. The value of the results lies in their weight as a whole.

\**Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. xvi., p. 290.

†*Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. xvi., pp. 158-9.

## CHAPTER IV

### COMMUNICATIONS, THE CHIEF INTEREST OF WHICH CONSISTS IN THEIR CHARACTER.

**A** LONG time ago, some years previous to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research, the writer of these pages was present at a series of addresses and messages given in the trance-condition. The circle was a small and entirely private one, all those taking part, including the "medium," a lady, being intimate friends. There was no doubt as to the speaker's complete unconsciousness of all she thus uttered, and she had no recollection afterwards of anything that had been said by herself or others. The going into the trance and coming out again were quite as quiet and calm as ordinary going to sleep and awakening; in fact were quite undistinguishable from those ordinary acts; the only difference being that in the course of two or three minutes the medium began to speak or to converse in an ordinary voice. All that was said, both in the form of addresses, short messages, and conversational remarks, was taken down, verbatim, by the present writer, in shorthand. He has several notebooks full of these records, in good, legible phonography. All are carefully dated, and notes added, as to the place and circumstances under which the sittings were held. No question can arise as to the reports conveying correctly what was said. The majority of these communications were anonymous; but to some, the names of the professed communicators were given. It should be clearly understood that in no case is there any evidence of identity, nor, throughout the whole series was any attempt made to obtain such evidence. The total number of the more formal addresses is about seventy-five, and of shorter communications and messages about forty. The time during which the series was given, extended over the greater parts of the years 1874 and 1875. The gift, if so it may be called, arose spontaneously, and ceased after a time without any apparent cause. With only

one or two exceptions, none of the communications have ever appeared in print.

The "Dramatis Personæ," or, as spiritualists would say, the "Controls," include "Frederick W. Robertson," "Elizabeth Barrett Browning," "The Strong Spirit," "The Messenger of the Strong Spirit," "A Priest," "A Sister of Charity," and others, some unknown names, and some anonymous designations.

The following ten selections give an idea of the most representative of the addresses, and also of some of the more conversational communications. A few of the more personal remarks and episodes are then given, together with some other brief extracts. A concluding selection follows of a somewhat different character, and which may be looked upon as forming a sort of link between Chapters III, and IV. The intelligences who spoke under the first two names in the above list appeared to be frequently together. The others seemed to form a separate group of themselves.

#### I.—"GOD IS A SPIRIT."

This address purports to come from the Rev. Frederick W. Robertson, of Brighton. It was the first long communication that was given. It contained a good deal of needless repetition, and some more or less irrelevant matter, as if the speaker was new to his work, or as if the instrument he was using was not quite under control. Hence it seems better to give an abstract instead of a verbatim report. No words have been added or even changed.

"GOD IS A SPIRIT. They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." To those who know that God is a Spirit it is given thus to worship Him. "For the Father seeketh such." How He seeketh such is only feebly known in this state where we are. But we are cognizant of a drawing upwards of the spiritual aspirations, of which on earth we knew hardly anything. "God is a Spirit." Most men have not reached this first form in the school of life. Some must worship Him through outward means. They cannot sail upon the ocean of God's Love without a boat, rudder, compass, captain, and crew. They cry, like Peter, "Lord, I sink." The spirit clothed with much encumbrance of mortal things must go to Him in some sort of conveyance. It is good for man to worship Him in temples made with hands, if he cannot have his mind attracted unto God without the building and the accessories of worship. How large the number of those only just raised above the purely animal, I had no idea until I came out of

earth-life. I thought all men knew that God was a Spirit. I thought all men knew that the spirit of man was *the* man.

Humanity in its lowest form finds its highest pleasure in eating and drinking, and lying down to sleep. Beautiful in the animal. Why not beautiful in the man? Because man is just beyond the boundary where animal life is beautiful, and life alone, exclusively animal life, is right. Man simply the animal is not beautiful to his fellow-man, as animal the animal is. Man the animal is sorrowful, not beautiful, to man the man.

Some need the pleasures which a cultivated taste engenders—the love of sound, the love of beauty, outward beauty. There is beauty in your man with his outward garb, in your music, in your altars, in your heavy, cumbrous religious systems, *if* you keep your soul upward through it all. But you *must* listen now or presently to a Voice which never yet passed itself through human lips, which will sound as never man's voice sounded—"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him in the awful purity which he will have finally, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." If, during your times of outward worship, your singing of hymns, your sounding of organs blown with wind, your postures of devotion—if at such times the thought steals in, "God is a Spirit"; if this voice strike upon your spirit, then hear it and look up. I would not have you feel that you are wrong in worshipping in any way which seems to soothe and elevate the heart. I did not know to how many of God's children the school of doctrines was as a gateway through which man had to pass upward, outward, onward, to the ocean of perfect freedom and love. I have looked over that great sea which so often comforted my weary spirit, and I have thought,—Why will not all mankind trust the Father and His infinite goodness? I see now that if I had sent all the people in that great town out upon the waters, they would have been drowned. I had been greatly blessed in spiritual education. I could swim. I forgot how many toiling men thrown into the sea, the sea of God's infinite Truth even, would sink to the bottom. "God is a Spirit" is not known to the carnal man, as it is to him whose way has been the way of conflict, whose path has been among the ice and snows of rigorous self-denial. I thought I had to drag the whole car of God's humanity. I would rather now say:—Leave much, very much, to God alone. Say to the world what God teaches thee; but do not try—not agonizingly try—to do that which God Himself sees fit to leave undone. Rather, comfort those who mourn. Sound ever in thy

life and in thy words the bugle note of comfort and of aspiration. *There* is glorious occupation !

The strong swimmer strikes for the open sea ; lost is he often in his battle with the waves to those who watch him from the shore ; but if his spirit is purely toward God, he reaches the other side, ready for the heavenly garment. Oh, how ready, few on your earth can comprehend. Men and women come to spirit-life in boat-loads—cargoes full. Then there is work and education, and often bitter discipline, on the other side. But if God is willing to work out His own redemption of His people, and if He is willing that it should cost Him infinite pains and ages of time, why should man murmur ? Only, I say again—God is a Spirit, and if, in worshipping Him in your outward way, you hear the Voice : “ Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow the good, the pure, the beautiful, unto death, if necessary,” listen and obey. For, in the life to come, if not here, that Voice shall speak, and its commands must be obeyed. Man the animal is coming up gradually to the beautiful stature of man the spirit. For the Father seeketh man the spirit to worship Him. And what the Father seeketh, He will surely find.

## II.—“ I DO SET MY BOW IN THE CLOUDS.”

This address also purports to be from the Rev. Frederick W. Robertson. A few paragraphs are omitted which have no connection with the main subject of the discussion. Otherwise it is almost verbatim.

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I take this for my motto rather than my text. In the old narrative this is looked upon as a mighty miracle worked by God ; a promise to the inhabitants of this planet that He would no more destroy the world by a flood. My purpose is not to build up or to destroy the meaning which this promise may convey to any. I take the matter to illustrate some truths which you may find food to your souls. The bow of promise is only known to be a bow of promise, after the clouds, the waters, have disappeared. Those who saw that bow, said to have arched the heavens long ago, had faith which this generation has not. That faith is not possible to-day. The true meaning of the bow in the clouds I believe to lie deeply hidden within the mystic veil. The bow must be wrought out of the drops of true spiritual tears. The bow must arch or bridge over the chasm which lies between things material and spiritual. The clouds of doubt and of dark despair must be made radiant by the exquisite

process of the true eternal rainbow-maker worker of miracles, *then*, and *now*, and *ever*; in time that *was*, in time that *is*, in time that *shall be*. The bow must be made out of the cloud before the man of the spirit of to-day can say—Thou hast set thy bow in the clouds and I know that the waters far from covering the soul are themselves the makers of the bow, they are the bow itself. If those we read of had that faith which seems to us impossible, nay, may we not say, a childish faith, if, seeing the bow they believed the waters should no more cover the earth, how much wider and deeper is the faith of some to-day, who, having passed through the cloud and through the sea, know that the cloud is the bow, and that the sea is the only dry land. If I am obscure you must strive to follow this thought for yourselves. The bow set in the clouds promised—so the story runs—safety for the days that were to come. The bow *to-day* promises, and the promise is fulfilled, that the bow is always in the cloud and is a part of it, now in this present life. And, in the life to come, it has a brilliancy of colour and a warmth which, seen through the mist of clouds by which we are surrounded while we are bodily dwelling on the earth, we have no power to conceive. “I do set my bow in the clouds.” We must learn that the waters are themselves the bow’s source, that they beget the bow. I have felt as I read this story to the people,—well, it has no spiritual meaning for me. Perhaps the people of old believed—I do not believe—that God ever spoke these words with outward voice. If, then, with inward voice, they have a spiritual meaning. As I read these words aloud, “I have set my bow in the clouds that the waters shall not return and cover the earth,” they had no meaning to me. The waters *do* return, the floods *do* lift up their voice, deep calls unto deep, all waves and billows pass over me. Where is the bow that promised these things should not be? I have shuddered at my own questioning, as I have seen the end of many a bow dip and sweep and pass away, over down and sea and miserable bauble of that town wherein I lived. I never knew until I passed away from upland, down, and sea, and town, wherein and over which my heart bled, I never knew till then that “I do set my bow in the cloud” was a great living spiritual truth. The bow *cannot* be where the cloud has not been before it. It must rain, ere the bow of promise—no—the bow of fulfilled hope and aspiration, can span and arch the sky of heaven. Let the sun shine, let the birds be merry, the cloud has passed away, there is the bow, the waters shall not return and cover the earth! They shall and must return,

for one bow is not enough. The clouds must sweep across your life, deep must call to deep, all waves and billows must go over. Because out of all these the eternal rainbow-garment of the redeemed soul is woven and fitted to the wearer. "I do set my bow in the clouds." Rather let us say:—Out of clouds, oh Lord, the bow is made. We, as children, knew not the voice of Thy Spirit, as we saw the bow which thou wast working and illuminating for us. We only knew that the clouds did return after the rain.

There is a faith to-day which mocks at the childish faith of which we read in the Old Testament. Let us thank God for this. That knowledge which is wrought out is knowledge which can reach to heights and depths where ready-made knowledge can never enter.

I would say again—"I do set my bow in the clouds." The clouds themselves are not only the promise, but outwork the bow itself. Creeds which even now are a theme of sorrowful wonderment to me shall outwork, I know, the law of perfect righteousness in all the earth.

Therefore let us be patient and brave, and thankful for the knowledge we have attained unto. Remembering that, as in days gone by, we saw not the bright bow that was in the clouds, so now we may not be ready to be shown the bright light which is being wrought by the darkness of outward religious worship. Man is so ignorant. He must have his nursery, his school, his college.

### III.—PLEASURE.

This communication was given in the name of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and was spoken in a hollow of the Downs, near Beachy Head, during a rest, on a day's excursion from Eastbourne. The same "control" had spoken previously on several occasions, on the first time, coming to the aid of "F. W. Robertson" when he seemed to be unable to proceed with one of his addresses. "Elizabeth Barrett Browning" gave several other addresses of a more abstruse character, but which cannot be included in the present selection. In one of these she says, with enthusiasm, almost rapturously: "Poetry is to me my life. We have union and communion with such society! Think of all those gone before! Is there no joy, no perfection of intercourse, in being days and days in the perfect sphere where Dante dwells!"

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We say that heaven must be begun on earth. It must be so in a sense. That is, the harmony of the heavenly life must be

known within the soul while it is on earth, if the heavenly life is lived here. But, apart from this, heaven cannot be upon the earth plane. Do not misunderstand. The soul which is at rest in God, or in faith in an over-ruling Love, is in a sense in heaven. But as you look *on* to a place towards which you journey, and are there, so, and so *only*, is the soul in heaven upon earth. That is, as you look onward during your journey, and by anticipation are there, you still have to walk, and work, and battle with wind, and storm, and cloud, and are really not at your destination till the warfare is done. Some of them tell me that heaven began for them on earth, and I believe it was so. That is, when they gave up their own wills to the inward Divine ruling, or when they so set their faces heavenward, that the sorrows of earth were forgotten, or kept constantly put aside. But with me, while earth-life lasted, the contact with influences and outward surroundings which were unlovely to me, not in harmony with my spirit, were perpetually reminding me that I must fight, and not remain at ease. All pleasure on the earth was marred to me by some cross or trial ; not the giving up of self, but some little speck upon the clear plate where heaven should be reflected. Sorrow upon the earth is sorrow because it is not understood. Here our pleasure is quite a different thing. We can enjoy the beauty of the earth without the contact with earthly influences. And, if you can understand, we never take pleasure for pleasure's sake, but we enjoy the rest in order that we may work afterwards. Not as it used to be in earth-life, when, after a time of grand isolation, the thought of returning to the ways and walks of man used to make my breast shudder. Then I did not know that all soul growth meant helping soul growth in others. Here we know before we take our rest, our pleasure, our time of delight, that it is only in order to be more helpful to those who want our help.

And so about pleasure. It is never with us that feeling that we must go home to be sad, or weary, or perplexed, because we see that the enjoyment and delight, if it be partaken of spiritually, fits us to endure and work for others. Some of them may tell you that they never take any pleasure ; and they may be right. They do not go into beautiful scenes, and seek music, and that sort of delight. But where I am we have our pleasure day, our seasons of joyous life, with the consciousness that we shall thereby give joy to some of those who need it more than we do. I think, perhaps, it may be that the capacity for true soul delight is inbreathed into us from higher spheres, and that, in the same way, we inbreathe that

capacity to you. For I cannot understand that form of pleasure, which some of your friends consider to be delight. I know that food and raiment, and outward comfort, received with a grateful heart, give pleasure in a sense, but I am talking of that rapture of the spirit which helps to build up, to intensify, to uplift, the spiritual man. I would not allow that the enjoyment of merely outward things was pleasure in the sense in which I use the word.

Q.—I should like to ask if you are conscious of where we are, that is, in a beautiful spot by the sea.

I am conscious of the sea nearly always, because I go there nearly always, but I could not see wrecks, or things of that kind. Except very seldom I do not see things that happen. So I cannot tell whether you are by the sea or on the sea, but I know that you are close to the sea, and that she is surrounded by the influence of the sea. Whether you are on a voyage I do not know; but I think I should see in her mind if she had left friends behind her. Here we see the influence upon the soul and judge from that. But we go upon the sea and by the sea, those of us who love it, every day.

Q. Then you still enjoy the scenery of the earth?

Yes, and No. How can you understand? I will put it this way. When you have seen a beautiful land, you forget, in looking back long after, what it cost you of outward annoyance and sorrow to see that land. You go there again mentally. You truly visit that land again. But you would not be filled with sorrow if a dreadful calamity was taking place in those very scenes which your spirit was visiting. Well, can you for a moment catch the thought that even so we visit earth?

Remark.—Yes! But we cannot go to new places in that way. We can only thus go where we remember to have been before!

Ah no! But we can! We see during our first visit with the sort of vision which you see afterwards. It is not comparable. I told you that. *Do not in ANY WAY limit* your anticipations of this life by any narrow thought that I shall give you. I only say these things because I know no better way of saying them. As it would make my soul exceedingly sorrowful if I could only visit earth by partaking of earthly suffering through evil, and through illness, and through mental distress of others—so I want you to see that I could behold the beauty of the world, yet not be weighted in my spirit by its, shall I say defilement, or shall I say ignorance?

Suppose that in passing over a village we could see the groans and tears in that place, how could we pass on with light hearts? If

we saw all the sorrow, how could our weak shoulders bear the load? "Where we cannot help, He blinds us." This was said to me by one of them soon after I came here. Another thought I have seen since. If we *will unduly* seek into sorrow, He will let us open our eyes until we feel so heart-broken that we have of ourselves to confess that we can not carry the world of sad hearts within our poor small feeble brain. But I believe that where we are simply patient and waiting, willing to help, but not struggling and striving to do it, where we are simply helping, waiting for the will of God to be shown, that it is so, that where we cannot help "He blinds us."

#### IV.—HELPING OTHER PEOPLE.

This communication came as from "The Strong Spirit." A few paragraphs only are selected.

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The aspirations of the soul must be unselfish. They must be wide as the kingdom of the Spirit. They must always aim at the greatest good for the greatest number. Such desires or aspirations shall certainly be answered. But this is often marred because men will work the soul through the mind. It must be bounded by the mind by the reason, in a sense. But the soul can be infinitely renewed, redecorated, replenished, and rebuilt. The body and the mind cannot in the same way. So that world work, work for the wide world, to prosper and to be done with power, must be done through the soul aspiration which brings an infinite response.

If once the spirit is freed from selfish outward ambition, the flight towards the infinite and all powerful is sure and strong. You are sure of help, and strength, and light, and joy, and peace, when once you have passed from the death of the lower nature into the kingdom of unselfish love.

It is more blessed to give than to receive of all outward things. But it is more blessed, if you only knew, to receive of the Spirit than to give. For when you reach out your souls beyond the narrow boundary which home, and family, and business and church have set, you do receive a thousand thousand fold in this life; and in the life to come you will stand in such a wide place that there will be a joyful liberty which you can hardly now understand. But this is always said to you:—If you have the wings of the eagle in spiritual things, it is appointed to you to carry some portion of your kind with you. If you would swim in God's sea of truth, you must take with you, bear with you, also help to learn to swim in this sea,

some childish creature who could not do it of himself. You cannot leave the world and fly into God's presence yourselves. But, as you mount upward, if you strive to carry one weaker than yourself, one portion of humanity weaker than yourself, you are blessed beyond all that you can ask or think. There is no higher joy in all heaven than that of helping God to help His suffering children. And when this earthly house shall be dissolved, there will be a freedom such as we cannot tell you of now. If it cost you something to work now for the great brotherhood of souls, if you sometimes face the cost, still look up and thank God for having taken you out of that narrow circle in which so many poor souls move.

You are so safe when once your selfish nature is put down, and love for poor humanity, God's great nursery for poor, weak, sin-hardened souls [fills your heart]. How pitiful would be the sight to God if He could not find those who were willing to help Him in His work.

I am going now. Perhaps I shall not come again for a long time. If I do not, you *must* remember that there is an infinite supply of help for all those who work unselfishly. It is God's way of redeeming His poor, weak children to feed those who can educate them. Otherwise the link between him and His uneducated children would be missing. Those who work for the world are necessary in an especial manner to God Himself. Therefore they *shall* mount up with wings as eagles—they shall walk about in all those various causes by which they try to help the helpless,—and though their bodies may be weak they shall not faint.

V.—“THE LORD ON HIGH IS MIGHTIER THAN THE NOISE OF MANY WATERS, YEA, THAN THE MIGHTY WAVES OF THE SEA.”

This communication is also from “The Strong Spirit.”

In His might He is terrible. How can He govern the rebellious wills of His rebellious children? Some He smites by sorrow, and lengthened discipline, life-long discipline, and cross and crown of thorns. He must do this if He prepares them for perfect resignation to the state in which they have to acknowledge that His will must be done. But He is mightier than the waves of the sea. They wash over the stricken soul and cast it on the shore of desolation and barrenness. They give the poor storm-tossed soul no rest, washing day and night ceaselessly.

Some must be shipwrecked many times ere they learn that in

the vessel of this body there is no fixed abiding place. Some must be shipwrecked many times ere they learn that the lifeboat of peace with God is the only vessel that can ride safely through the tempests of life's sea. The body is so frail that if you could but realise its frailty you would shudder to do your daily work. All within and around and above are mighty influences, calling the spiritual man to fly away. The natural or carnal man is so blind, so deaf, to these influences that he needs the thunder, the earthquake, and the plague upon his mortal body to smite him with conviction that this is not his rest,—that this mortal body is sown in corruption, and is mortal only.

No anger or wrath is known to us. We cannot in all ways see how God deals with you. But we see that Love is over all, and that the deepest strongest love is needed to arouse and awaken the soul held in bondage by material things. If you saw how you are encompassed day and night, by the visible, you call invisible, hosts of heaven, you would not fear, though the earth be removed—the earth of your body, of your estate, or even of your intellect. “Oh that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.” This was all the Psalmist knew. If he had seen as we see now, he might well have said—Fold my wings a little longer, that I may teach the unsearchable riches of Thy grace in this life. The wings are only waiting to unfold. But for the sake of those who are still in bondage, you must not pray to slip the earthly sheath. It will come in its appointed time. There is more power when in the temple of this body by which you can help those who mourn in many dark ways. The power of true and loving sympathy is one which you can use so mightily that you would be afraid if you saw the weapons with which you go forth. We can use it here. But you can, in a sense, use it better, because you are brought into contact with the outward lives of those who, in effect, know not God. There are so many who must first see God in their fellow-creatures—whose hearts must be melted by the kindness and love of the long-suffering creature, before they can spell out—MY CREATOR.

I did wrong in wishing my life to cease so early as it did. It is only because, baffled and beaten, we do not look up and see the influences from on high, that we ever despair. I thought my life's work was done, that there was no more hope, or joy, or rest, for me, and that I should rest better in the life beyond. Setting my face determinedly towards the next life, I believe I hastened my departure to it. But my deep love for all mankind followed me

here; and I now see that true, unselfish love can live out its appointed time in joy and not in grief.

There is unutterable peace to be found amid the fiercest discord, otherwise where would be the hope for poor humanity? You must remember this, that to all those who are spiritually-minded, the discipline is not to go, but to stay. Pray, therefore, that your light shine a little longer, rather than be anxious to take it away out of your sphere of work.

#### VI.—INDIVIDUALITY AND IMMORTALITY, OR, THE SPIRITUAL REPUBLICAN.

"The Strong Spirit" and "The Priest" appear to be, so to speak, the leaders of a group who have several "Messengers." This communication purports to be given by one of these "Messengers." It is reproduced mostly verbatim, except that a few sentences here and there are omitted.

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There are two kinds of individuality. The individual man and the individual spirit are very different entities. The individual man is very necessary for the earth-life. But he is quite in the way, he obstructs his own advancement, in the spirit-life. The individual man is an outward entity. The individual spirit is so refined, so much more sympathetic, so much more enlightened. It is perhaps not well that the individual man should be earnest in the pursuit of spiritualism. He takes with him so much of the outward individuality into the pursuit of the subject, that at best he only gets at half-truths, blunders himself, and becomes a stumbling block to others, by reason of the very incomplete data at which he arrives. The individuality of the spirit is never lost. But the individuality of the man, in great part, ceases at death.

The individual man must of necessity be, in great part, the individual mortal. The more spiritually-minded the man—I think you will observe this—the less clearly pronounced is the individual mortal. The man who loses himself in the advancement of his fellow-men is not so clearly pronounced an individual as the man who is, so to speak, complete in himself. He who becomes convinced of the truths of spiritualism, shall I say spiritually convinced, in his spirit, by whom the truths are clearly discerned, that man, or rather, that spirit goes aloft, in a sense, at once. It is nothing to him that he, the conscious A or B, does the work. He only longs to do it, and derives untold delight from the pursuit and accomplish-

ment of his high purpose. There is no more earth to conquer in the spirit-life. Personal ambition is lost or swallowed up in the desire after general salvation or redemption. The individual man is not a SPIRITUAL REPUBLICAN, nor can he be. You see this in such men as Napoleon—individual men who were in no sense spiritual republicans. The good of the whole could not be thought of. The death of thousands on the battlefield was not their concern. The individual man accomplished to the utmost of his power his own purposes, his ambition. It was for earthly ends.

The individual men who have joined the ranks of those who enquire into the life beyond are, to a great extent, obnoxious to the SPIRITUAL INDIVIDUAL. They convince A, B, and C, other individual men like themselves. But the spiritual individual, the man who, having grasped a small portion of spiritual truth, goes after it out of himself, and soon goes out of the region in which A, B, and C, who are waiting to be convinced, dwell. He then becomes a SPIRITUAL REPUBLICAN, and is lost in the desire for the good of all. The individual spirit is the real entity. YOU ARE yourself as much in spirit-life as you are here; you don't lose your individuality. But the individual *man-mortal* is a nuisance in the spirit-world, and he has to become as a little child, and learn that his ponderous individual personality is inconvenient and obstructive, and the cause of sorrow and loss to himself. I mind me of what a spirit told me who is far above. She said—It is as though I said to you in reverent words: God does not want A, and then a full stop; B, and then another full stop; C, and so on, full stop, to Z. He wants the whole alphabet; then He makes words and sentences, and teaches through them.

That gave me the idea. But perhaps it will not give it to you. A, and then full stop, does not join on to B, and so on. A is necessary as B, and B as A, and so on, all the letters. And in the mortal individual the full stop has its use, is necessary. But take A and B, and on to Z, out of earth-life, and remove the full stop at the end of each, and A, B, C, D, E, and on to Z, can run in useful harmonious rhythm. A, lost in B or C, just as A is wanted to be used for the word, the word for the sentence—the sentence only the mode of conveying the infinite idea.

To a large extent the spiritual individual will not fight. It is for him to take up his bed and walk. It is for him to rise and follow the Lord of Life and Truth wherever He may lead. And so steadfastly does he pursue that which he feels to be his life that he will

not turn round and spend his strength in wrangling with those who have neither the inclination nor the aspiration to go with him.

Shall man live again? The light which Spiritualists draw down upon them will presently shine, be reflected on the heart of humanity wherein this question waits for its solution. This light shall reveal the answer—"The man dies *that* he may live again." One would think that the individual man of to-day regarded himself as a fixed star, so certain is he of all material things. He dwells surrounded by outward luxury. He gathers unto himself all things sufficient for outward delight. One would suppose he thought that mortal life meant immortal self-indulgence. Suddenly it is all gone, and mortal man giving up the ghost is an immortal spirit. In what condition? Oh, that one little scene just removed outside the boundary of earth-life could be put upon the boards of actual life, and acted over, that mortal man might see. To-day, in proud Paradise of mortal delight. To-morrow, where there is weeping and wailing. I will not say gnashing of teeth, because that is purely figurative. But will you not imagine for a moment what that change must be to the individual whose individuality is almost entirely mortal. The immortal spirit comes like an untimely birth into the spiritual world—and man, giving up the ghost, where is he? Oh! lost souls are no dream! Lost souls by thousands come into spirit-life, and are lost in this way: that the mortal individuality is gone, and the immortal spirit gropes and wails, and requires to be fed, and is as helpless as the infant born before its time. The rightly appointed process has not been carried on. The poor immortal spirit has been entombed in the mortal flesh, so that it has not grown or developed.

If you had seen a man, a magnate in the land, go out as I have seen him go, and on the other side was only seen as an infant, crying, wailing, lost, feeble, unlovely, hungry, naked; and if you had seen, as I have seen, a young man and a young woman go—not either of them great in this world—if you had seen out of the poor clay such spirits or souls arise as I have seen rise, strong, and gentle, and brave, ready for the warfare with evil and sorrow in the next life; if you had heard the "well done, good and faithful," you would understand that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, or rather, over one mortal, who, in earth-life, can so put on immortality as to enter spirit-life a spirit royal and beautiful and loving. There is work to do instantly,

because you have not forgotten the one who went out first, the magnate in earth-life, the miserable infant in the spirit-land.

I want you to see that those men and women who are redeemed in mortal life, are born redeemers into spirit-life, and are ready to take orders when they come. If you carry your light in front it will attract all those who are longing for light and are tired of their own darkness. Do not try and thrust your beautiful spirit-light into earthly lamp sockets. They will follow your light when they hunger and thirst after it. If millions are not convinced do not mourn. It is yours to show the light, and keep it burning brightly ; but it is not yours to thrust either here or there. The mortal individual takes up this task and does it as best he may. Bear in mind there is a difference, though I may not make it plain, between the individual mortal who is mortal and the individual mortal who is immortal.

#### VII.—ON FASTING.

At this close of the address the " Priest " said a few words :—" A Catholic lady has spoken to you. She has not spoken before. She will tell you some time about her life. She was a noble Catholic lady of France. Only a private lady who had a noble, loving nature. She says: ' Died in 1604.' Now good-bye." This report is almost verbatim."

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ON FASTING.—Let me speak to you about fasting. There are the children of the bond-women and the children of the free. The children of the bond-woman shall one day be free. But in order to reach that day they must fast. The outward fast which they preach of to-day is necessary for some. There is no good in it to God. But the child of the bond-woman cannot become the child of the free by what we may call physical fasting. All things which drag down and keep down the child of the bond-woman must be fasted from, driven out. At this great price of outward fasting from outward evil does the child of the bond-woman obtain its ransom. But, says the child of the free-woman, " I was born free." I thought this of myself. And indeed I was born free. I had no need to fast like the child of the bond-woman. But there must be fasting for the child of the free-woman if the spirit would not remain alone when it comes up to us. I was born free, and for my freedom I thank God. But if the seed fall not into the ground it abideth alone. I never fell into the ground. I never knew what

others suffered because I would not. I was born free. Then coming here I came to those who, being born free, had yet humbled themselves, and become obedient unto death, which was the death of the cross—born free, yet bound for the sake of the son of the bond-woman. *There* was majesty and might *with* freedom! I abode alone. For although being born free, I knew nothing of those heights to which they had attained by passing through the depths. They that are born free need not fast outwardly. They have no lust to conquer. They can soar where others grovel. But we must all fast. That is, we must go through the strait gate of self-denial. I want you to see this—that “I was born free” is not real freedom unless it is used to help him who is bound. Except I help him who is bound, I abide alone. It is a warfare, because the free spirit cannot act the Lady Bountiful. It must give of its life. It must humble itself and become obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross, which death is only fully known by the free spirit who strives to help the spirit that is bound.

You must not let life puzzle you. Do not try to live it too hard. But where you find another soul in need, simply try to help it, and leave the cross here and the crown hereafter, to those whom God appoints to minister. Your outward life, if you are brave and quiet, will be taken care of, will be made straight. It is so difficult to let you have your own way, and yet to bless you as we would. The child of the free-woman is more hard to bless often than the child of the bond-woman; because it is not easy to take up the cross of material things when the spirit knows all the while that it is free.

Above all, grow wide and deep. Grow while you are there, and you will know what it is to have grown others with you; and when you come away you will count all things but as dross for the excellency of the knowledge which you have been acquiring in earth-life. There are angels and angels. And the lowest is content with his lot. I do not dispute that. But look at this. The child of the free-woman should attain to a royal life on earth, because coming to her own place of freedom here, unless she has learned what freedom costs, she has to clothe herself in sack-cloth and ashes. I was born free. Then, if I would die free, be raised to the new life free, I must know what it costs them who are bound. Otherwise what advantageth it me my freedom. Let no experience of earth-life fill you with shock or horror. You were born free, and for those who are bound you came to suffer. And if for them you

die, you shall (more than I can tell you of) buy that life again. Whether you pray or fast, you must fast. But fasting with prayer is like the sore with the ointment of healing. Fast and pray because we can help you, and we will.

VIII.—“LAY DOWN THE SWORD AND QUIT THE SHIELD, FOR NOW  
THY WORK IS DONE.”

The lesson of life, the refining discipline of life, lies in this,—to lay down the sword and quit the shield and to have done with work. While you as constantly fly back again to the sword and the shield, and the heavy, heavy work. Here I speak entirely of outward life. Good rests in that which belongs to the outer man, which the outer man possesses. For this good you will take up the sword and the shield, and do the never-ceasing drudging work of life. We are always striving to teach you (and now I speak not recklessly because in a degree in metaphor) we are constantly striving, I say, to teach you to lay down this sword, and quit this shield, and have done with the work. This once accomplished, the soul bound by the most miserable of outer circumstances yet walks free. The outer life is not the life. Once learning that, you have done with death, you are not here as beings to grasp all of matter that shall come in your way, to have and to hold, and to grow rich; but as beings who, passing through the wilderness, in their own separate ways, make it to rejoice and blossom. So long as you look upon mortal life as a state in which you are to grasp, to hold, all that you can, so long will the terror of death hold you and shake you. It is of no use that you believe in life after death, unless you believe in life so lived as to conquer death. If you could but learn to have done with this fighting for outward things, to give up the strife, to throw all outward circumstances calmly into the face of God or Spirit, to leave your outer life in the keeping of your inner life, to say utterly—take these things just as they are, unravel them for me, and if it be best, leave me naked; but suffer not coil after coil of outer life to bind me until I end, like one of old, in having to destroy myself with the destruction of others, but take my life just as it is, and do with all outer things as seems best. I know I am immortal, I shall rise, I shall live, I shall not die. If you could once be taught this so as to live it, you might join the company of the redeemed, or who have redeemed themselves, at any moment of the day. But so long as your eyes are dimmed by the terror of outer things, so long as you walk among those things which entomb you,

you cannot go to heaven. Because before you enter into the marriage supper, you must put on the wedding garment, and that is free, trustful, patient, dauntless spirit-clothing. "And they began with one accord to make excuse." They need not have done it. They could not have entered in. It is easier for the camel to go through the needle's eye. For it is impossible for the spirit to join spirit company while in the flesh. And in this again I use metaphor, for your spirit may be parted from your body, and yet remain entirely surrounded by the flesh. Free among the dead, is the description of all those spirits who are with you to-day who lead a man upward, for the dead cannot lead the living unto life. "The living, the living, they shall praise Thee," and serve Thee. That is all I want to say to you. There must be this laying down the sword and quitting the shield, in this strife about outer things. To do the best and leave the rest to God, or Love, or Spirit—this is to hunger no more and thirst no more with that insatiable mortal hunger and thirst. But it is to hunger and thirst for living bread for the soul, for garments wherewith to clothe itself, for living power by which to conquer the earth for your fellow-men (your own earth being conquered) and enable them to subdue it, as you have also subdued.

Hearken to the heavenly voices, how they cry,  
Leave the fight with outward weapons, lay them by.

There is a little more ; and the Priest says I must make her say it—for she can.

Let the armourer of heaven clothe you perfectly,  
Then, however hot the battle, sure is victory.

That must do. I am a French Spirit who was a Sister of Charity.

#### IX.—LIBERTY.

At the end of this address, which is almost a verbatim report, in reply to the question—Who is it ? the following was said :—

It is impossible for you to know about these things. I think you have been told before, that sometimes those who are above us can come through us, as it were, to you. We have no control over what they may say. It is as though, seeing an opening, they breathe forth a few words, and are again gone. There must be strong attraction at your end for this to be possible. They do this only where their thoughts can find a home, in some strange places, and with some most lowly people. But, still, there must be a cord

attached, as it were, from you to them, and them to you. I have known them do it, when all that we could see was a sort of common working man or woman. They do not consult us in passing through. I do not doubt that they use those in other spheres as ourselves. We only know that you get these things through the opening of our house. Now I am going. I am "the Priest."

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**A FEW WORDS ON LIBERTY.**—In the undying hunger after liberty there is to be found one of mankind's most potent saviours. In the beginning, man, as typified by the child, hungers after liberty—liberty to enjoy himself, the self of the higher animal, to the utmost. On all sides he finds this liberty is chained. He must hunt for his food, dig for his food, hunger for his food. Liberty to enjoy is his dream of Paradise. And so on up. The undying hunger after liberty to enjoy to the utmost that which the soul feels to be enjoyment—it is this for which man pants and groans, and by which he is redeemed. For the end of Liberty is the death of self, as I shall show you.

They are free, many who go up and down upon your earth to-day; but when the goal of Liberty is reached, all find there, written in letters of living light, this command:—There is no liberty short of a life of love—and he who passes free into the kingdom of true liberty finds that there is no abiding place there for him unless he return to set other captives free, and to open earth's prison for souls who are still bound. Men and women are dwelling in the kingdom of true liberty, while upon your earth. But you will find that these are never set free to enjoy selfish delight. The more free they are, the closer they are bound for his sake who is yet a slave. Would you test to the uttermost what Liberty means, you would find that in her service there is joy unspeakable, amid sorrow, which must abound. For no man is truly free until, having laid down his own cross, having vanquished the cross, having ceased to feel that it is any longer a cross, he takes it up and bears it for those who have not spiritual life enough to bear it for themselves. The true liberty of the individual is only known when he reaches to that height whereon he is willing to be bound for the sake of him who is a slave. There are no regions of wild, selfish, personal joy. But there are regions where the sense of liberty is exquisitely full, perfect love, perfect light, perfect harmony. How long the march is from the beginning to the end, you can form some idea of, from, shall we say, the spiritual man lost in the animal, up

to the time when the animal is lost in the spiritual. But it is the undying hunger after that liberty which it only dimly realises, which is one of the most saving or redeeming processes through which you have to pass. Liberty is no child's crown. Liberty is no license to selfish indulgence. Liberty is no vast region where man can enjoy and enjoy only, until he comes into the kingdom of most perfect liberty, where he voluntarily suffers bondage and lays his own liberty aside for ever. Then he does know what it means to be free, to be at rest in the perfection of liberty, which is to feel that perfection is all and in all, that there is no more discord, but that redemption shall do its perfect work through the ministry of those who, having been bound, lived upward into being free, and presently passed upwards yet again, to lay down that liberty so dearly bought, for the bondage of perfect love which cannot rest until all have come upward by the same line of light, into the kingdom where the sun of perfect righteousness can never set.

X.—“WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH THEE, JESUS, THOU SON OF THE LIVING GOD?”

In these words is expressed the malady, and yet the healing of every lost soul. “What have I to do with Thee?” Evidently nothing. My pursuits, my life, my aims, are apart from Thee or Thine. And yet wonderful or mysterious is that voice which speaks so that man must listen. In the very question “What have I to do with Thee?” there lies the seed of future harvest. How can darkness abide light? Yet the light shall presently make darkness flee away. I do not suppose that this account which we have given us is what would be called in any way authentic. But it is given us for our instruction. It is one of those sayings which, old as the Bible, are new every day.

It is a question which the dead ask incessantly of those that are alive. It is a dark soul acknowledging its darkness, and praying towards the light. This is your mission, all of you who are alive—to be baptized with the true fire from heaven. You must so live and walk as that men shall feel—“What have I to do with thee?” If your souls, however faint and crushed, are yet pursuing steadfastly, working your way toward the light, men will say to you—“What have I to do with thee?” They will feel no resentment, no despair, but in acknowledging that they have nought to do with you, they will realise that they have not given to them the new life, and the white stone, and the eternal working together with God,

which amid cross and loss, buffeting and fighting, doubts and fears, is yet the only true life for the soul, while it is a prisoner of the body.

[Pause.]— I cannot go on speaking.

Q.—Is it anyone we know?

A.—It is no one you know. I cannot interest her about it, and that makes it difficult to me to speak. I was with her to-day when she was in the house of church prayer. (The "medium" had that day been in Dorking Church).

Q.—Had you ever seen her before?

A.—No.

Q.—Were you in that Church?

A.—Yes. I had been in that Church. I am often there.

Q.—Did you hear the preacher?

A.—I could not hear the preacher. I do not know what he said.

Q.—What takes you there? Is there anybody there you know?

A.—I go of myself to get some Church.

Q.—Did you go there when in the body?

A.—I go there now. But never mind. They say it is no use. But I was once like that. I knew those who were the sons of the living God, and knew that with them I had nothing to do. But I want to show you that it is not in vain.

"THE PRIEST":—He cannot speak through her. It is all right and best. It is sometimes so. It gives them comfort to try. And when they meet with anyone through whom they can speak they like to talk. I do not want to talk to you now. You can talk to me.

Q.—Can you tell us anything about the state of this spirit who has been speaking?

A.—He is one of our good messengers or servants. I cannot say better than that. He goes to that Church through some attraction; I do not know what. It is one of his haunts; and he wanted to say something through her.

#### INCIDENTS AND BRIEF EXTRACTS.

In the introductory lines to some of the preceding selections we have quoted a few remarks of a personal or incidental character. There were many such, and they added greatly to the life-like and realistic impression produced on those present. It may assist the reader in gaining a complete idea of the atmosphere, so to speak, of the sittings to quote a few more incidental episodes.

The first of the addresses—Selection I—was thus prefaced :—

I will try to give a short address through her if I am able. Are you ready? (The present writer as recorder.)

Please speak slower.

I am not able to see you ; but if you will *think* towards me that I must speak slower, I shall perhaps better understand.

Then, after a few sentences :—

Have you written that ? You must write as clearly as you can.

In the course of one of his early addresses “ F. W. Robertson ” had quoted two well-known lines from “ The Sleep ” :—

O Earth so full of dreary noises,  
O men with wailing in your voices.

After the conclusion of the address, the following conversation took place, the questioner being the present writer :—

Q.—Do you know Elizabeth Barrett Browning ? Is she in your sphere ?

A.—You puzzle me with names. I hardly know my own name. I am myself.

Q.—Do you know the spirit whose lines you quoted ?

A.—(with sudden animation) Oh, YES ! I know HER.

Q.—Do you know when you are with people who are fond of your writings ?

A.—Listen. I know spirits whom my spirit touches, but I do not know the whole identity of that spirit made up into a person. I know spirits. And it is my great joy here—I say this with reverence—to see something of the travail of my soul, and to be satisfied. I missed much on earth for want of cultivating personal affection. And I cannot reach to the whole identity as well as I could have done if I had loved the human and the divine. I thought too much of the souls and too little of the outward humanity of the people among whom I dwelt. But I am learning many things, and I am grateful that in me the balance was kept always weighted with the spiritual rather than the material. We can not choose our lot. But I want you to see that I should know the whole identity if I had loved the human more when I was upon the earth. I scarcely see her through whom I talk. It is the soul concord. It is the power to make her respond to my idea. I scarcely know her bodily presence. This is strange, perhaps, to you, but it is so.

On one occasion “ F. W. Robertson ” had commenced an address, but after a few sentences he came to a stop, and said :—“ I can hardly do her brain. I think I must talk. I cannot put my thoughts clearly.” Then, after a pause—“ He has fetched me to help him.” “ Elizabeth Barrett Browning ” then carried on a long

conversation on various interesting topics. She concluded with these sentences in reference to present communion between spirits "here" and "there":—

If you knew us you would stay with us. You can feel our influence, and be with us in a sense. But you cannot see or apprehend our state as it is. You do enter our homes, only you come and go away without seeing or hearing in the outward way. As you may receive a delicious perfume by being merely in the company of beautiful flowers, so you come to us and are refreshed and made better. But you do not carry back any outward news of our country, because if you came to us you would certainly stay where we are.

Q.—When we come to you, shall we know those we have held converse with in this way?

You must not connect this husky sound with us. You will know those you love and have affinity for at once, because you are part of their life and they are part of yours. . . . All that is belonging to the spirit will be known and recognized and used at once. No need to be introduced to this or that soul. No surprise. Not like saying—"What, are you here?"—"Why, I did not think I should see you!" Not so, but—"I knew you were here long ago."

An article in the *Pioneer of Progress*, for August 28th, 1874, had been read, in which Robert Dale Owen writes thus:—"I have received, written under my very eyes by a luminous detached hand, a communication of some length, purporting to come from an eminent English clergyman—(the Rev. F. W. Robertson)—who died twenty years ago; the style and signature serving further to attest its genuine character." It was suggested to ask "F. W. Robertson" if he could say anything as to this statement. "F. W. R." said:—

Our thoughts often run in sentences, and where these may reach, to what soul, in what part of your earth or our spiritual world, we do not know. I may very possibly have influenced this man, Robert Dale Owen, and this thought may to him assume the form peculiar to his own mind. But, as to luminosity of my hand, and writing a sentence—well, you should read that in the light of the other part of the sentence. The man who can talk of me as an "eminent" divine is a very insipid sort of person. And, you see the confusion of spiritual thought, that I, being dead, wrote this sentence, as if the dead could do anything. . . . The thought is not spiritual—an "eminent" divine, and "being dead twenty years ago." But for aught I know, the thoughts which are set free, let out from my soul may influence the very lowest nature in the human family, and so I may make sentences for them, but I am not conscious of anything like the "eminent" divine writing with a burning hand on the paper, of which you speak.

There is one peculiarity in these communications which seems worth noting, as it occurs more frequently than can be attributed to a merely incidental cause or to accident. In discussing high themes there is frequently a style and dignity about the language employed which is sometimes rather striking, and the words are generally well chosen for the expression of the idea intended to be conveyed. But in speaking of ordinary external, mundane concerns, the phraseology continually reminds one of a foreigner attempting to speak in a language with which he is not familiar. Such phrases as the following illustrate what is meant:—

She has brought down from the sleeping place the picture.

The lady, French person, foreign lady, is attached to her as a mother might be.

They cannot speak through her now. It is far better in the dark of the day. (This was at 2.30 p.m.)

(Again at 3 p.m.) Some one will speak through her this evening, presently, if they can. . . In the after evening we will try to speak.

Other instances of curious phraseology in reference to external things will be noticed in the foregoing pages of selections. At the commencement of a conversational sitting this occurred:—

I am the Priest.

Q.—Have you been with us much lately?

A.—I always know where you are.

Q.—Were you with us the other night? (A small party of friends.)

A.—It is not being here. If you saw all the rooms of your house at once, and could tell all that is taking place in them, you would not say—Were you in the parlour room? It is not place but companionship or connection of the spirits of the people.

Q.—Did you know those two friends who were with us—the Catholics?

A.—The evening of the other day? Yes, I know about that evening.

Q.—When we are like you, we shall be able to be more with those with whom we are in harmony, shall we not?

A.—It is only by being apart that we learn that we are fitted to be together. There is no real spirit-tie between those people or spirits who forget. That is, you know, you are very pleased to meet A or B, but A or B part from you for a few months, and you lose all desire to be with them. We ourselves may be one with you and you with us. It is not the “dead” and the “living.” With you, you have to be kind and polite, and to be somewhat ridiculous to each other, to get on with each other. We do not approach each other like that. With us it is only knowing each other and being at home. We do not all see alike, but we feel quite free. It is not striving to please each other, it is being at rest or in harmony; though all the while wide differences may exist. But this state is not reached until

self, in all the outward senses of the word, is put away. . . . The strange doctor gentleman who was here belongs to a home-place where she does not often go. But she sees him there sometimes. Now, look. They meet in your house, we will say, for the first time as strangers. . . . Well, but still they know each other quite well in this spirit-home or sphere. But when they meet on earth they are "blinded new." That is how you do again and again. And she (i.e., the medium) knows that stranger better away from earth-life than in it. . . . "The Strong Spirit" told us this, and she was laughing to us about it on your evening day. It is so odd ! We could see you. "The Strong Spirit" told us those words "She is blinded new." But I cannot tell how you sat. I cannot tell you about your room. Only you were in walls. And she ("the Strong Spirit") was speaking to your wife. That is how I knew. Now tell me about the others. It was more like three women, and the others men.

The writer described the party :—

The PRIEST : It is all right ! I did not see that Mrs.— was a woman

Then follow some curiously graphic and pertinent remarks about this lady and her work, which was of a unique kind, and was widely known to a large circle of correspondents. She was a Catholic, and the wife of the "strange doctor gentleman." After this "the Priest" again :—

"The Strong Spirit" says :—Try and tell me what was said about your being free and therefore free to do evil and be evil !

One of the party, an ardent Swedenborgian, had argued on this subject at length on the evening in question. Then followed a long argumentative conversational discourse from "the Priest" on the ultimate inevitable death of evil in the evil-doer, and emphasizing that the time must come when he will feel compelled to say "I will arise and go to my Father." The whole sitting was most graphic and life-like, and full of curious points. But it is too long to reproduce in full on the present occasion.

Although most of the communications are of a distinctly religious tone, only one Prayer, or Invocation, occurs in the whole series. It was given by "F. W. Robertson" at the close of one of the sittings, and will form an appropriate finish to these extracts.

I will repeat to you a prayer which I said. Not that you should copy it. The words are nothing :—

In the darkness of my present state be Thou my Light. In the ignorance of my present state, be Thou my Knowledge. In the hate of my present state, be thou my Love. Be all things to me which are necessary, and make me evermore to seek with earnest spirit after Thee, O God, Who art

the only true Spirit. Keep this thought first in me—that I may strive to be whatever is Thy will. I believe that I have yet to pass through the cloud and through the sea, but knowing that Thou art beyond, it is no longer cloud or sea to me, only in as far as it may teach me the necessary lesson which I have to learn. And now for the world. Give the world light and the knowledge of Thy ways, and wrap it round in Thy love, so thick, so warm, that the waste places of the desolate earth shall get a little comfort from the warmth of Thy Divine Spirit. Why the world suffers as it does even now I do not know. Teach me to know this, because I am still puzzled at Thy working, at Thy ways. Not in discontent, but I want to see how it is that evil is not already overcome of good. And for all the earth and for all in it I do ever pray—grant it all Thy tender care and love—Thy most blessed Love.

#### A CONCLUDING SELECTION.

An intimate friend of the members of the circle—whom we will call Mr. A.—was lying seriously ill. But no request had been made for any message in reference to him. The communications on this occasion, as we have already remarked, may be looked upon as a sort of connecting link between those in Chapter III. and the present series. The "Poor Human Spirit" was a "stranger," something like some of J. J. Morse's less educated "strangers," although she gave no name or evidence of identity, possibly because no attempt was made to elicit such information. Like some of Mr. Morse's "strangers," she was conscious of not being in a state of advancement, and also, like some of Mr. Morse's "strangers," she was conscious of the presence of other spirits more advanced than herself, and of their help and guidance. The touching picture, as a whole, affords much food for reflection. What follows is an almost verbatim report.

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A POOR HUMAN SPIRIT.—They let me come through their house. The Priest fetched me to his house, and now I come to you. I am one of those who watch over him. The Priest told me I was to tell you this.

HE WHO WAS THE PRIEST.—You do not understand. I want her to tell you simply about your friend who is ill, who was a friend to her. Wait a moment. She will tell you about your friend, Mr. A. I will try to follow her and correct her afterwards. You had better leave her alone, because she is frightened somewhat at coming.

**THE POOR HUMAN SPIRIT.**—The Priest says I am to say that he helped me when I was ill long ago. He gave me, to cure me, medicine, and because I was poor and wanted food, he gave me money long ago. But my earth-life was short—27 years. I had for my husband a wood carpenter. He was cruel to my body, because he took drinks. We walked about for work, and I suffered because I was not strong in my body. I was never bad in my life, and he was not bad, only he was never at home, but walking about. Your friend did not know me or my husband. We were in that place where he lives.\* I was ill and went up to him, and he gave me things to cure me, medicine and money. It was a cough in my chest and my side, and I was tall and thin. No, it was only one night. That will do. You must go on. I am done with. He did it for me. I want you to see that that is past, and that I am now set free. But there are others who need all and more than all that I needed. This is what I want to say. The Priest tells me to say it. It is good for us to die. We are better off here, and you will be. And so it is all gain to you. But while the world, which is your world, is in sorrow, it is all a help toward the time when sorrow shall cease, for the people who can help, to live in your world. You may say you are better off. But you see, you leave the world—your world—poorer for your going. And so the Priest says—"God wants you in the world more than He does in Heaven." It is bad to see those you love suffer. You must leave it all to God and His angels. But I want to say this plain. I went through that place and found noble help. It did me such good, because it some way helped my spirit to a firm trust in God. I knew that God was watching over me because He sent someone to help me. You see—take him away from earth—I am gone, but those who follow through that place after me will find that shop shut up. If he is in danger of hurting his soul, or if physical disease saps the fountains of his earth life, they will take him. But so long as he can live God wants him. He is more help with you to the world. I see it so plainly, but I cannot put it. You do not know how you do good in this way; not perhaps good, but how you hold up the weak when you help the strong. Not me you help, but if you help him it is all through so. The great power of some of you is to move the strong to help the weak.

\*Mr. A. had a good business as Chemist and Druggist in a town about 25 miles from London. He recovered, and is still living in this world.

It is all one work. I am sometimes with your friend, sometimes not. I do not know why. I cannot say any more. Do you want me to? I do not help him. They bring me with others. You see it is this way. I am round him; I am with him to help him; but I do not know how. There is discord, let us say, somewhere. They come to us, and fetch us, and there is peace. It is putting away something which makes discord. We are there, and there is peace. I cannot go myself to him. You see, I am not high up as they are. They tell me to go, and I can come very near him. I would do anything for him I could. Because he was good to me. Not because I am grateful, but because he did make me part of his—the Priest says—part of the comfort of his life. The Priest says I have done, and I am at rest.

HE WHO WAS THE PRIEST.—I cannot make her say all that I would. Now it is as real a thing that you are ministered to by those to whom you minister, as that you take your natural food. And when I saw that you were thinking about this friend, I thought no doubt one from this band of spirits might know him. Your friend can help the soul through the body, and has done so all his life. Unwittingly often. I wanted her to show you that we do not live alone, and that, from our world, we see that those who can help in your world are worth keeping there.

After referring to an entirely different subject, "The Priest" said:—This is the thought. For the love of souls, for the love of your brother whom you have seen, help by any means within your power, those who are strong, to help the weak. They need many baptisms of love and strength and comfort. The weak often cause the strong to be weary. Build up the strong then, you who have the power, and by doing this prepare yourselves to hear those words of wonderful commendation—"Well done good and faithful servant." No mistake is greater than to suppose you must help the weak only. The strong need help in yet greater measure. And when you see the straight knees bending, and the broad back bowing down, help all you can, because, as she has told you, this may help the weak in a way which you cannot do. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Yes or no. If you can keep him, and you will not, there will not only come a day, but the day now is, in which *you* suffer loss, and not *he*. God can keep him. Your brother is not at your mercy. But there is blessing, and honor, and power, and riches, and glory, beyond all that you can now

ask or think, for him who gives himself daily to his kind, who not only prays, *Make me my brother's keeper*, but who is willing to give of himself, as he may be shown, to him who stands in need. For it is true that "God is Love, and he who dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

One looked far out into the night  
And he was all alone—  
Up to the very gate of heaven  
His spirit made its moan.  
A voice low down upon the earth  
Was crying calm and clear—  
"Seek not thy comfort in the skies,  
"Thy dwelling place is here."

He turned him from the gate of heaven,  
And earthward made his quest,  
And found that in God's lowly earth  
His spirit could find rest,  
For God who loveth all alike,  
Whether below, above,  
Will safely keep in holy arms  
Of everlasting Love.

It means this. God can make you in heaven upon earth ; and that you are not alone, because the Father is with you in your life as well as here. For Love is all, and Death is nought. Good-bye, Good night.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SOURCES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS—CONCLUSIONS.

THE consideration of the sources of Automatic Speaking and Writing is so intimately connected with the conclusions to which we may be led, that the two subjects can best be considered in the same chapter. We naturally turn first to Mr. Myers' great work, "Human Personality," for the latest ideas of the man who has devoted more study to the subject of automatic action than anyone else. To some extent we are disappointed. During his life-time, so far as the public had any means of judging, it seemed as if Mr. Myers had almost entirely ignored the higher-class written communications, with the exception of those through Mr. Stainton Moses, and as if, with the exception of Mrs. Piper, he was almost oblivious of automatic speaking. Apparently he did not come into contact with any non-professional automatic or trance speaking. But among the professional utterances of the time during which his studies continued, there was much that was far above the commonplace or the trivial.

Mr. Myers arranges the apparent sources of written messages under four classes. They may be concisely stated thus :—\*

A.—The automatist's own mind.

B.—Telepathically derived from the mind of some other person still living on earth.

C.—Unembodied intelligences of unknown type, "elementaries," "guides," or "guardians."

D.—That the messages may be derived, in a more or less direct manner, from the agent—the departed friend—from whom the communications actually claim to come.

This classification is equally applicable to spoken as to written communications. Mr. Myers says that his main efforts had been directed to the proof that there are messages which do *not* fall into Class A. But he also asserts that the great majority of such communications represent the subliminal workings of the automatist's mind alone. He then proceeds to adduce a number of cases such

\* Human Personality, Vol. ii. pp. 118-119.

as would come under our Group I. Later on he discusses cases which would belong to our Group II.\*

In Chapter III, which discusses this Group, enough has been said regarding the series of "Strangers." But we should be glad to refer again to Professor Hyslop's investigations. The position which Professor Hyslop assumes is one of extreme caution. This greatly enhances the value of his work. In a short concluding chapter he says:—

Our first duty is to science, and in this we must give the right of way to scepticism, as the safest provision against illusion, until the audacity of the theories necessary to support it carries us beyond all evidence and rationality in the resistance to the alternative view. . . . I give my adhesion to the theory that there is a future life, and persistence of personal identity.

. . . I am willing to make it provisional upon the establishment, by the non-believer in the supernormal of any kind, of sufficient telepathy in combination with the other necessary processes, to account for the whole amazing result. . . . I have kept my mind steadily and only on the question whether some theory could not explain away the facts, rather than accept spiritism. . . . The fact of satisfying the criterion for personal identity can hardly be disputed by anyone on any theory whatever, whether of fraud, telepathy, or spiritism. †

Professor Hyslop considers fraud on Mrs. Piper's part as absolutely excluded. He proceeds:—

The only question is whether it is more consistent with the data at hand to believe that they can be better accounted for by telepathy with its necessary adjuncts, than by the survival of consciousness after death. . . . The only difficulty that offers any resistance worth serious attention is that which supposes a combination of telepathy and secondary personality. . . . We merely show that secondary personality explains a number of abnormal mental phenomena which some unintelligent people considered spiritistic, and the habit of dispelling illusions by that phrase enables us still to use it as a charm in the defence of scepticism, which in spite of its rights may easily adopt the tone of dogmatism.‡

These remarks of Professor Hyslop seem to us to go to the root of the matter and to deserve the serious pondering of all sceptics. He then goes on to state the grounds of the conclusion to which he has been impelled:—

If we study the Piper phenomena with due care and patience, we shall discover in the difference between them and the ordinary facts of

\*The reader is referred to Chapters VIII. and IX., and to the Appendices to them, in Vol. II. of *Human Personality*.

† *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. xvi. pp. 289-291.

‡ *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. xvi., p. 291.

secondary consciousness a significance in the dramatic interplay of different personalities that reveals the most apparent realism in the whole performance. But even telepathy and secondary personality do not exhaust the suppositions that have to be made. The enormous deception involved in so persistent and consistent a representation of the spiritistic reality, is of a nature to make one pause. A process assumed to be intelligent and acute as it must be to reproduce personal identity in this manner, must know whether it is deceiving or not. Nor can we stop with the Piper case in making this supposition. This is only one in many thousands of those that are continually producing phenomena with an apparent spiritistic import. The only difference between them and the case before us is that the latter more nearly satisfies the most rigid demands of science. But all of them represent a constant attempt to reproduce spiritistic phenomena, and if we are to use the theory of unconscious deception we have to extend it to the subliminal for all who have apparitions, mediumistic experiences, spontaneous coincidences suggesting a spirit origin, planchette and other writing, and possibly to the unconscious life of every one of us. Such a supposition baffles all credulity, scientific or otherwise. But it is the necessary consequence of the combination of telepathy and secondary personality.\*

Towards the end of the concluding chapter in Professor Hyslop's Record the following paragraph occurs. It appears to us to put a novel view of the question very forcibly:—

It is worth remarking in this contention that in so far as explanatory considerations are concerned, spiritism has superior claims scientifically to telepathy. Spiritism is an appeal to known causes, the fundamental criterion of all scientific procedure ; telepathy is an appeal to the unknown. We know just what an individual consciousness can do when it exists. In supposing its continuance beyond death we are but extending a known cause beyond certain concomitants and limitations of its terrestrial manifestation. As a phenomenon it is quite as intangible and invisible in its incarnate conditions as it can be supposed to be in the discarnate. We know it even terrestrially, in others, only by induction applied to certain physical movements. Hence where we advance spiritism to explain the Piper and similar phenomena we are but extending *known* causes precisely as Newton extended terrestrial gravitation to explain phenomena previously excluded from its operations. We are using the same cause to explain the unity of certain facts that we used to explain them when the person was living. It is telepathy then that appeals to the unknown, so that the spiritistic hypothesis has one scientific credential that telepathy has not.†

With regard to communications, whether spoken or written, which belong to our Group III., Mr. Myers says :—

\* Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. xvi., pp. 291-2.

† Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. xvi., p. 294.

The automatic writings of W. Stainton Moses—about 1870-80—were perhaps the first continuous series of messages given in England which lifted the subject into a higher plane. These writings marked a new departure of most serious moment. . . . However important it may be to work to the full that preliminary enquiry, [referring to an intermediate paragraph] it is still more important to collect the richest possible harvest of these advanced cases. To such collection Mr. Moses' writings acted as a powerful stimulant ; and ever since my first sight of his MSS., I have made it a principal object to get hold of automatic script from trustworthy sources. During these 27 years I have personally observed at least 50 cases where there was every reason to suppose that the writing was genuinely automatic, albeit in most of the cases it was uninteresting and non-evidential.\*

A few pages further on Mr. Myers says:—

The almost universally high moral tone of genuinely automatic utterances . . . has not, I think, been sufficiently noticed, or adequately explained.\*

After mentioning one point which struck him as specially noticeable, he writes thus of a second:—

No one of the various conflicting churches has been able to claim the general drift of automatic messages as making for its special tenets. The various controversialists, where they have been candid, have admitted moral elevation, but,—from their various opposing points of view,—have agreed in deploring theological laxity. I must indeed confess myself unable to explain why it is that beneath the frequent incoherences, frequent common-placeness, frequent pomposity of these messages, there should almost always be a substratum of better sense, of truer catholicity, than is usually to be heard, except from the leading minds of the generation.†

In the second of two interesting articles on "Science and the After Life" which appeared last year, the writer says:—"Little has been published as to the nature of the more serious messages received. Very wisely, indeed, the majority have been kept back until greater certainty is attained as to their real origin."‡ Even if we admit to the full the verdict of Mr. Myers, as regards the great majority of spoken and written automatic messages, three things may be looked upon as proved:—First, that by their means information does come to the mind in a supernormal manner from other embodied minds. Second, that by the same means information is conveyed from intelligences which are unembodied, and that in some cases these intelligences have furnished proof of their identity with deceased human beings.

\*Human Personality, Vol. II., pp. 117-118.

†Human Personality, Vol. II., pp. 133-134.

‡"Science and the After Life." By James Edmund Clarke, B.A., B.Sc. —*Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, April and July, 1904.

An analogy may here be permissible. The scientific and evidential value of messages obtained through movements of a table, when the circle was sitting round with their hands resting on it, was destroyed by the impossibility of determining the extent to which "unconscious muscular action" might operate. But as soon as it was demonstrated that, even in a few instances, the table moved when untouched, matters were entirely altered. The presence of a force "new to science" was apparent. The probability was then greatly increased that in cases where contact existed the new force might be at work, and the results were in consequence invested with greater interest and importance. In an analogous way—the great majority of messages both spoken and written are non-evidential. But as soon as it was demonstrated that there were some which conveyed new facts, and still more when it was demonstrated that even a few of the messages came from the personalities they professed to,—and we claim that both these propositions have been established,—matters become entirely altered. The presence of an intelligence "new to science" is apparent, and, as a further consequence, the non-evidential messages become invested with greater interest and importance.

The authentication of communications belonging to Group III., by which we mean the obtaining of evidence as to the identity of the professed communicators, is a much more difficult matter than in the case of messages belonging to the other two groups. The difficulties encountered appear to be in the nature of the case, almost insuperable. This need not be regarded as of essential importance or as detracting from the interest or value of such communications. The value to the true lovers of our best literature, whether prose or poetry, does not depend upon the personality of, let us say, Thomas à Kempis, or Ruskin, or of the authors of "*Childe Harold*," or "*Queen Mab*," or the "*Drama of Exile*," but upon considerations of an entirely different character. In the same way, it is of quite secondary importance whether "*F. W. Robertson*" or "*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*" were the actual writers of the messages.

Still, it may be worth while to consider the question of identity in relation to messages of this kind a little further. Let us suppose the case of an ordinary person who has been lost sight of for years by his relatives and friends; and that the post one morning brings a letter purporting to be from him, and claiming recognition and response. How is evidence of identity to be established? Not by descriptions of the country in which the long lost one asserts he is

living. Not by literary, or scientific, or moral essays. But by narrations of personal incidents of a private character;—the more trivial and insignificant, the more calculated would they be to produce the desired effect. If we now suppose the correspondent to have actually gone to another world, such considerations would have still greater force. If he has been a contemporary of his friends and relatives, and has had personal intercourse with them, it is the details of that personal intercourse that would be most effective. Conviction of his identity might result. If, however, we imagine the correspondent to be an ancestor, or a person known only by repute, it would manifestly be far more difficult for him to prove his identity, if he were still living on earth; and if it was alleged that he had sent a communication from another sphere, it would be well-nigh impossible. If we imagine still further that he had lost interest in the details of the life he once lived, and not caring to enter into them was absorbed in aims and thoughts of a different character, the “well-nigh impossible” might become practically unattainable.

It would, we think, be wise, in the present state of our knowledge, not to pursue the attempt to obtain evidence of identity in reference to communications belonging to our Group III., and to restrict consideration of them to their intrinsic interest, and to the influence they are calculated to exert apart from their association with particular names. It will be known to many of our readers that the attempts to identify the “controls” of W. Stainton Moses, in regard to “Spirit Teachings,” have so far resulted in signal failure. And yet it is, we think, probably wrong to associate any idea of wilful deception with the failures.

On the other hand, many “non-evidential” messages carry internal evidence along with them that they proceed from intelligent beings further advanced in wisdom and knowledge than any of those who took part in their delivery. The theory that their source is to be found in the subliminal powers and faculties of the medium, may be incapable of disproof. But it does not appear to us to afford reasonable justification for building so great an edifice on so small a foundation of knowledge. So far as we are aware, in no single instance in any part of the world, has the message itself claimed that its source was in the mind or soul of the medium, that it was in fact spoken or written by a “subliminal” self. To suppose a uniform dramatisation by such a “subliminal” self, in similar terms, all the world over, seems almost ludicrously improbable.

Reverting, in conclusion, to the selections which constitute

Chapter IV., the effect on the mind of the transcriber—the present writer—of the whole series of those communications, was a conviction at the time, which has remained unchanged through all the subsequent years. That conviction was that a door was actually opened into another world, that teachings came directly from it, and that glimpses were permitted of an active, intelligent, earnest life of work and aspiration, under conditions which can only be most imperfectly grasped by those in earth-life.

It has been objected by a friend to whom some of the addresses were shown, that they seem to emanate from no fixed stand-point. By this we imagine is meant that they have no fixed basis of religious or philosophical belief, especially the former. This is of course true, so far as any creed, doctrine, or theology, is concerned. In this connection the opening verses of the Gospel of John can hardly fail to recur to the mind. A Light is there testified to “which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” May we not give a still wider application to the universality of this Divine Light, and believe that it embraces not only the human race as inhabitants of earth, but all Spirits everywhere, all the children of the Universal Father? We then have a standpoint which will, we think, be found to be in essence, that of these communications from the Unseen.

Apart from this, the communications may be said to have two key-notes, which at every opportunity make themselves heard. The first is **FREEDOM**. Over and over again the advantage is expatiated on, of the attainment of Freedom in this life. By this is meant, firstly, Freedom from the carnal nature. That is, that **THE MAN** shall have so conquered material things that he is no longer a slave to any of the appetites of the body, nor to the acquisition of outward and material gain, nor to any ambition of place or power. And, secondly, the blessings of that Freedom are equally insisted on, in which Creed and Dogma have no enslaving power over the mind and soul. The essence of idolatry has been defined as the attributing to outward acts or ceremonies, any inherent spiritual efficacy. Such acts or ceremonies can not be more than symbols of spiritual realities. From the wide outlook assumed by these communications there is Freedom from everything of this kind. In varying words the belief is expressed,—that—Happy is that Spirit who gains this Freedom, while on earth, and blessed is the Freedom in which such a one finds himself at the entrance of another life.

The second key-note is **SERVICE**. Service to God, by means of—in the form of—service to His sons and daughters, who stand in

need of help, encouragement, and instruction from those who are able to give it. The privilege and duty of Service is continually emphasized. And the thought is more than once expressed, that earth-life affords special facility and ability for helping up those who are low down. The spirit, while in the body, can get nearer to those who suffer. In the quaint words of one of the messages—"God wants you in the world more than He does in heaven."

With all her deep insight and power of expression, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, while in earth-life, gave us only a glimpse of realities which seem to be opening before us to-day. Her words—

Mortal man and woman,  
Go upon your travel !

may be looked upon as addressed to every-one

Who sought the stern descending way,  
Perfecting on our darkened earth,  
His spirit, citizen of clay. (—*F. W. H. Myers*.)

Mrs. Browning proceeds :—

Heaven assist the human  
Smoothly to unravel  
All that web of pain  
Wherein ye are holden.  
Do ye know our Voices  
Chanting down the Golden ?  
Do ye guess our choice is,  
Being un beholden,  
To be harkened by you yet again ?

This pure door of opal  
God hath shut between us,—  
Us, His shining people,  
You, who once have seen us  
And are blinded new !

But "Farewells" are not enough. If they would teach, as well as bless, there must be Greetings also. And so we must change one word in the lines which follow, and say :—

Yet, across the doorway,  
Past the silence reaching,  
GREETINGS evermore may,  
Blessing in the teaching,  
Glide from us to you.

## A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF AUTOMATIC LITERATURE.

**T**HIS Catalogue is confined to Automatic Literature in the English Language, and to works printed and published in England. Many works of this class, some of them interesting and valuable, have been issued in America; but it has not been found practicable to compile an even approximately complete list. The aim of the present Catalogue is to include all, respecting which there appears to be good evidence of their genuinely automatic character, either by speech or writing, without regard to their literary or intrinsic value. What are termed by spiritualists "inspirational addresses" delivered consciously, are not included. In writing, it is possible generally to distinguish what is written without conscious exercise of the will-power; but in speaking, although some "inspirational" utterances may be genuinely automatic, even when the speaker is quite conscious, there seems no means of distinguishing them from ordinary extempore speaking, the result of previous thought.

The Catalogue is doubtless incomplete, especially in books privately printed. The writer would feel indebted to any readers who would kindly take the trouble to send particulars of any such omissions to the care of the publishers of this volume.

**Angelic Revelations.**—THE ORIGIN, ULTIMATION AND DESTINY OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT. Vols. I. to V.—1875 to 1885. 8vo., Pages in all 2167. Privately Published.

The contents of these volumes were communicated in the form of Addresses to a chosen and select circle of Recipients through an unconscious instrument—that is—one in the entranced state. They were taken down at the time, by the one chosen Recorder.

A small volume, under the title of "The Philosophy of Life," was privately published a year ago (1904), by Thomas Powers, 134, Great Clowes Street, Broughton, Manchester, which is a synopsis of interior life states as contained in the "Angelic Revelations," and a second series of books. Mr. Powers invites correspondence with "earnest students of the laws of spiritual life."

**Spirit Teachings.**—THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF WILLIAM STANTON MOSES (M.A. OXON.) By Automatic or Passive Writing. With a Biography by CHARLTON T. SPEER. Fifth Edition. 324 pp., demy 8vo, 8s. 6d. net. Office of "Light," 110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.

This book has probably been more widely read than any other volume of automatic literature. Mr. Myers discusses it both in the "S.P.R. Proceedings," and in "Human Personality."

**I Awoke! The Article of Death and the Soul's Awakening.** WITH APPENDIX ON THE FOURTH DIMENSION. Fifth Thousand. 8vo., 157 pp. London: Thomas Burleigh, 1900. Price 1s. net. Paper.

**The Drama of Life. The Evolution of Man.** 8vo., 264 pp. London: Thomas Burleigh, 1900. Price 1s. net. Paper.

**What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? AN IMPERFECT STORY OF A PERFECT LIFE.**—Re-Issue of **THE WELL BELOVED OF THE FATHER.** 8vo., 348 pp. London: The Walter Scott Publishing Company, Limited. N.D. Price 1s. net. Paper.

These three books must be taken together. The preface to the first says:—"Three friends . . . met at various times and places—indoors, or in the open air—always in broad daylight. One of them taking paper and pencil, would write rapidly . . . without looking at the paper, and with no knowledge at the time of what was written. . . . The book is presented exactly as it was received." The two other volumes are from the same circle.

**An Allegory.**—By L.O. 67 pp. 1899.

**Fairy Tales from Fairyland.**—By DONALD AND OTHERS. 209 pp. 1900.

**Auld Reekie.**—By CLARA. 64 pp. 1900.

**Letters from Donald.**—By CLARA. 147 pp. 1s. net 1899.

**Letters from some Friends who have crossed the Border.** 149 pp. May be obtained from Office of "Light," 110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

These five small volumes were written automatically by a lady who signs herself "Clara." Respecting the first three, the writer has sent to some of her friends a few brief explanatory manuscript notes. The "Allegory" is in reference to the lost continent of Atlantis, and its inhabitants. The writer was "in the habit of copying stories for the blind in the embossed letters called Braille." One day she was told "We should all like to write stories for the blind." "Each day they wrote, and with one or two exceptions all the stories were copied by me in Braille." This is the origin of "Fairy Tales from Fairyland." With regard to "Auld Reekie," the writer says:—"This curious automatically written legend or story represents in allegorical form the theory that what we call sin, and evil, are but the experiences of our race in searching after the Everlasting Good, No-Good being merely the negative of Good."

**Glimpses of a Brighter Land.**—Given through a Writing Medium, who signs herself "H." 162 pp. London. James Burns. 1870. Dedicated to Mary Howitt. Preface by A. M. H. W. [Anna Mary Howitt Watts].

The Preface is interesting. And so are the letters, although they do not contain anything which approaches to evidence of a super-human origin.

**Essays from the Unseen.**—Delivered through the mouth of W. L., a Sensitive, and recorded by A.T.T.P. London: 1885. Introductory Chapter, 65 pp. Essays, 461 pp. Frontispiece Portrait of Recorder, and a few "Portraits" of Communicators drawn by the Sensitive.

The Introductory Chapter is interesting, and gives the impression of an earnest, sincere seeker after truth on the part of the "Recorder," and of a genuine automatic speaker on the part of the "Sensitive." The "Recorder" was by profession a Barrister, and was intimately acquainted with men and things in India. The "Controls" profess to include a number of Europeans and Natives celebrated in the History of the Indian Empire, also a number of Religious and Classical Heroes of Antiquity, also some modern historical characters. The position and education of the "Recorder" may be presumed to have qualified him as a judge of evidence. He appears to believe that a large number of the "Controls" have given evidence of identity. We do not think that readers of the book will come to the same conclusion, but will believe that some other solution must be searched for.

**Letters from Julia, or LIGHT FROM THE BORDERLAND.**—A Series of Messages as to the Life beyond the Grave received by Automatic Writing from one who has gone before. Preface by W. T. Stead (through whose hand the Messages were written). London. 188 pp. 2s. cloth.

A remarkable book. Should be read by all who are interested in the subject, quite independently of what views they may hold as to the source of the intelligence manifested, or how far they may agree or disagree with Mr. Stead himself. The greater part had been already published in *BORDERLAND*, Vols. II., III., IV. 1895-7.

**Spiritualism Explained in Seven Trance Addresses** through E. W. WALLIS (Late) Editor of "The Two Worlds." 99 pp. 1s. paper; 1s. 6d. cloth. 1896. Post free, 1s. 8d., from Office of "Light," 110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.

These are reports of trance-addresses delivered to the Birmingham Spiritualist Union in 1896. A preface says—"They are not verbatim, and have had to be revised and edited under considerable difficulties, owing to the fact that in trance-addresses the medium is unable to recall or reproduce the arguments, illustrations, or the exact phraseology employed while he is under control."

**A Spirit's Idea of Happiness.** 344 pp. Cloth 2s. 1898. Given by Automatic Writing through J. R. TURIN. Post free 2s. 4d. from office of "Light," 110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

The conditions under which this book was written are thus described :—"We have seen this instrument write at the swiftest speed possible; at the same time his brain has been in a condition of complete passivity." At times he hears the message, and "we have been able to cause him to write all we wished by means of his clairaudient faculty."—pp. 138-9.

**One Year in Spirit Land.**—**Letters from Florence to her Mother.**—London; Gay & Bird—1904. 92 pp. 2s. 6d. Cloth.

"Light" says of this little book :—"Those who look for illumination, or revelation, regarding life in spirit land will, we are afraid, be disappointed . . . for many of the statements are so bald, and seemingly so materialistic, that more difficulties and questions are likely to be aroused in the minds of thoughtful readers.—Dec. 10, 1904." There is no reason to doubt that the book is genuinely automatic, but we fail to see any evidence in the book that the source is what it professes to be.

**Letters from the Spirit World.** 2nd edition, with additional Letters. For private circulation only. 84 pp. London, Harrison & Sons, 1904.

Preface by Isabella M. Nugent, 5 Temple Gardens, Brighton, who states that she received the following letters through the mediumship of Mrs. Russell-Davies. "The Spirit who has written them claims to be my cousin, Lord Carlingford, who died six years ago, and I am fully convinced of his identity . . . I shall be happy to give any further information desired by readers of this pamphlet." The letters are animated by a sincere, intelligent religious spirit. There is but little theology. One letter which comments on the pre-Christian and Pagan origin of much that is included in orthodox Christianity includes these sentences :—"There is no authentic and contemporary record of the birth, life, and death of Jesus Christ. I can say no more. But when all this is said what have we? The New Testament, full of the best, the grandest, purest and truest guides to the worship of that unknown but ever present Jehovah. . . . The noblest aspirations of mankind are there embodied." (p. 56.)

**Thought Lectures.**—By FATHER STEPHANO. Given through VITA and MANDOLA. 8vo. pp. 94. One Shilling net. Office of "Light," 110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C. [1904.]

The Preface tells us that these Thought Lectures were given in automatic writing during 1903 and 1904; "Vita" being the writing medium, but gaining the power to be so only during "Mandola's" presence. A "Foreword" is contributed by Miss E. Katharine Bates, to whom the two ladies are known personally, and to whose *bona-fides* she bears her testimony. The language and style of the Lectures is simple and refined, and their tone is very high. The volume is well worth study, whatever view the reader may take as to the source claimed for it.

### TWO VOLUMES OF POETRY.

So far as we know only two volumes of automatic poetry have been published in this country; both of which are out of print.

**Improvisations from the Spirit.**—London, 1857.—A NOTE at the end of the volume is signed.—J.J.G.W. [DR. J. J. GARTH WILKINSON.]

Dr. Wilkinson says that his attention had been "particularly directed to the phenomena of drawing, speaking and writing by Impression: and I determined to make an experiment of the kind, in composition, myself. . . . A theme is chosen, and written down. So soon as this is done the first impression upon the mind which succeeds the act of writing the title, is the beginning of the evolution of that theme, no matter how strange or alien the word or phrase may seem. That impression is written down: and then another, and another, until the piece is concluded." The results are varied. Sometimes poetical. Sometimes grotesque. Sometimes absurd.

**Songs of the Spirit.**—By H.H. London, 1868.

A few words, "To the Reader," say:—The verses contained in this Volume flowed from the pen of the writer unasked for, unpremeditated and without study or effort. She believes their source to be in the Spirit-World.

**References to the more important articles on Automatic Speaking and Writing in the "Proceedings of the S.P.R.":—**

A series of four articles by Mr. F. W. H. Myers.—Proceedings, Vol. II., p. 217.—Vol. III., p. 1.—Vol. IV., p. 209.—Vol. V., p. 522.—Proceedings, Vol. IX. The Subliminal Consciousness. Chapter VI., p. 3. F. W. H. Myers. (Many passages in this chapter).—The Experiences of W. Stainton Moses. I., p. 245. F. W. H. Myers (Many passages in this article).—Proceedings, Vol. X., p. 14. Some portions of an article by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S.—Proceedings, Vol. XI. The Experiences of W. Stainton Moses. II., p. 24. F. W. H. Myers. (Many passages in this article).—The Subliminal Self. Chapter VIII., p. 334 (some cases).—Proceedings, Vol. XII., p. 277. The case of Albert Le Baron. Communicated by Professor William James.—Proceedings, Vol. XIII., p. 291. "Development of Automatic Writing in Mrs. Piper's Trance." In a "Further Record," by Dr. R. Hodgson.—Proceedings, Vol. XV., p. 16. Mrs. Henry Sidgwick. Discussion of the Trance Phenomena of Mrs. Piper.—Proceedings, Vol. XV., pp. 400-401. F. W. H. Myers. (Some paragraphs).—Proceedings, XVII. A large portion of this Volume deals with the Automatic Speaking and Writing of Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Thompson, and Helene Smith, by various writers.—Proceedings, Vol. XVIII., p. 104. The Types of Phenomena Displayed in Mrs. Thompson's Trance. J. S. Piddington. (Mainly Automatic Speaking and Writing).—Also see "Human Personality," Chapter VIII., Vol. II., pp. 116-185, and pp. 416-495.

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