

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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# MY FATHER

By

ESTELLE W. STEAD



1.  
Arthur E. Mussey

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"The Union of all who love in the  
Service" of all who suffer"

My Father's motto —

Forward be our watchword.

Estelle S. Stacey

MY FATHER

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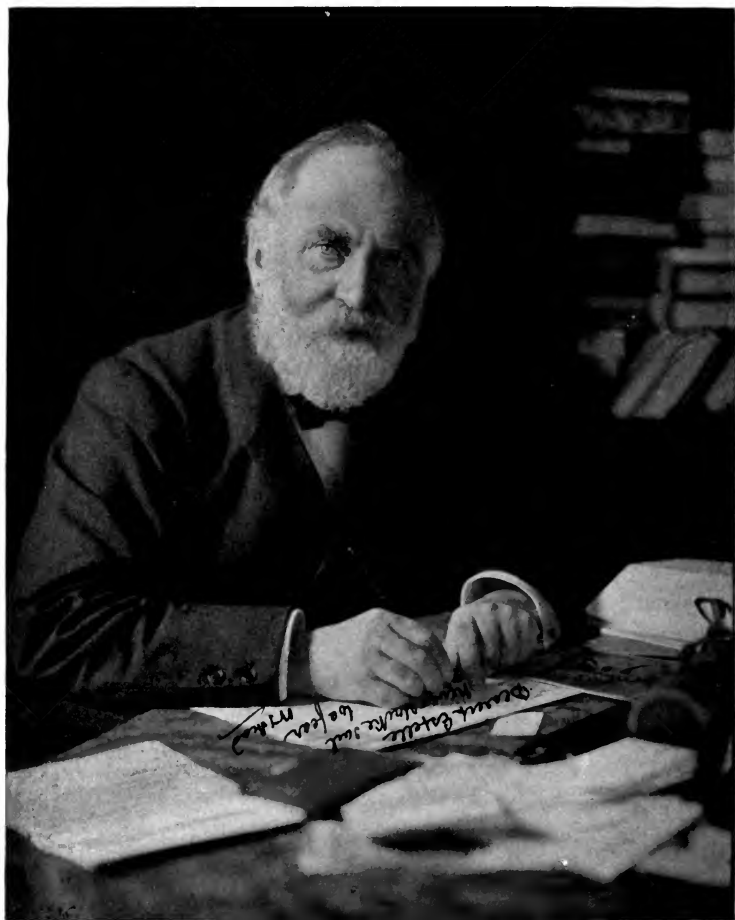
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MY FATHER.

*E. H. Mills*

*Frontispiece.*

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# MY FATHER

*Personal & Spiritual Reminiscences*

By ESTELLE W. STEAD

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DEDICATED  
TO  
EMMA LUCY STEAD  
BELOVED  
WIFE AND MOTHER



## FOREWORD

I HAVE not attempted in this book to cover the whole of my Father's life. Many events are put in the background and some are omitted altogether.

I have endeavoured to show the "beginnings" of some of his activities, and leave it to a fuller Life to give in detail the work which grew out of these "beginnings."

I have dwelt more especially on his interest in Spiritualism, and have sought to show, by quotations from his own writings, that Spiritualism was indeed spiritual to him. And that it was his belief in a Higher Power that made him undertake many things, which he knew, without that Power, would have been impossible.

I have quoted largely from *Reminiscences* written by him in 1893, which cover his early life up to the time of his leaving the *Northern Echo*.

I am indebted to *The Christian Endeavour World*, America, for permission to publish my Father's own account of what he considered two of the most impressive scenes of his life.

I regret that I have found it impossible to do more than touch on my Father's wonderful friendships, which extended from the highest to the lowest, and ranged over all nationalities, creeds and politics.

ESTELLE W. STEAD.

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## CHAPTER I .

### PARENTAGE

“Some may give sons an ancestry noble, that came with the  
Conqueror in,  
But ah, what is blood the most ancient, compared to the soul  
that’s within?  
Some boast of the treasure they gave us, and high heaps of  
silver and gold,  
But compared with the dower *you* gave me, it’s metal both  
worthless and cold.”

(W. T. STEAD, *et.* 20, To his Mother.)

ON July 5th, 1849, in the little manse under the shadow of the Northern hills, my Father, William Thomas Stead, was born—the first son of the manse. As the loving eyes of mother and father looked into those of their babe, did they see any vision of the path that lay ahead? Did the eager, loving soul gazing on life for the first time through those baby eyes, give any sign of the life to come, of that strenuous fight to overcome wrongs that blotted the wonderful world into which it had just been born? of the gallant endeavour to bridge the grave, and make death but a beautiful pathway to another life; to lift the veil and enable those here to see the

world around. The fight, seemingly alone, against terrible odds, was not alone, for he was to know that He Who was with him was stronger than all those against him, and that for him there was no other path—the “Sign” was given and he must follow. And then the end, the glorious end of the earthly body, thrown off to rest, covered by the deep, dark waters of the Atlantic, as the soul passed upward to the greater and fuller life.

His father was the Rev. William Stead, a Congregational minister, to whose forethought, in noting down for the benefit of those who came after him, the reader is indebted for the following brief details of family history.

In Wharfedale, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, two miles from Ben Rhydding, four miles from Bolton Abbey, and six from Skipton, there is a village named Addingham, near to which once stood a farmhouse in which the Rev. William Stead's father, Thomas Stead, was born, in 1778, his father being then a farmer . . . . (“I never knew my grandfather,” remarks the minister, in parenthesis, “but I remember my grandmother. She could remember the news coming of the defeat of Charles Stuart at Culloden, in 1745.”) . . .

While the aforesaid Thomas Stead was very young, his father's fortunes suffered such severe reverses, owing to agricultural depression, that the family was obliged to leave the Wharfedale farm. The father, with his wife and children, removed to the village of Crooks, about a mile from Sheffield,



EMBLETON MANSE, WHERE MY FATHER WAS BORN.



THE HOUSE (TO THE LEFT) AT HOWDON—WHERE FATHER  
SPENT HIS YOUTH (1850-1871).



where he continued to live until he died. The son, Thomas, married a farmer's daughter, "of the parish of Bradfield in Yorkshire." And it was this couple's son, William, who breasted the adverse tide of family misfortune, by his own strength and independence of character, and after much hard study, under very difficult and uncongenial conditions, succeeded in becoming a minister of the Congregational church ; which was his heart's desire.

In due course his ministerial duties called him to Northumberland, where he met and eventually married, a lady named Isabella Jobson, daughter of Mr. John Jobson, farmer, of Sturton Grange, near Warkworth. The estate of Sturton Grange belonged jointly to John Jobson and his brother Christopher, who, during the Peninsular war, had made money in shipping and had invested it in land.

The marriage of William and Isabella Stead was a singularly felicitous one, from beginning to end, notwithstanding frequent ill-health, straitened means, and much hard work. For there was likewise love in abundance, great mutual sympathy and understanding, and a deep and simple religious faith.

Their first home was at Embleton Manse, near Alnwick, and it was there that my Father was born.

He writes himself, concerning this event: " I was born just when Europe was in its first reaction after the revolutionary social outburst of 1848. "

There was one little sister just over two years old

at the time of his birth, who, with the fate of a family of kittens still fresh in her baby-memory, when presented to the small new brother, innocently suggested that he should be "put down the well." He was very fond of telling this family tradition, to which he generally added with a chuckle: "And I reckon there are plenty of folks who would think it a mighty good thing if I had been put."

From both parents he inherited a deeply religious temperament, which was spiritual rather than devotional, in the sense in which the latter term is generally used. He was passionately attached to his mother. One who knew her intimately has left this tribute to her life—"A life very simple, very placid in its 'deeds of weekday holiness,' yet most powerful in its shaping influence upon the fiery ardent nature of her son."

"From early childhood Mrs. Stead was the subject of religious impressions. She had passed through much domestic affliction previous to her marriage. One text was her comfort through it all: 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'"

At the age of twenty-two she married the Rev. William Stead. On hearing of his approaching marriage an old woman said to him: "You are going to marry Miss Jobson. Why, she is half a priest herself." From a child, although she was very delicate, she was ever anxious to be "about her Master's business." She worked hard and with a great earnestness at a time when her children were still young. For sixteen years there was

always a baby, and yet regularly during the greater part of that time, she met the girls of her Sunday class well prepared. She never till her death ceased to be the friend, comforter and adviser of her people. Her own comfort was unthought of if she could only secure that of others. She was a great peace-maker. If she knew of anything likely to cause unpleasantness, either in the Church or between individuals, she used to go to the different parties and, with great tact and judgment, talk kindly to them, and without in any case giving offence, would succeed in stilling the tempest that otherwise would have arisen. . . .

She made her home very happy. She read and studied to afford pleasant subjects for conversation, so that there should be no lack of interest and intelligence in the home circle. She entered heartily and with ever-ready sympathy into the pursuits of each of her family. There was not a joy nor a sorrow but they shared it with her, always sure of her ready sympathy. She never became old. She used to say "I feel just like a young girl yet." In teaching her children it was always the *love* of Christ she tried to set before them.

One Easter she was taken ill and never recovered. A great part of the time was spent in bed. She suffered much, but with the greatest patience and without murmuring. Once someone asked her if she felt Christ near her. She looked up with a smile of love and confidence mingled with surprise, and said: "Of course I feel Christ near me. How could

I live without that? He is always with me." Eight days before her death she gave up all hope of living, and asked for her sons to be sent for. She said: "Tell them not to pray for me to live. I want to go Home to-night. I only want to stay till the boys come, and then go to Heaven. I would like to go to-night, but Jesus is preparing a place for me and He won't come for me until it is quite ready."

The death of her son Joe, a boy of fifteen, was the greatest trial of her life. On her deathbed she used to say: "I shall soon see my Saviour. And I shall soon be with Joe. I shall see my boy again." She said: "Tell our people how very much I love them, and how very kind they have been to me. Tell them they must get ready to meet me in Heaven. They must get ready now."

She fell asleep, as was her wish, in her husband's arms, and awoke in Heaven.

Speaking of her to one of her children, an old village dame once remarked: "When we tell your mother anything, it's like telling it to the Lord—we never hear of it again!"

"In the year 1850," my Father writes in his Reminiscences, "we left Embleton for North Shields, from whence we came to Howden, about five miles from Newcastle, on the North Bank of the Tyne, where my father was Congregational Minister till he died."

The following is taken from his own tribute to that beloved father, written in 1885, a few days after the latter's death, and long afterwards

republished in the *Review of Reviews* under the title of "My Father and my Son":—

"For the last hour I have been lying on the old couch in my father's study, watching the 'shadows from the fitful firelight' dancing on the familiar walls within which so much of my earlier life was spent. The gloaming has given place to darkness. I have lit the gas, and I will now endeavour, before the first day after the funeral has gone, to jot down as faithfully as I can a few reminiscences of the father to whom, and to my mother, I owe all that I am, all that I have, and all that I ever shall be. The place is congenial for such a retrospect. Here, on the very spot where I am writing, my father taught me to read, and helped me, then a shy and timid child of six, sitting upon his knee, to pick my way through the Latin grammar. Many long years have gone by since those early days, when father's study was both my schoolroom and my favourite playground; but how little is changed! The small room with its bookshelves—which then seemed to me to be laden with all the learning of the world, but whose literary furnishing now seems so poor and so meagre—is just as it was. The bed is changed, but all else is there. A little room it is, with one draughty window—study and bedroom in one; yet there was lived out within its four walls a noble life of patient service for others, of humble devotion and simple piety, Oh! my dear, my patient, long-suffering father! How utterly inadequate are

my poor words to express in merest outline the debt I owe to you, or to describe the image of personified goodness which dwells in our memories !

“ It is more as a father than as a minister that I would speak of him. As a minister there have been many more popular, but none more respected ; and there were many who were more eloquent and more successful, although no one could have been more faithful and devoted. But as a father, I never knew, I will not say his superior, but even his equal. My experience of men is wider now than when I was first called from Tyneside, but the wider the range of my acquaintance with the families of the world, the more deeply am I impressed with the fact that in him we had all but realised the ideal of fatherhood. His life was lived for his children. Every moment he could spare from study was ours, we were always with him. One of my earliest recollections is that of constructing stables for my toy horses with Hume and Smollett’s calf-bound History of England as building materials, under the table on which father was writing his sermons. He possessed a rare gift of concentration and could write and study, undisturbed by the noisy chatter of his children, who were making dolls-houses or riding a rocking-horse at the other end of the room. That rocking-horse ! What memories it recalls ! It was of his own making. Accustomed from his youth to manual labour—he had served his apprenticeship as a cutler at Sheffield when rattening was an ordinary incident of the cutler’s

life—he was never at a loss to make what he had not the means to buy. This rocking-horse was fearfully and wonderfully made, with four legs as straight as bedposts, a neck of unplanned deal, and a tail of rags; but it rocked as well as the best, and it only succumbed at last when some six of us attempted to ride it at once! Had it not been a home-made article it would have collapsed long before . . . . .

“There was literally nothing—that was not contrary to the Ten Commandments—that our father would not have done to encourage us. Himself reserved, and humble almost to a morbid point, he fully appreciated the importance of praise as a means of encouraging to effort.

“He taught me almost all that I ever learned, sitting on his knee at the table. I never went to school until I was twelve, and my two years’ schooling, although invaluable in other things, added comparatively little to my grasp of the instruments of knowledge—except perhaps in algebra and mathematics. He taught us Latin almost as soon as we could read, and we were reading the Old Testament before we were five. I learned the Latin grammar before the English. Before I went to school I was enthusiastically devoted to Scott and Byron, which were amongst the reading books from which I learned to read. My elder sister and I were taught together; in every respect we were taught alike. We had the same class-books, the same lessons, the same tasks. Although there were only two of us, we always went up and down in class. Top was

father's knee. Bottom was a chair; and many a tear was shed by the eager child who, at the close of the class, was off the knee.

“Our schoolday began at six o'clock in the winter morning, when father, who down to the last was an early riser, would hear us our spelling as we lay in bed, when he was busy lighting the study fire. It was an informal class, but effective; nor did he ever allow false spelling to escape in spite of all his domestic cares. After breakfast and family worship, to which morning and evening with unfailing regularity the whole household was gathered, we had one Bible lesson and other lessons till eleven. Then we were free till after dinner, when he taught us again for an hour or two, after which, beyond learning our tasks for the next day, our schooling was over. The actual teaching, however, was only a branch of our education. To be with our father day after day, at every meal except supper, to play in his study when it was wet, to go out walking with him when it was fine, to live constantly under the stimulating and inspiring shadow of his presence, that was an education in itself. We were constantly encouraged to enquire. No question was too absurd to be disregarded; no theory too wild not to be treated with kindness. Always studious and fond of reading, and possessing a singularly retentive memory, he was to us a perfect library, the volumes of which always opened themselves at the right place whenever we sought information. My first knowledge of the convict system was gained in this way, and

I daresay that most of my earliest ideas as to the world and all it contains, reached me from my father's lips. Few persons whom I have ever met, possessed the art of making his knowledge more pleasantly available to others. He never read a book or a newspaper without gathering some facts, some incidents, some illustrations, to tell us at meal times, or to serve as a subject for discussion when we were out for his invariable midday walk.

“Not one of us ever felt the least awe of him nor was afraid to ventilate an opinion in his presence. No one was snubbed for ignorance, or silenced for presumption. Each one was taught that his opinion was worth having. In our little commonwealth every citizen had a right to a voice, the only unpardonable thing was not to have an opinion at all. To outsiders, admitted for the first time into the vehement democracy of our household, the first impression was naturally one of scandal. The fierce young disputants showed little conventional reverence for their father. He debated with them on a footing of perfect equality. If he indulged in a fallacy, it was exposed as mercilessly, and his mistakes were denounced as roughly as if he had been one of the boys; nor did he ever resent the liberties taken by his children. I sometimes grieved my mother, if I did not hurt my father, by the vehemence of my retorts, but how vivid is the sense of gratitude, how deep the impression of those hot and eager days! He never lost our respect by enduring what others called our

impudence. He never asserted his right to reverence as a matter of authority, but there was not one of us who did not revere him beyond all other men.

“A most useful habit which my father inculcated was that of remembering the leading points of whatever we heard and repeating them to him when we came home. Many a painful moment I have had when I forgot the heads of a sermon, but the training was most useful. This faculty for remembering what has been said to you in order to repeat it at home, has been of great use to me in many ways. In interviewing it is invaluable. I have frequently, without taking a single note, been able to dictate or write out three columns of close-print report of an interview, to the accuracy of which the person interviewed has given his most emphatic testimony.

“It would be a mistake to imagine that my only memories of my father are those of a strenuous teacher, always eliciting enquiry or supplying information. He was our best, our most delightful playmate. I mixed little with the boys of the village. My sister, my father, and I were playfellows. He made us our first swing. He made us our first kites; carved our first bat and taught us to play cricket. It was with him that we learned to use the bow and arrow, and to fish. Almost the only things I did not learn from him were riding and rowing. He had a nervous dread of boating and he was never quite free from fear about horses. So deeply

rooted was his antipathy to boating, and so scrupulous the regard we paid to his wishes, that I was twenty-three years of age before I handled an oar. It is very curious that one who had such an instinctive shrinking from all unnecessary danger, should have encouraged us in making all manner of chemical experiments. For years we used to amuse ourselves every winter by making gunpowder or squibs and in firing toy cannons. I can still see the pane of glass in the study window through which the leaden bullet, fired out of a cannon I had made from an old key, perforated a hole round as a pea. But other accident we had none. There was never an interest of ours which was not his also. He lived our lives as well as his own, and to the last he was a boy amongst his boys. That evergreen youthfulness of heart which distinguished him was a great charm to us all. Akin to this there was a great and unruffled cheerfulness of speech. Few but those who lived in closest intimacy with him ever knew how sore sometimes was the heart, while the face bore the same placid kindly smile. He was emphatically a healthy man, healthy and whole-hearted.

“There was a fine spirit of inflexibility about his notions of duty. It was not a question of ‘ought’ with him, but merely one of ‘must.’ He did not preach much about the obligation of doing one’s duty. He only made us feel that to neglect one’s duty was as flat a flying in the face of the law of the universe, as to neglect to breathe.

“ I do not remember during the thirty years I knew him, having seen him lose his temper once. The meekest and mildest of men, I have seen him bear insults which made me, boy as I was, long to smite the insulter to the ground. But he never displayed any other sign of feeling than that of rubbing the side of his head with his hand. ‘ Never think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think ’ was a maxim ever in his mind. He carried it out by always thinking of himself less highly than he ought to think. The faculty of self-estimate is rare, we always either underdo or overdo it. Our father underdid it. Modest and reserved he never pushed himself; what is more, he always discouraged others from pushing themselves. He was always restrained. He never incited to new ventures. Cautious in the extreme, he was never bold except when he saw clearly that a certain course was right. Then all hesitation disappeared. But when of two courses neither might be right, he always preferred the more retiring. He doubted at first whether I should go on the press. Afterwards, when I was called to London, he shook his head; ‘ Why do you not remain where you are? I do not see why you should be changing.’ Of all things he abhorred pride. The last warning he addressed to me the day on which I took leave of him for ever was: ‘ Walk humbly before God, and take care that you be not carried away by too great popularity.’ ”

## CHAPTER II

### REMINISCENCES

“The idea that everything wrong in the world was a divine call, to use your life in righting it, sank deep into my soul.”—  
W. T. STEAD.

“IN 1854, occurred the first family event that I remember ; my mother’s sister and her family emigrated to Canada. About the same time I remember the Russian War, and how sorry I used to be for the horses that were killed. Somehow I have never been very sorry for men. I have been sorry for horses, for women, and birds, but men have not touched me. When I was a child and stories used to be told about carriage accidents and so forth, I never manifested the slightest interest in the fate of the people in the carriage, but I would cry bitterly if the horses broke their legs or got hurt.”

As a very small boy, his sister relates, he used to gloat with fascinated awe and enjoyment over the references to the horses in the Book of Revelation.

“Before 1854, I fell in love, and you will be surprised to hear that the object of my devotion

was no other than Queen Elizabeth ! I remember distinctly feeling about her exactly what you would feel about a woman with whom you are in love ; i.e., you are greatly interested to hear everything about her that you can ; you believe that she is the peerless of all women ; and you regard all her enemies as enemies of the human race, who ought to be exterminated. To this day I have never been able quite to get over the feeling of exultation that Mary Queen of Scots had her head cut off. I could not deny that Mary was better looking than Queen Elizabeth, although I did occasionally deny even that in those days, to such lengths did I carry my zeal, but I think I felt that a woman who *could* be more beautiful than *My Ideal Love* deserved beheading ! From Queen Elizabeth, by association of ideas, and also because she was an extremely nice, loving, and kind woman, I transferred my affection to an Aunt Bessie. The memory of her was brought back in an odd way after nearly forty years of oblivion, by the announcement made at a séance a week or two ago<sup>1</sup> that my aunt Bessie was with me there, with other members of my family. She died when I was quite a child.

“ I think I was about eight years old when I fell in love with a child of my own age. She went to school close to our home, and after school-time she used to play with my sister. I do not remember anything about her except that her name was Lizzie and that she wore a dimity pinafore that was rather stiff. That was only a

<sup>1</sup> These Reminiscences were written in 1893.

passing fancy. My first real serious love affair was when I was between ten and eleven, when I fell over head and ears in love with a girl named Lydia, who had long golden curls and bright blue eyes and a beautiful red and white complexion. She was the belle of the village and all the boys were crazy over her. Alas, she was two years older than I, and when you are only eleven two years seem a whole eternity !

“All the same, I was very much in love with her, though I never dared to breathe my affection. In the winter time I used to walk behind her at a distance and put my feet into the footprints she had made in the snow, and feel inexpressibly happy. It was about this girl that the fight occurred to which Mr. Waugh alludes, but like most historians he ignores a very vital consideration, in order to make it appear that my battle was on behalf of her modesty, or from general devotion to ideal virtue ; whereas it was really inspired by a very devoted love for the girl herself.”<sup>1</sup>

This characteristically frank explanation refers to a battle royal concerning a “maiden in distress,” who, while endeavouring to hide the loss of her garter, was frustrated in her object by a boy considerably older than William. A terrific fight ensued, in which, sad to relate, our hero was beaten by the superior strength and age of his opponent. His loyal little sister stood by him, though filled with grief and mortification that the minister’s son,

<sup>1</sup> See “William Stead, A Life for the People.” By the Rev. Benjamin Waugh.

who should have been a pattern to all the parish, was guilty of fighting before a small crowd of other children—that was ignominy almost too great to be borne!

“We solemnly promised each other,” says his sister, “that we would never tell our parents, or cause them such grief as would be theirs if they knew. We kept our word. When editor of the *Northern Echo*, William told the tale in rhyme among a number of other childish reminiscences, at a homely Church Social gathering. Our father who was in the chair said it was the first he had ever heard of it.”

“Up till 1861,” he proceeds, “my sister and I got all our teaching from father, who taught us Latin and to read French, although he did not know it at all as a spoken language. In 1861 I went to Silcoates School,<sup>1</sup> near Wakefield. It was a school for the sons of Congregational Ministers. I had not been there for two months before a very remarkable revival of religion broke out in the school, and nearly all the boys, excepting about half-a-dozen, professed to have been converted. Some twenty, I think, joined the Church, myself among the number. I had, previous to that time, had an occasional but very intense sense of my own sinfulness, and I remember at one time sobbing so bitterly after I had gone to bed, at the thought of my lost condition, that my mother had to come up, and I had to have a great deal of comforting before I could get to sleep.”

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bewglass was Headmaster at the time.

Of this revival, of which it will be rather difficult to find a parallel among public-school annals, he wrote the following account in 1904.

“The tradition of the school in the fifties had not been distinctly religious. All of us came from Christian homes, but, as a school, it was very much like other schools. About a month after I entered Silcoates, some of the lads started a prayer-meeting of their own in a summer-house in the garden. They asked me to join, and I went, more out of curiosity, and to oblige my chum, than for any other reason. There were about half-a-dozen of us, perhaps more, none of us over fourteen. We read a chapter in the Bible, and we prayed. No master was present, nor was there any attempt made on the part of the masters to encourage the prayer-meeting. One master, indeed, was frankly contemptuous. The majority of the boys had nothing to do with ‘the prayer-meeting fellows.’ One or two of us were under deep conviction of sin, and we talked among ourselves, and read the Bible, and prayed. Suddenly one day, after the prayer-meeting had been going on for a week or two, there seemed to be a sudden change in the atmosphere. How it came about no one ever knew. All that we did know was that there seemed to have descended from the sky, with the suddenness of a drenching summer shower, a spirit of intense earnest seeking after God for the forgiveness of sins and consecration to His service. The summer-house was crowded with boys. A

deputation waited upon the Principal and told him what was happening. He was very sympathetic and helpful. Preparation class was dispensed with that night ; all the evening the prayer-meeting was kept going. There was no singing, only Bible reading, a few words of exhortation, a confession of sin and asking for prayers, and ever and anon a joyful acknowledgment of an assurance of forgiveness. Those of us who could not find peace were taken out into the playground by their happier comrades, who laboured with them to accept Christ. How well to this very day do I remember the solemn hush of that memorable day and night in the course of which forty out of the fifty lads publicly confessed conversion."

On reading over his boyish letters home—he was in his thirteenth year and away from home for the first time—one cannot but be struck by the deeply religious note running through them all, mixed up quaintly with references to his studies and games. The letter quoted below is typical of the sentiment expressed in all his letters at that time. Very touching in its simplicity and genuineness is his appeal to his sister :

"SILCOATES SCHOOL.  
*Sept 27th.*

MY OWN DEAR SISTER,—

I take up my pen to write to you. Now you must know that to-day is the beginning of the Michaelmas holidays, if we were to have holidays at this time, but we are not to have

any, but notwithstanding that, the two G.'s are going to Leeds to stay till Tuesday. The two G.'s would have bought some of the stamps if I had not given them some. E. and A. bought the stamps. Now my dear sister unless you have already given your heart to God, give it to Him now. My dear Mary Isie, turn, oh turn, why will ye die, have you any objection to come to Him who is altogether lovely. Oh that I could love Him more and I wish that everybody in the world could have their eyes opened to their danger. Oh how great the danger is and how many walk on with their eyes shut to hell, oh that awful place. No one can tell the miseries of that place. And then the way to glory is so simple, anyone can come to Him, you are saved already if you will only believe on HIM and believe that you are saved. That was the point where I stuck so long while I felt as though I could not come to Him, but oh, how easy a way it is to come to Jesus, the simplicity of it baulked me, oh come to Jesus (Behold a stranger at the door, He gently knocks, has knocked before). Oh come ere it be too late, you will never repent it, you are saved if you believe you are saved; oh why delay to come. Now my dear sister I must bid you good-bye, give my love to Mrs. Bell and all the children. I hope Mama is in perfect health. I pray for you all every night.

I remain,

Your affectionate brother

W. T. STEAD.

Referring to the Revival, in a letter to his mother, he writes :

“SILCOATES SCHOOL.

MY VERY DEAR MAMA,

There has been a great work going on in the School. The teacher I spoke of has obtained peace and has been instrumental in the conversion of J—— G—— first and then of several other boys. Well, on the 18th of September the blessed work began. I obtained peace, so did six other boys. We went in to Doctor and asked his advice concerning it. That night young G—— became serious, he has always been anything but serious. I talked seriously to him all that night and he said that he wished he could come to Jesus. I explained to him as well as I could how ready Jesus Christ and how simple the way was. Next day I walked and talked with him a long while ; at last he found peace in the afternoon. I was very pleased and thought that God had made me the instrument of saving him, but afterwards I heard him say that he had found peace through the instrumentality of A—— and that teacher I told you of. I felt this rather keenly and still more when every boy almost in the school who had found peace could say he had led some to Jesus while I who tried very much and prayerfully to turn some from their evil ways ; how I walked long with them and talked to them, and apparently they took no notice at all when another boy (said) just two or three words to them they

would burst out crying and in a few minutes they would find peace. I know this caused great agony of spirit that I could bring none to the Saviour. I will send a more lengthy account of the Revival afterwards; suffice it to say that there are only five boys in the School who have not confessed that they have received peace though I am afraid that many will fall away. I myself still feel that if I died this instant I would go to Heaven. Now good-bye my dear, believe me,

Your affectionate son,

WILLIAM STEAD.

P.S.—Mama and Dada, Doctor proposed that we should join the Church. I know that it rather startled me but send me your opinion of it.”

In his childhood as in later life the idea of mourning was appalling to him. Referring in one letter to the death of his little sister, he writes :

“Where will she be buried? Please do not take any mourners. I should like her to be buried in the garden.”

This was the little sister Hettie (described as a “sweet and fascinating child”) to whom he had acted by turns as nurse, companion, and playmate, during her short lifetime. She died in 1862, aged three, during his absence at Silcoates School. He was deeply attached to her and felt her loss severely. In after years, clairvoyants

occasionally saw with him a fair-haired, blue-eyed child, with pink and white complexion, whom he loved to think was this little sister, Hettie. Again, in 1868, writes a member of the family, "dark clouds gathered and burst over the happy home." Scarlet fever broke out in the village; two of the Stead children took it, one slightly, the other seriously. The latter, Joe, a boy of fifteen, "full of fun and merriment," died after three weeks' illness. This was a terrible shock to them all, and those days were dark indeed.

"I was little more than twelve," proceed the Reminiscences, "when I joined the Congregational Church at Wakefield, and I have remained a member of the Congregational Church ever since. Nor has anything occurred in all my subsequent wanderings, spiritual or otherwise, to lead me to wish to abandon that position. The Congregationalists, as the heirs of Cromwell and Milton and the Pilgrim Fathers, and the representatives of extreme Democracy which knows neither male nor female, and makes the votes of the whole Church the supreme and only authority in the Church; have always attracted me, nor does the attraction grow less with years, although I have often differed more or less from many Congregationalists.

"When I was at school I became an enthusiastic devotee of cricket; and also learnt the principles of self-government, for the boys were



AGED 12.



AGED 16.



left very much to themselves. So that I may be said to have acquired three very important things at school, none of which were in the curriculum, viz.: Christianity, Cricket, and Democracy.

“I left school in 1863 and was apprenticed as office-boy in a merchant’s Counting House on Quayside, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The office hours fortunately were not long, and we had an hour for dinner at mid-day during which I got in a good deal of reading.”

His employer, Mr. Smith, was also Russian Vice-Consul. He came thus early into touch with Russian “atmosphere.”

“In the first year of my apprenticeship,” he says, “my chief reading was the *Sporting Life* sandwiched with novels. Passionately fond of cricket, I got the *Sporting Life*, eagerly devouring its descriptions of the big matches. From the bat and ball columns I turned to the sporting, becoming familiarised with all the prize horses and tremendously excited about the winners. Then came a shunt—I was shunted like a goods train on to an altogether different set of rails. Dick’s ‘Penny Shakespeare’ came out and I managed to buy the numbers. My pocket money was threepence per week, of which a penny was religiously exacted for the missionaries. The remaining tuppence was all my weekly capital. This I invested in penny Shakespeares, the first being Hamlet and Othello. A new world opened up to me; the great

tragedies and drama coming to me as a kind of revelation. I went in for a lot of hard reading—reading almost everything I could get hold of. Among other things I read Carlyle's "Life of Cromwell," which had an immense influence upon me.

"Like most other youths in those days I was in the habit of competing for the modest prize offered for essays in the *Boy's Own Magazine*, which was then published by S. O. Beeton. I wrote several,<sup>1</sup> always under the name of W. T. Silcoates, and only succeeded once in getting a prize. My solitary success was an essay on Oliver Cromwell, in compiling which I took a great deal more pains than in writing any book I have since published, so at least it seems to me looking back twenty years and more, and I certainly enjoyed much more keenly that first triumph than any successes achieved in later years. The prize was one guinea, to be taken out in books published by the proprietor of the *Boy's Own Magazine*. I remember, as if it were yesterday, carefully going through the little catalogue making up my guinea's worth, and after selecting books valued at twenty shillings I chose the "Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell" to make up the guinea. That little volume, with its green paper cover, lies before me now, thumbed almost to pieces, underscored and marked in the margin throughout, and inside there is written: 'To W. T. Silcoates, with

<sup>1</sup> He wrote an Essay on "Coal," and another on "The Villains of Shakespeare."

Mr. Beeton's best wishes.' It was one of Beeton's Companion Poets and bore on its cover 'Books of Worth.' With the exception of the little copy of Thomas à Kempis which General Gordon gave to me as he was starting for Khartoum, it is the most precious of all my books. It has been with me everywhere. In Russia, in Ireland, in Rome, in Prison, it has been a constant companion."

His notebooks full of copious memoranda are still in existence. These much more than cover the whole ground of the essay, and indicate the thoroughness which, even then, was one of his marked characteristics. That "solitary success" was a crisis however in more ways than one. He had overstrained his eyes, through excessive application and overstudy, and was in consequence obliged to cease reading, as it was feared for some time that he might lose his sight. But as with all his earthly trials in after years, this grew to be an added source of spiritual strength. He wrote of it long afterwards in his Character Sketch of Russell Lowell :

"This little book reached me at a somewhat critical time. I was saturated with the memories of the Puritans, and filled with a deep sense of the unworthiness of my old literary ambitions. My health, impaired by overstudy, affected my eyes, and for some terrible months I was haunted by the consciousness of possible blindness. I had to give up reading at night-time and in the train,

and by way of occupation I committed to memory long screeds of verse — Byron, Longfellow, Coleridge and Campbell being special favorites. All chance of literary success seemed to fade and disappear with my dimming sight, and I looked out on life in a sadder and more serious mood than any I had formerly entertained. It was then that I came upon Mr. Lowell's little-known poem 'Extreme Unction,' which I find marked in pencil — 'This poem changed my life.'

"It may seem somewhat fantastic that a lad of eighteen should have appropriated to himself the reproaches which the poet placed in the mouth of an octogenarian. But youth is a rare self-torturer. With my enfeebled health and failing eyesight, an oppressive sense of having lived for myself and my own ambitious day-dreams, it did not seem unnatural then; it seemed only too terribly real. I don't think any four lines ever printed went into my life so deeply as these :—

"Now here I gasp; what lose my kind,  
When this fast-ebbing breath shall part?  
What bands of love and service bind  
This being to the world's sad heart?"

"These questions used to ring in my ears night and day. And the only answer that came was Richard's bitter death cry :—

"There is no creature loves me,  
And if I die no one will pity me."

"All this, I daresay, was very morbid. Probably few lads of eighteen had more relatives

and friends to love and pity them. I was one of a large and singularly united family, and I had my Sunday-school class besides. But there was that guilty sense of having lived for myself, of having had my ideal of life on the plain of personal literary success, and I felt I deserved to feel all that Lowell's octogenarian felt.

"At the same time this remorseful horror would sometimes abate, owing probably to occasional better health, and then an immense inspiration thrilled me from the lines :

"On this bowed head the awful Past,  
Once laid its consecrating hands ;  
The Future, in its purpose vast  
Paused, waiting my supreme commands."

"If I recovered, and my eyesight did not fail, perhaps, after all, I might yet live to better purpose. To what purpose? The answer came in the next verse :

"God bends from out the deep, and says,  
'I gave thee the great gift of life ;  
Wast thou not called in many ways ?  
Are not my earth and heaven at strife?'"

"The idea that everything wrong in the world was a divine call to use your life in righting it, sank deep into my soul. And there, in the darkness and gloom of that time of weakness and trial, I put away from me, as of the Evil One, all dreams of fame and literary ambitions on which I had fed my boyhood, and resolutely set myself to do what little I could, there and then, where I was, among those who

surrounded me, to fulfil 'the trust for such high uses given.' It was one of the decisive moments in my life. Since then I can honestly say that I have never regarded literary or journalistic success as worth a straw, excepting in so far as it enabled me to strike a heavier blow in the cause of those for whom I was called to fight.

The yearning for helpful fellowship with my fellows grew, under Lowell's influence, to control my life. Living in a village, where you know everyone, it was almost with a sense of positive pain that I would find myself in a great city, and feel that of all the hundred thousands around me, I did not know one! To know that of all those multitudes you knew none, had helped none, and that not a human being cared in the least whether you lived or died, maddened into despair, or broke your heart in solitude, was appalling to me. There seemed something unnatural about it.

"How well I remember, night after night, looking down from the Manors railway station over the house-crowded valley at the base of All Saints' Church, Newcastle, which towered above them all, all black and empty, like the vast sepulchre of a dead God, and thinking that behind every lighted window which gleamed through the smoky darkness there was at least one human being whose heart was full of all the tragedies of love and hate, of life and of death, and yet between them and me, what a great gulf was fixed! How could bands of love and service be woven between these innumerable units so as to

make us all one brotherhood once more ? There they sat by lamp and candle—so near, and yet, in all the realities of their existence, as far apart as the fixed stars. And there grew up in me, largely under Lowell's influence, a feeling as if there were something that blasphemed God in whatever interposed a barrier impeding the free flow of the helpful sympathy and confident intercourse between man and man."

## CHAPTER III

### REMINISCENCES CONTINUED

“It is love that makes difficult things easy and constrains you to do things that otherwise you would never attempt.—  
W. T. STEAD.

“THEN occurred what I always regard as my second conversion; the first being when I was at school, which was a conversion in the ordinary sense of the word, as used by ordinary Christians, meaning a sudden deliverance from the weight, horror, and consequence of sin, by faith in the intervention and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Who practically wiped off all outstanding debts, which you could never pay, and started a new life in you, of which He was the Source, the Custodian, and Lord. But from that date down to 1868 I was full of ambition. I wanted to write the whole history of the Puritan Movement, which would practically piece in between where Froude left off the History of England and Macaulay began it. That was the dream of my life for some years. I was intensely ambitious, with a personal ambition that led me

to wish to make a name for myself and to be great and famous.

“When my eyes became bad and I had to look a possible blindness in the face I had the whole of Cromwell’s ‘Life, Letters, and Speeches’ fermenting in my head and it gradually grew upon me that this dream of ambition was unworthy and un-Christian. Then I took refuge, as we all do, in a second position, and attempted to make out that I did not want to write this History so much to make a name for myself as to do justice to Cromwell, etc., etc., which was largely true, but I gradually woke up to a conviction that all that feeling was wrong and that I must put away all idea of ever writing the book, or of making a name for myself, and must simply set to work and labour for those who were around me.

“As I was forbidden to read after leaving the office, I set to work to organise social and religious agencies in the village, becoming to a certain extent a kind of ‘lay-curate’ to my father. My class of lads in the Sunday School was a social microcosm where I studied human nature and the organisation of society. I sometimes think that I have hardly gained a single idea since I left school. I have learnt a great many more facts, and to know a great many more people, but my standpoint or outlook upon life, my conception of what is possible and what ought to be done, in other words, my ideal and objective, were fixed by the time I was twenty, and I have never since seen any reason to alter

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them. Of course there have been endless modifications in the methods by which I sought to attain them, but I am to-day what I was in 1868."

One of the members of his Boys' Class has given the following affectionate tribute to the memory of those eventful village days, which have born so rich a harvest in so many lives.

"The Club Room, Garden, and everything else devised for the benefit of the lads were originated by him, they were all managed under his direction and guidance, and he was the life and soul of them all. Then as now he did things after his own fashion, and in his own way, without much regard to the orthodox way in which things were usually done. For example, on 'Speaking Sundays' every Sunday scholar sat enthralled by his graphic story of the adventures of two Hebrew children during the Plagues in Egypt, but the older teachers would have none of his 'concoctions' and 'fiction' there, and put their foot down. Hence the exciting biography of Cora and Ada was brought to an abrupt conclusion. Again, the superintendent wished the lessons to be taken as he thought best, but even then W. T. Stead believed in his own plan and method so far as his class was concerned. The superintendent insisted and finally ordered both teacher and class to the door. The lads marched, behind their teacher, from the far end of the school-room as proudly as if they had achieved a glorious victory.

"His theory was that it is no use training a

child the way he should go, one day of the week, and letting someone else train him up another way the remaining six.

“In the Sunday class which, after their summary dismissal from the school met in the Club Room,<sup>1</sup> he trained the boys to speak by giving them a text and sitting, watch in hand, making them stand up and ‘hold forth’ for one or two minutes. Those minutes at first seemed terribly long. At the Sunday services he set them round a table in a square pew under the pulpit, with pens, ink, and books, to take the sermon down in outline, afterwards correcting their summary himself. In countless ways he helped them and endeavoured to make them fit to help others.”

It is noteworthy that even thus early the distinctive feature of his teaching was individuality. He sought to create efficient members of society, so that each one might in turn become a focus of independent energy.

To return to the Reminiscences.

“I had in 1865 and 1868, written two leading articles, one on the assassination of President Lincoln; the other on the disestablishment of the Irish Church. The former was published in a little Jarrow weekly paper, the other was published in the *Sheffield Independent*. But after that I did not write any more till 1870. My eyes got better, for the dimness of sight was

<sup>1</sup> A large unused kitchen which someone had lent for the use of the boys' club.

simply caused by nervous exhaustion, but I never contemplated the possibility of depending for my living upon my pen."

In 1867, however, before he was quite eighteen, his budding literary ambitions had burst into blossom in the shape of a wonderful production entitled, *The Magazinctum ; a Journal of the Stead Family*, of which he was editor and contributor-in-chief. This was designed for private circulation only and was written by hand on sheets of paper, neatly pasted together, with a limp cardboard cover. *The Magazinctum* ran its vigorous, though intermittent, course for about five years, during which period ten of the little volumes appeared. It was devoted to the various interests and adventures of the different members of the Stead family at that time, and was illustrated by many pen portraits and sketches. Here is the preface to the first number, in which the editorial "we" but thinly disguises the editorial personality :

THE MAGAZINCTUM : A Journal of the Stead Family.

*Preface.*

This magazine is the result of much talking and scheming. After dangling before the eyes of the family for nearly twelve months it has at last taken the tangible form in which it now presents itself.

*Magazinctum* will, we trust, always be found of interest to its readers, both of this and of following generations. To show on what firm ground this trust is founded, we need only mention of what it will consist.

First there will be a continued story running through the whole year, contributed by that celebrated authoress Vida Amica.

Her name will be well known to our readers as the composer of several brilliant poems, and that fascinating novel "The Covenanters," This alone is sufficient to insure its popularity, but when we proceed to enumerate the various other attractions, it will present, all our readers will be satisfied that never before in the annals of the Steadian *gens* was such a varied and delightful amount of literature made public.

There will be mechanical devices, instrumental plans, and many other outpourings of perfect genius from him who bids fair to be the Sir Isaac of the race.

It is certain that a tale, weirdly romantic, from the pen of a well-known student of sensation will appear every month.

The patient and industrious writer known by the name of Hitchiedobler will detail the internal organism and domestic government of a well-known house.

Stories illustrative of ancient times are expected from the philological member of the race. But we are exceeding the bounds of a preface. Time would fail us were we to enumerate our poets, our historians, and our divines, so after mentioning that our only principle is "Utter disregard of everything unconnected with the Race," we finish.

W. T. SILCOATES.

"My mother," the Reminiscences continue, "whose shaping influence upon me was constant and is abiding, had conceived, I think from the reading of Johnson's Lives of the Poets, a mortal terror of any human being ever depending for the necessities of life upon literary work, and when I built my castles in the air at this period, what I dreamt of was to be in a situation where I should get away from the office as early as possible, and have my nights to myself. The position of a bank clerk with £150 a year and freedom to leave the bank between 4 and 5, seemed to me to come very near the zenith of human felicity.

"When I was out of my apprenticeship I was

engaged as junior clerk at a salary of £60 per annum, in the same office where I had served my time."

As a mark of approval, my Father's employer presented him with a silver watch and a sum of money. The money was spent on a holiday in Edinburgh, where he took his sister and revelled with eager delight in the scenes with which Sir Walter Scott had long made him familiar by name. But romance was busy in his own life also, for his sister and he were joined on their Scottish holiday by two girl friends, Annie and Emma Wilson, of whom the latter was destined in the fulness of time to become Mrs. W. T. Stead.

It was during this Scottish holiday that he had his first clairvoyant experience. He relates the incident in "Real Ghost Stories."

"On one occasion I went to sleep in the ruins of a haunted castle and was awakened with a shuddering horror that I shall never forget as long as I live.

"It was in Hermitage Castle, Hermitage, that grim old border stronghold which stood in Liddesdale, not many miles from Riccarton, that most desolate of railway junctions. I visited it when I was just out of my teens with a mind saturated with legendary lore of the Scottish Border. I made a pilgrimage to Brankesome Hall, taking Hermitage on my way. I write this, not to maintain the objectivity of any ghostly haunting of Hermitage Castle, but to show that although it may all have been the merest delusion of a sub-

jective character, I have at least gone through an experience which enables me to understand what it feels like to be in a haunted house.

“When I visited Hermitage Castle I was all alone, with my memory teeming with associations of the past. I unlocked the door with the key, which I had brought with me from the keeper’s cottage, at a little distance down the valley. As it creaked on its hinges and I felt the chill air of the ruin, I was almost afraid to enter. Mustering my courage, however, I went in and explored the castle, then lying down on the mossy bank I gave myself up to the glamour of the past. I must have been there an hour or more, when suddenly, while the blood seemed to freeze down my back, I was startled by a long prolonged screech over my head, followed by a noise which I could only compare to the trampling of a multitude of iron-shod feet on the stone-paved doorway. This was alarming enough, but it was nothing to the horror which filled me when I heard the heavy gate swing on its hinges with a clang which for the moment seemed like the closing of a vault in which I was entombed alive. I could almost hear the beating of my heart. The rusty hinges, the creaking of the door, the melancholy and unearthly nature of the noise, and the clanging of the gate, made me shudder and shiver as I lay motionless, not daring to move, and so utterly crushed by the terror that had fallen upon me that I felt as if I were on the very verge of death. If the Evil One had appeared at that moment and carried me off I should have re-

garded it as the natural corollary to what I had already heard. Fortunately no sulphureous visitant darkened the blue sky that stretched overhead, with his unwelcome presence, and after a few minutes, when I had recovered from my fright, I ventured into the echoing doorway to see whether or not I was really a prisoner. The door was shut, and I can remember to this day the tremor which I experienced when I laid my hand upon the door and tried whether or not it was locked. It yielded to my hand, and I have seldom felt a sensation of more profound relief than when I stepped across the threshold and felt that I was free once more. For a moment it was as if I had been delivered from the grave itself which had already closed over my head.

“Of course, looking back on this after a number of years, it is easy to say that the whole thing was purely subjective. An overwrought fancy, a gust of wind whistling through the crannies and banging the door close, were quite sufficient to account for my fright, especially as it was not at all improbable that I had gone to sleep in the midst of the haunted ruins.

“So I reasoned at the moment, and came back and stayed another hour in the castle, if only to convince myself that I was not afraid. But neither before nor after that alarm did any gust of wind howl round the battlements with anything approaching to the clamour which gave me such a fright. One thing amuses me in looking back at a letter which I wrote at the

time, describing my alarm. I say, ‘ Superstition, sneer you ? It may be. I rejoice that I am capable of superstition ; I thought it was dried out of me by high-pressure civilisation.’ I am afraid that some of my critics will be inclined to remark that my capacities in that direction stand in need of a great deal of drying up.”

The Reminiscences proceed with engaging candour :

“ I have not mentioned all the love affairs I had between 1861 and 1871. I need not say that they were numerous. But I should mention two things, one was that I fell in love with my present wife when I was about thirteen, in a romantic, distant, kind of way. Then I fell in love with her again when I was about seventeen, but as she was about my own age I did not make much progress. School girls of seventeen are very difficult to get on with.

“ One of the most useful love affairs I ever had was that which came when I was about eighteen, when the sister of our village doctor came to stay with him. She was about twenty-eight or twenty-nine, and, finding life in the village rather dull, she took a great deal of notice of me. She was the first woman outside my own family who ever said a civil word to me. My devotion to the other girls was all one-sided. I was a somewhat eccentric youth who had a rooted objection to wearing gloves, and always preferred to run rather than walk weekdays and Sundays, and I remember with a smile the spectacle of the Minister’s

eldest son running home as soon as Chapel was over, on the blessed Sabbath morning, when the streets were crowded with people leaving their respective places of worship, at as hard a gallop as his legs could carry him.

“It was thought in the village that I was a little ‘daft,’ and the girls did not care to receive the attentions of a suitor who was more or less looked down upon and ridiculed by local public opinion.

“However, I did not care. I liked the lift that comes from running as hard as you can, and I like it to this day.

“The doctor’s sister was an educated lady who lived in Scotland. She played and sang Scottish airs, and I think she was the only woman I have ever turned over music for at the piano. She took to me to pass the time, probably, but I fell very deeply in love with her and she was the first woman to whom I ever said the word ‘Love.’ It was between eleven and twelve o’clock. We were setting home. The stars were shining . . . !

“But why should I go on with this rambling reminiscence? We all go through this, and I only mention it in order to lead up to the way in which she helped me. Up to that time it had been always more or less of an effort to me to write letters. I would write essays when I set myself to do it. But I always preferred to talk rather than to write, having a greater facility for the use of my tongue than for the use of my pen. After some months of very delicious

experience, she accepted the calf-love of the hobble-de-hoy as a kind of pleasant homage which in no way interfered with her attachment to a Naval officer to whom she was engaged to be married. When she left our village for Edinburgh, I felt as if the sun had gone down in mid-heaven.

“Out of the misery of that parting I wrote her immense letters three times a week, and the exercise and the straining always to write my very best did me more good than almost anything else. I often advise young people who come to me now and ask me what would be the best school in which to learn to write well—to fall in love with a clever woman a dozen years older than themselves, who lives at a distance from them, and with whom they can only communicate by writing. It is love that makes difficult things easy and constrains you to do things that otherwise you would never attempt.

“This, however, is a digression or an interlude. I return to my work. About 1870, I had laid very much upon my heart the misery of the tramps or vagrant class. They used to come to the office and I used to try what I could do in the way of helping them. I remember one scoundrel whom I helped, a very clever scoundrel he was, too. I gave him what I could, wrapped him up in an old coat, gave him an old Bible, and was very friendly and brotherly to him. When he learnt he had got as much out of me as I had to give he vanished, carrying off with him all the portable property of his

fellow lodger, but leaving behind him as a souvenir my poor little Bible!

“Thinking over this thing I came to the conclusion—which I suppose everyone must come to—that nothing could be done excepting by association and by organisation. And reading at that time some chance paragraph as to the way in which the Blackheath Mendicity Society had attempted to grapple with the evil in its district, I wrote a letter to the *Northern Daily Express* advocating the formation of a charity organisation or mendicity society in Newcastle. The editor inserted it and I sent round marked copies to the leading people in the town who might, I thought, be induced to take an interest in the thing. My employer rather liked the idea and seemed disposed to move in the matter. Someone replied to my letter. I replied, writing a longer letter, which to my great delight the editor put in as a leading article. We got up a town’s meeting. My employer undertook to act as secretary on condition that I wrote his speeches for him and did all that sort of work. And so the C.O.S. of Newcastle came into being.

“I believe that it is still in existence. I became consumed by a great zeal to establish charity organisations everywhere, and I sent an article to the *Sheffield Independent*<sup>1</sup> urging

<sup>1</sup> The *Sheffield Independent* writes: “This would be in the days of the Leader family, before Sir Henry Lucy wrote the London Letter. At that time Mr. Foster Frazer was junior reporter.”

that they should found one there; only part of which appeared.

“About that time the *Northern Echo*<sup>1</sup> of Darlington, a new halfpenny paper, had just appeared, or was about to appear. As it was the only morning paper for the towns round Preston I thought it was a good opportunity, affording a useful pulpit in which to preach the doctrine of the organisation of charity and of a co-operative way of dealing with the unemployed. I wrote a letter to the editor, which to my delight he put in, and wrote to me thanking me for my contribution. But he did not put it in exactly as it was written. He put in several sentences of his own from which I dissented, and I wrote to tell him so. This brought about a correspondence and he asked me to write more. That marks my first initiation into journalism. I wrote occasional notes and leaders, and a series of articles upon America and the Americans. The article which attracted most attention was one about Christianity and Democracy. The proprietor of the paper seeing this article when he was abroad, was much struck with it and made enquiries as to the writer.

“I was not paid for any of those contributions. After having written for about nine

<sup>1</sup> *The Northern Echo*, the first halfpenny morning newspaper published in this country, had been started by Mr. J. Hyslop Bell in the year 1870 at Darlington, as the most central point from which to reach the thriving industrial population of South Durham and Cleveland.” (“The M.P. for Russia.”)

months I modestly ventured to suggest that as I was writing about three leaders a week, and half-a-dozen occasional notes, the labourer might be worthy of his hire! The editor replied saying he was very sorry but there was no fund available to pay outside contributors, and that if I insisted upon payment he would just have to fall back upon his own unaided pen to produce all the editorial matter that the paper contained.

“He sent me a book by Miss Yonge, with a shorthand inscription which I could not understand (having no knowledge of shorthand), but which I afterwards learnt was the prayer: ‘May your Soul be bound up in the Bundle of Life.’ And that was the only payment—if payment it may be called—that I received for all the literary work I did up to the age of twenty-one.

“I still had no intention of becoming a journalist, or of making my living by journalism.

“But one day I was much astonished by a visit of a stranger who came to the office (on the Quayside, Newcastle), and who turned out to be J. Hyslop Bell of the *Northern Echo*. After a few preliminary words he offered me the editorship of the *Northern Echo* at a salary of £150 a year. I asked if the editor were leaving. He said he was going to leave, and that his place had to be filled. I said I would take no further steps until I had communicated with him, as he was my friend.

Mr. Bell demurred a little but finally gave way. I wrote to the editor and told him of the offer that had been made, and said that if it would in any way help him for me to refuse to entertain the idea, I would refuse. He said that it would not make any difference as he was going to leave anyhow."

But my Father would also consult with his parents before deciding anything. They do not appear to have consented very readily, for he relates afterwards that his father "had very grave doubts as to the wisdom of his going on to the Press." He finally made his own decision, however, and the die was cast. It was the same all through his life. He consulted everybody—from Cabinet Ministers down to office-boys; from Empresses to charwomen,—but invariably ended by doing exactly as he pleased. He loved to ventilate every subject thoroughly, and to study it from every possible point of view, in the working out of his ethical belief that there is in most things a kind of a fundamental bed-rock on which it is possible for all mankind to be in agreement. He was ever striving to find this common meeting-ground in everything that pertains to human life and actions. "If humanity lived on a true basis of brotherhood, and professing Christians lived according to Christian ethics," he once said, "it ought to be perfectly possible and natural to seek sympathy and advice from the first stranger you meet in the street!"

"And then," he continues, "came negotiations

during the course of which I think I once or twice refused to go, but finally agreed, under very strict conditions. I still have the old agreement at home. I was to be paid £150 a year and have a fortnight's holiday. I was not to be required to write anything that was opposed to my convictions. I was never to be required to do any Sunday work whatever. And I was never to be expected to wait later than 9.0 for a subject for a leading article, as I had to spare my health from strain. I never observed this stipulation, and always worked late from the very first."

He quaintly relates apropos of this momentous decision, by which he was first launched into journalism, and speaking of the books which through life had had the greatest influence over him.

"After I left school the Book of Proverbs influenced me most and I remember, when I was first started on editorship, reading all the Proverbs relating to kings, as affording the best advice I could get anywhere as to the right discharge of editorial duties."

His own ideals of editorship and journalism find their best expression in what he wrote many years afterwards concerning James Russell Lowell and the "Pious Editor's Creed."

Long before he won the "Prize" volume of poems, and when he was little more than a boy of fifteen, he had come across a "yellow-backed

shilling edition of the Biglow Papers, lying side-by-side with a well-thumbed copy of Artemus Ward as a specimen of American humour," and of this he says : " It was not the humour of the delicious verse that made a dint in my mind . . . but I think I can trace the first 'set' of my mind in a journalistic direction to reading the ' Pious Editor's Creed.' "

Of the " Pious Editor's Creed," he adds elsewhere :

" I feel to-day, as I transcribe those words, as if, all my life long, ever since I read them, I had been doing little else but trying, as best I could, to circulate and propagate the ideas contained in this preface. All that is real and true in what Matthew Arnold called ' The New Journalism,' which he said I had invented, is there in germ. That great ideal of the editor, as the ' Captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order' still glows like a pillar of fire amid the midnight gloom before the journalists of the world."

No apology is therefore necessary to the reader for quoting from Lowell's celebrated Preface :

#### PREFACE TO THE " PIOUS EDITOR'S CREED."

I know of no so responsible position as that of the public journalist. The editor of our day bears the same relation to his time that a clerk bore to the age before the invention of printing. Indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into that darkness which he calls the Next Life. As if *Next* did not mean *Nearest*, and as if any life were nearer than that immediately present one which boils and eddies all round him at the caucus, the ratification meeting, and the

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polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity, as for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow, which Time is even now turning, runs through the Everlasting, and in that must he plant, or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are going to have more of eternity than we have now. This *going* of his is like that of the auctioneer, on which *gone* follows before we have made up our minds to bid . . .

Meanwhile, see what a pulpit the editor mounts daily, sometimes with a congregation of fifty thousand within reach of his voice, and never so much as a nodder, even, among them. And from what a Bible can he choose his text—a Bible which needs no translation, and which no priest-craft can shut and clasp from the laity—the open volume of the world, upon which, with a pen of sunshine or destroying fire, the inspired Present is even now writing the annals of God! Methinks the editor who should understand his calling and be equal thereto, would truly deserve that title which Homer bestows upon princes. He would be the Moses of our nineteenth century; and whereas the old Sinai, silent now, is but a common mountain stared at by the elegant tourist and crawled over by the hammering geologist, he must find his tables of the new law here among factories and cities in this wilderness of Sin (Numbers xxxiii. v. 12.<sup>1</sup>) called the Progress of Civilisation, and be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order.

There was great lamentation in the village when my Father left home for Darlington. One can imagine the prayers and blessings which followed him from the parental roof-tree, and the pride with which the village learnt that he was the “youngest editor in England.”

“It seemed then as though the world would stand still,” writes an old member of his Boys’ Club. “But the severance was gradual, and he

<sup>1</sup> “And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah.”

so managed matters that most of his projects went on as before . . . . he was beloved by every villager in Howden, both churchgoer and non-churchgoer alike . . . . as a result of his work and influence the whole village was eager to stand by him through good and ill report."

When he came home for the weekends from Darlington, a small crowd of boys and girls awaited him at the railway-station, and "escorted him home in one wide line," eagerly relating the news of the week, and clamouring for his approval.

He became editor of the *Northern Echo* in 1871 and remained there until 1880.

And within that nine years span much took place that was to bear great fruit in after time. There were the Bulgarian atrocities, which led to his correspondence with Gladstone and Freeman and to the final shaping of his Russian policy—a policy to which he was faithful all his life. There were his visits to London and his first personal meeting with Gladstone and Carlyle, great events these in the life of an eager, youthful aspirant in the literary, journalistic, and political world. But the event of greatest personal importance during his life at Darlington was his engagement and marriage with Miss Emma Lucy Wilson, his old playmate, daughter of Mr. Henry Wilson of Howden-on-Tyne, to which in his *Reminiscences* occurs this brief but characteristic reference :

"On June tenth, 1873, I married my wife,

whom I had fallen in love with for the third time."

For his marriage he compiled a special service "adapted to modern requirements," in which the challenging word "obey" was omitted by the express stipulation of the bride-elect.

During his bachelor days in Darlington he lived in lodgings, having found ideal quarters on the outskirts of the town, but he was obliged to give up Flora Cottage, as the house was named, a few months before his marriage, and for the remainder of the time he lived in the town itself. The shut-in atmosphere of a street, with its "rows of slated hideousness" was as obnoxious to him as it was novel, and he plaintively pulled down the window blinds of his room in order to shut out the "view" of the brick walls opposite.

## CHAPTER IV

### REMINISCENCES CONTINUED

"In the world's great field of battle no duty is higher than to keep the ranks of the forces of Light well filled with recruits. It is to no holiday that our offspring are called—rather is it a combat long and stern, ending in inevitable death."—W. T. STEAD.

"LIVING two miles out of Darlington,<sup>1</sup> we saw few visitors. I rode into town after dark, returning at two or three in the morning. The life of the little household was well under way before I woke, but all the rest of the day we spent together."

A year of this quiet domestic happiness: and then "the deepest and sweetest of all human experiences."

"It is nearly thirty-four years," he wrote, long afterwards, "since my wife and I received my son from God, as the pledge and seal of our mutual love. During the first hour of agony and alarm preceding his birth we were

<sup>1</sup> The house to which he took his bride was called Grainey Hill, a house surrounded by trees and situated on the outskirts of Darlington.

absolutely alone in a house in the country, two miles from the nearest doctor, for whom our little maid of fourteen had been dispatched in haste. As if it were yesterday I recall how his mother hovered on the brink of death in order to give our son the gift of life.

“Of all things in the world the responsibility of parentage is at once the greatest and the least regarded. With most people it is considered only as a possible, not by any means always a desired, corollary of the indulgence of passionate desire. It was not so with us. To summon an immortal soul into being—what human act is comparable to this? Even if the conscious life of the individual ceased at death, the responsibility of perpetuating the existence of a race, with all its immeasurable possibilities of sin and suffering, is one from which the boldest might recoil. But the only effective way of improving the lot of man is to rear up a new generation of better stock. . . . In the world's great field of battle no duty is higher than to keep the ranks of the forces of Light well filled with recruits. It is to no holiday that our offspring are called—rather is it a combat long and stern, ending in inevitable death.

“These considerations weighed much with us before marriage, and it can therefore be well imagined with what anxiety we awaited the advent of the little one who was to carry on in the next generation the warfare to which he was dedicated before his birth. He was the



MY FATHER, 1873, WHEN EDITOR OF THE "NORTHERN ECHO."



child of many prayers, not only those of his parents, for he was the first grandchild in either family. Reared in the simple faith which regards the fruit of the womb as His reward, we both of us prayed in all sincerity that our marriage might be childless unless the children, each and all from birth up, were loyal servants of their Heavenly Father. When our boy was born we felt with her who in the olden days exclaimed: 'I have gotten a manchild from the Lord.'

"We named him after his grandfather. When he was publicly dedicated at the old chapel in baptism we received the solemn admonition from my father's lips, 'Take this child and bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'" . . .

"In such wise came Willie into our home, and in such spirit did we undertake the task entrusted to our care. . . . Other children followed, and before we came up to London in 1881, we had three sons and one daughter. My wife nursed all of them and we were between us their teachers and their playmates. We had no governess in those days. My wife taught them their lessons, made their clothes, baked and washed, and did all the housework with the assistance of a single servant. I was with them constantly when I was not busy with my journalistic work, in which, in addition to her household duties, my wife acted as my only secretary and assistant.

"There were stormy days even in those halcyon times. It has ever been my fate to be called to

try to stem the tide of popular fury. My first experience was when in 1876-8 I had to act as Mr. Gladstone's humble lieutenant in keeping the North of England as far as possible immune from the Jingo madness that raged and clamoured for war with Russia.

“ One terrible night when the flood was at its height and I was threatened with death as a Russian spy, by anonymous scribes, and it was loudly declared that at the first British reverse in the expected war my office would be gutted by the mob hunting for the traitor's life, I remember walking home at midnight through the fields, wondering whether this sacrifice would be exacted from me. When I reached home my wife was slumbering peacefully with her baby in her arms. I remember bending over them in a sudden paroxysm of fear as to what would become of her and my poor children if the worst befell. But I thought of the thousands of other mothers and children who would be left widowed and fatherless if war broke out, and the dread passed. Ellice Hopkins said somewhere that the devil usually comes to a man in the shape of his wife and children. I can gratefully say that never once in all the stormy trials and personal perils of my married life have my wife and children ever by word or deed endeavoured to dissuade me by considerations for their safety or their comfort to flinch from what I believed to be the path of duty.”

In his last published book, “The M.P. for

Russia," he describes very minutely the events which led to the famous Atrocity Agitation of 1876. This splendid protest on behalf of a common humanity followed, as thunder follows the lightning, upon a letter in the *Daily News* from Mr. MacGahan, special correspondent of that paper, describing the terrible atrocities committed by the Turk in Bulgaria.

From the North of England came the first ringing response voicing itself in passionate columns in the "brave little *Northern Echo*."<sup>1</sup>

"Mr. MacGahan's vivid word-picture of the hecatomb of skulls, of the outraged and massacred women, of the butchered babes at Batak, was flung with a glare of journalistic limelight before the eyes of a shuddering nation. Parliament was not sitting. The natural leaders of the nation were scattered far and wide o'er moor and mountain. But here and there all over the country, but chiefly in the earnest North, were to be found men who had long

<sup>1</sup> Looking back upon the period when I was a young man of seven-and-twenty, I remember with gratitude the part which I was enabled to play in rousing the North of England and in supporting Mr. Gladstone in his protests against a threatened war against Russia on behalf of the Turks. Both Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright repeatedly recognised the services which I rendered to the cause of Peace in that campaign, and it was my proud privilege to be one of the three Englishmen who received the thanks of the first Bulgarian Assembly for the services which I had rendered to the cause of Bulgarian independence.

The three Englishmen were, Mr. Gladstone, the Editor of the *Daily News*, and W. T. Stead.

been testifying to the iniquity of the Turkish Alliance and the duty of endeavouring to make friends with Russia. Cobden had taught this doctrine from before the time of the Crimean War. John Bright had always been anti-Turk and pro-Russian. But the party leaders, from Mr. Gladstone downwards, were all more or less compromised by the Crimean War. Mr. Freeman was conspicuous among the men of letters who were zealous, even to slaying, against the Ottoman horde. The disciples of these men were to be found all over Great Britain, and when Mr. MacGahan's letter appeared they saw that their hour had come. These Stalwarts, no longer mere voices crying in the wilderness, were ready instantly to give articulate expression and practical objective to what would otherwise have been the blind, inarticulate horror of the nation . . . .

"The first town's meeting held in Britain after the publication of Mr. MacGahan's letters was summoned at Darlington. It was crowded, indignant, and unanimous. Similar towns' meetings followed in rapid succession in Durham and Yorkshire. In reporting the temper of the first of these meetings to Mr. Gladstone I implored him to place himself at the head of what promised to be an irresistible movement in favour of the emancipation of Bulgaria. Most of the North-Country towns had held their meetings and repudiated the Turkish Alliance before Mr. Gladstone published his pamphlet on the "Bulgarian Horrors." It was, as he

himself said, "like Inkermann, a soldiers battle."

"It was in reply to a letter of mine announcing that a second series of meetings was to be held in the North in support of the liberation of the Slavs, that Mr. Gladstone wrote me the following letter :

"FORD CASTLE,  
CORNHILL,  
NORTHUMBERLAND,  
*Sept. 30th, 1876.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am not surprised that the energy of the North should take the lead in a supplemental movement as it did to a great extent in the former one.

Before blaming the Servians for rejecting the prolongation of the quasi-armistice, we may fairly remember that when they asked for a suspension the Turks delayed and delayed their answer for a fortnight, I think, and only granted it when they had seemingly lost all chance of further military successes.

The independence of Servia is a point on which I could not commit myself, but a public meeting is more free than I am. It appears that the Government is now tenaciously working out a policy in which Lord Beaconsfield has announced at Aylesbury that they have not the support of the people of England—and of which Lord Derby has avowed that they will probably achieve it before Parliament could meet.

I drop these remarks, from which it may be

better not to quote now, as my name is rather often before the public; but the acute discernment with which your articles are written needs no help from me.

Your faithful servant,  
W. E. GLADSTONE."

Another of his correspondents in those stirring days was the famous historian Edward A. Freeman, whose anti-Turkish vehemence expressed itself in terms of the most extraordinarily fierce invective.

The close touch with Gladstone continued. Here, for instance, is another of "The G.O.M.'s brief incisive words of command:—

"HAWARDEN,  
*Nov. 19th., 1876.*

"I look upon the mission of Lord Salisbury as a contradiction to the speech of the Prime Minister at the Guildhall, and if you meet again I venture to hope you will, while speaking plainly on the purposes in view, give to that mission a word of goodwill."

Another meeting was held in Darlington and the resolutions forwarded to Mr. Gladstone. He replied :

"HAWARDEN,  
*Nov., 1876.*

I view with extreme satisfaction that energy of conviction and character which leads the people of Darlington to watch with an unceasing vigilance the course of the Eastern Question, and thus to confute the pretence of those who think so ill of the people of this country as coolly to

assert that in the interval between September and November they have changed their minds."

It was in the summer of 1876 that Madame Olga Novikoff, "the unofficial Representative of the Russian Nation" (the M.P. for Russia, as Lord Beaconsfield named her) was visiting Sumerlease, the residence of Mr. E. A. Freeman. Mr. Freeman put into her hand a copy of the *Northern Echo*, and she was immensely thrilled by the verve and passion of its editor's leading articles on the situation in the Near East. Her own ardent espousal of the Slavonic cause had been deepened almost to frenzy by the death of her beloved brother Nicholas Kiréeff, which had taken place only a few weeks before. An officer in the Guards, he was the first Russian volunteer who fell fighting for the Christian Slavs against "a vast army of Asiatic Hordes from three-quarters of the Globe," becoming for his men the almost sainted hero of a hundred tales of chivalry and romance, none wilder than the actual details of his own brief brilliant career and his thrilling death. On reading the articles in the *Northern Echo* wherein the heroism of the Russian volunteers in Servia, and of Nicholas Kiréeff in particular, was made the stirring text of a modern Odyssey, Madame Novikoff entered into correspondence with my Father and eventually invited him to call upon her in London. So began a friendship between them, one of the many friendships which so deeply interlaced his life, an "Entente Cordiale," which, to quote his own words,

“although subjected to many violent strains, chiefly arising from difference of opinion on the subject of religious freedom, has never been interrupted for a single week.”

“Mr. Gladstone’s pamphlet on the ‘Bulgarian Horrors,’ which followed the agitation in the North of England,” says my Father, “marked his (Mr. Gladstone’s) return to the leadership of the progressive forces of the nation, and signified his acceptance of the responsibility for guiding, directing and controlling the Atrocity Agitation. It is difficult to make any of those who did not live in the midst of that great moral crisis realise the enthusiasm and passionate devotion with which Mr. Gladstone’s action was hailed by the majority of the English people. It was almost as the descent of an angel from Heaven to succour the sorely-pressed host who was contending for justice and liberty against enormous odds. To me it was a boon unspeakable. I had headed the forlorn hope, hardly daring to hope for success. And now the greatest in all the land, our dread Achilles, had quitted his tent and was summoning the nation to the fray. The emotion this kindles naturally gave warmth and colour to the scene in which it was my good fortune first to see Mr. Gladstone face to face, and to listen to the fiery eloquence of one of the greatest and most momentous of all his orations.”

The Speech was addressed to Mr. Gladstone’s own constituents on Blackheath Common.

The following account of this momentous occasion is taken from the record of his impressions, published in the *Northern Echo* at the time, and later in *The Christian Endeavour World*, America.

“I travelled all night up to London from Darlington in order to be present at that historic occasion. It was my first political pilgrimage to the capital of the Empire, the first occasion on which I was conscious of playing a part in the making of history as well as the first time that I was to hear Gladstone. Upon the issue of that day’s meeting peace or war might depend. Our traditional Alliance with the Turks was at stake, and on Mr. Gladstone’s success depended the hopes of Bulgarian freedom.

“The journey up to town was one of sleepless excitement. The line from Darlington passes through York and Peterborough, and so crosses the western edge of the Fenlands. As the train swept by the level Fens, with their crowds of stirring memories of olden times, when our fathers from Hereward to Cromwell battled nobly for the cause of liberty and justice, the sun was still streaming down floods of golden light upon cottage, farmstead, and village church, encouraging the hope that the weather would be propitious that afternoon when another blow was to be struck for the good old cause by the foremost of living Englishmen.

“The line of succession from Hereward to Gladstone was clear. I felt myself privileged for

the first time to take a part, however humble, in the struggle of the heroes of liberty.

“The place of the meeting was not without its own historic associations, although, they were not associations of victory, but of defeat.

“Blackheath Common, a wide open expanse near Greenwich, in the South-East of London, bears small token now of the rising of the Kentish men when five hundred years ago they burst into mad rebellion against a corrupt aristocracy and a perverted law. Small trace is there left of that terrible day when the oppressed Commons rose, and with red right hand, sought to redress the wrongs of their order by massacre and pillage. Yet, out of that confused turmoil in the past, out of those horrible slaughterings and rebellions, out of all those mad wild struggles for liberty and justice against the all-powerful oppressor, have sprung the peace, prosperity, and freedom of to-day, of which this peaceful Blackheath is but one of the myriad illustrations that fail to attract attention, merely because they are so common.

“The hustings from which Mr. Gladstone addressed his constituents were erected at the eastern extremity of the Heath. It commanded an extensive view of undulating landscape. The sky, which had been bright in the morning, was overcast and threatening in the afternoon. When the people began to assemble, it was pelting hard. Down it poured in torrents, from the great grey clouds that covered the sky, upon the great black crowd that covered the Heath.

“The rain fortunately did not deter thousands from coming to hear Mr. Gladstone plead for the cause of human liberty, and after a while they were rewarded by a cessation of the downpour.

“A ringing cheer, and a simultaneous rush of the fringe of the crowd towards a rapidly advancing carriage told everyone that Mr. Gladstone, in a few minutes, would appear in their midst. A tempest of cheering again and again renewed, hats and handkerchiefs waving in the air, and a confused chorus of congratulatory shouts from various demonstrative members of the vast concourse, hailed the appearance of Mr. Gladstone.

“Mr. Gladstone is not tall, neither is he stout, he is on the contrary spare and somewhat wiry. But it was difficult to think of his body whilst looking at his face. Such a marvellously expressive face I do not ever remember to have seen. Every muscle seemed alive, every inch of surface seemed to speak, it was in perpetual motion. Now it rippled over with a genial smile and then the smile disappeared and the horror expressed by his words was reflected on his countenance, and then again the intensity of his highly wrought feeling gleamed out from his flashing eye, and the listener might have imagined that he was hearing the outpourings of one of the prophets who brought the message of Jehovah to the House of Israel. A benevolent face, too, it was ; one upon which the kindness enthroned in the heart looks out upon you through the eyes and leavens every feature with such mildness and sweetness that it is difficult to conceive that he

whose face rivals the tenderness of that of a woman, has proved himself the best man in the field, not on one occasion, but on hundreds, whenever in the hall of St. Stephen's the signal has been given for battle.

“The meeting opened by a brief speech from the chair, and then a resolution calling upon the Government to use their utmost endeavour to re-establish the Concert of Europe for the redress of the sufferings of the oppressed races of the East, was moved and seconded, almost in dumb show, and then amid a storm of cheers Mr. Gladstone rose to address the meeting.

“The rain had ceased to fall, but the clouds still obscured the sun. There was but a faint breath of wind and that, fortunately, was in favour of the speaker. Ten thousand men were tightly wedged together there, waiting with eager faces and fixed eyes for the first words which were to fall from the lips of the great orator. It was an inspiring sight, and Mr. Gladstone felt the inspiration. Seldom did he speak with more effect. Those who had often heard him declared that, excepting on a great night in the House of Commons, when he could employ his terrible powers of sarcasm, they had never heard him in better form, and seldom, if ever, had he displayed in the course of a single speech so many of the distinguishing characteristics of his oratory.

“The simultaneous cry which was not a cry, but a groan of horror and indignation, burst from the whole of the vast concourse as

Mr. Gladstone mentioned deed after deed whereby the Pashas had shown their approval of the atrocities which their troops had committed in Bulgaria. And when at length he declared that the Government of Turkey was as deeply dyed in hand and arm with blood as the vilest of the mercenaries, the tremendous energy of the speaker was reflected in his audience, and a roar went up from the whole of the great throng, a roar which might justly be regarded as the inarticulate condemnation which Democracy was pronouncing upon the Ottomans, the emphatic attestation by the English people of the guilt of the Turks. Mr. Gladstone only occasionally rose to that height of fervid expression. He did so when he declared that all the massacres and outrages which form the worst pages in English history, concentrated into one block, would not be worthy to appear upon one of the pages which will hereafter consign to eternal infamy the proceedings of the Turks in Bulgaria. The man's soul seemed to go out of him in the extraordinary earnestness with which he hurled his anathemas at the heads of the devastators of Bulgaria. A remarkable instance of this was afforded his hearers in the indescribable, concentrated scorn and indignation with which, replying to the excuse that it was only a few irregulars who had committed these atrocities, he pronounced the words: 'Irregulars or regulars, they are all alike.' It is but a simple sentence, but falling as it did, red hot from

Mr. Gladstone's lips, upon an immense multitude, all thoroughly roused to the overwhelming importance of the occasion, it had a marvellous effect. The wonderful compass of his voice, the withering emphasis with which he pronounced each syllable, will never leave the memory of those who heard it. But the most sustained, and perhaps the finest portion of his speech, was that in which he explained the terms which he would allow the Turks. As if he were addressing the Ottomans, he paused, and then drawing himself up to his full height he began with measured solemn cadence, sentence slowly following sentence: 'You shall receive your regular tribute, retain your titular sovereignty, your Empire shall not be invaded, but,' then Mr. Gladstone's eye kindled, and lifting his clenched hand on high, he proceeded in tones which rang clear as a clarion on every ear, 'but never again, while the years roll their course, so far as it is in our power to determine, never again shall hand of violence be raised by you, never again shall the floodgates of lust be opened by you for the sake of making mankind miserable.' Here the pent-up feelings of the multitude found vent in a tremendous roar of applause in which the end of the sentence was entirely lost. There was rhythm almost of a chant in the way in which Mr. Gladstone pronounced these solemn words that carried awe into every heart. It was as if the High Priest of humanity were pronouncing the doom which was impending over

“ Every word that he speaks has been fiercely furnace-d  
In the blast of a life that has struggled in earnest :

“Mr. Gladstone seems to deliver himself of the conclusion of some of his periods as the hunter hurls the spear at his victim with muscles quivering, and the whole energy of the man concentrated in that single act. Nor should another notable characteristic of his energy be omitted,—the solemnity with which the foremost statesman of our land appealed to the consciousness of his hearers—that if England suffered her wretched jealousies to thwart the freeing of those peoples, she had nothing to anticipate but a just judgment at the hands of the Almighty. The address was throughout permeated by a religious spirit, in its lofty appeal to man’s better nature, in its earnest pleading for the cause of the oppressed, in its constant recognition of the superintendence and government of the Almighty. It was a much more religious address than many a score of sermons that were preached on the following Sunday.

“In eloquence, in lofty spirituality, in keen practical sagacity, and in earnest sympathy, Mr. Gladstone’s Speech at Blackheath reveals the marvellous combination of qualities which have made Mr. Gladstone the idol of the popular heart, the heaven-sent leader of Englishmen whenever they have any serious work to do that must be done.

“Mr. Gladstone sat down amidst a tempest of applause. And then arose a strange cry, or strange blending of cries, from thousands of voices. It was difficult to make anything out distinctly. Some were calling for Granville, others for Carrington, but over and above all these voices was one vast plaintive semi-articulate cry, a cry that was also a prayer. The outburst of ten thousand hearts, and that cry, that prayer, that pleading outburst from the popular heart, as well as could be made out, was ‘Lead us! Lead us!’ It was the call which the nation addressed to Mr. Gladstone.

“We do not believe that he was deaf to the semi-articulate entreaty that rose from this imposing audience, but at the time he made no sign. Mr. Gladstone did not remain unresponsive to that cry.

“From that day forth he made it the main business of his life to counter-work and defeat the pro-Turkish, anti-Russian policy of his great antagonist who was then in power. To a large extent he succeeded. For England was delivered from the infamy of unsheathing her sword in support of the savage tyranny of the Turks,

and, thanks solely to the magnificent self-sacrifice and enthusiasm of the Russian people, Bulgaria was freed.

“But to a large extent he failed. He was unable to compel Lord Beaconsfield to take the only step by which war could have been averted. The English Fleet did not co-operate with the Russian Army in demanding redress for the wronged Bulgarians. One hundred thousand human lives were sacrificed as the result of that failure. And if to-day Macedonia is a by-word and a reproach to Christendom, the despair of Europe and a disgrace to the human race, it is solely due to the fact that the movement launched that day at Blackheath was not strong enough to prevent Lord Beaconsfield from using his power to thrust Macedonia, emancipated by the Russian sword, back under the hoofs of the Turkish hordes. But both his success and his failure were hidden from our eyes that day. We only saw the heroic champion of nationality and liberty standing forth with strength unimpaired by years, to do battle for the cause of the down-trodden and the weak.”

Thirty years afterwards, looking back upon that memorable day, my Father wrote: “I can say I have seen no finer, more inspiring spectacle in my time.”

And he gave it the first place in his series of articles, *The most Memorable Scenes in my Life*.

## CHAPTER V

### CARLYLE AND GLADSTONE

"Of all men who have trodden the English ground since first I saw the light, this man was to me the noblest."—W. T. STEAD on Carlyle.

IT was during the stormy autumn months of 1877 that he was first introduced to Madame Novikoff's Salon. She held her little Court at Symonds's Hotel, Brook Street. And here, in the great world of London, he met and crossed swords with the literary giants who had long been his inspiration.

"It was there," he narrates, "that I first met Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Kinglake, Mr. Froude, Mr. Stansfield, Mr. Courtney, Count Beust, Mr. Matthew Arnold, and a host of other notables. I shall never forget the feeling of awe that came over me when in the most matter-of-fact way Madame Novikoff proposed to take me to call upon Mr. Carlyle. Had she proposed to take me to dine with the Apostle Paul I could hardly have been more startled. Carlyle, from

my earliest boyhood, had been one of the greatest gods of a shadowy Olympus. To call upon him as though he were an actual mortal seemed like a chapter out of fairy-land. But it was delightfully real, when, half-an-hour afterwards, we were seated in the familiar parlour in Cheyne Row, listening to the Chelsea Sage's fierce denunciation of Lord Beaconsfield and enthusiastic eulogy of the Russians, "the only European Nation which has not forgotten how to obey."

"I was much impressed with the stateliness of Mr. Carlyle's manner, the heartiness of his laugh, and the marked regard which he showed to the 'Russian ledly' as he called her. When he was with her there was not a trace of the grim sardonic spirit which has left such a dark shadow over his memory. His bright blue eyes, the russet red of his cheeks, contrasted strangely with my previous conception of the man 'with features scarred with wrinkles and gloomy with undying grief.'

"Although," he proceeds, "I could not accept much of his stern, sad gospel, yet all that was manly and heroic within me vibrated with sympathy when under the spell of his prophetic message. Here, at least, there was a man in earnest, who saw into the soul of things, and who by virtue of his insight was of all men the most earnest to speak his message to his fellows. The prophet of duty in an age when interest is enshrined in the Holy of Holies; the preacher of righteousness, when all men are making haste to be rich . . . of all men who have trodden the English ground since first I saw the light,

this man was to me the noblest. Nor was that all. In the storm and strife, and still more in the routine and absorbing duties of editorial life, it was Carlyle more than any other man who kept my soul alive, who braced me anew to my work, and whose profound sayings stirred my heart like the blast of a trumpet, in those crises of our life when alone you realise the full significance of Time, not so much as a preparation for, but as a part of, Eternity.

“Especially was this the case in the midst of the Atrocity Agitations of 1876–8. Thomas Carlyle, Wordsworth, James Russell Lowell, and the Old Testament,—these supplied and sustained the force which, whatever may be thought of its direction, undoubtedly gave me motive power of the highest—moral and spiritual, that I ever attained.”

Here is the impressionist picture my Father recorded at that time, of the room in which Mr. Carlyle received his friends.

“It was a bright and cheerful apartment on the first floor fronting the street, over the door by which we had just entered. It was lighted by two windows and warmed by a fire on the north side of the room, the door being placed at the south-east corner. The fireplace was lined with blue and white Dutch tiles. On the mantelpiece under a glass shade stood a small clock in white marble and gilt. In front of the fire was a comfortable leather-covered Voltairean arm-chair, with a reading-desk fixed

to the right arm. On this desk lay open an old French Work bound in rusty leather, the Life, so far as I could make out, of St. Panomb. I am not certain about the name, but Mr. Carlyle afterwards told us it was the Life of one of the monks of the Thebaid. On the left-hand side of the arm-chair on the right of the fire stood a comfortable easy sofa. On each side of the fireplace the recesses, extending to the wall on the right and the left, were filled with books, all well bound. I noted one, apparently a work on a theological question by a Scottish divine, at least I think so, but even that I have now forgotten. In the centre of the room there was a table. Some books were lying on it, and some porcelain or china cups and saucers. At the opposite end of the room to the fireplace, near the window, stood a small statue in terra-cotta of Mr. Carlyle. There were, I noticed, several pictures on the walls, mostly, if not exclusively, portraits. I saw one oil painting of Cromwell and one curious print portrait of the same, both on the wall opposite to the window. I did not recognise the other portraits.

“We were sitting on the sofa and had hardly had time to glance round the room when a step was heard on the threshold. We rose and saluted—Thomas Carlyle !

“There are moments in life when you ought to feel so keenly that you do not feel at all. Judging from all previous impressions I should have been thrilled with uncontrollable emotions of delight mingled with awe, but, as a matter of fact, I simply felt a little dazed, as for the first

time in my life I looked into those eyes through whose eagle vision so many far off events had become visible to me. The eyes were bright, brilliantly bright, and blue as the azure lochs which gemmed the hills between St. Mary's Loch and Hawick. I never saw so rich a blue, excepting in those lochs, as that which gleamed in the eyes of Thomas Carlyle. Beneath those blue eyes were ruddy cheeks, almost hectic in their bright colouring, and on the left cheek a vein showed out clearly red in the midst of the red. His lips were rather fallen in, owing to the lack of teeth. His brow, although high and wrinkled, bore upon it none of that weight of consuming care that impressed you in his portraits. The ploughshares of sorrow have passed over it, but the furrows do not show, and the expression is more that of benignant placid innocence than that which sits on the grief-scarred features of his photographs. His head is covered with lovely white grey hair, as thick as if the silvered locks belonged to the young Carlyle of forty years before. When I saw him I appreciated for the first time the exclamation of my enthusiastic companion who, in describing her 'dear old Carlyle,' emphasised her admiration for his 'darling little face'; the expression, although at the time it struck me as incongruous, was just. It is a little face. And his bright blue eyes and ruddy cheeks, with the thick grey hair, might well justify the endearing epithet.

"I was surprised and agreeably disappointed that the infinite sadness which I had believed

ever brooded over the face of the author of 'Sartor Resartus' was not there. In its stead there was nothing but kindly mirth and ready sympathy. It was somewhat perplexing. Mr. Carlyle stood erect, as if the weight of four-score years did not rest upon his shoulders, and although his long frail hands trembled slightly there was no other indication of failing strength. . .

"Mr. Carlyle afterwards talked to me a good deal about Madame Novikoff, 'a very patriotic leddy,' as he observed. They used to drive together on week-days in Lady Ashburton's carriage, and on Sundays in the Chelsea omnibus, where they must have seemed a curious pair to the inquisitive and hero-worshipping conductor. Froude was generally with them during those drives. At Mr. Carlyle's also I met Mr. Lecky, and subsequently Madame Novikoff took me to see Mr. Froude. It was a great new world for me to see the men whom I had been reading and writing about all my life for the first time face to face."

Still more important was it to meet Mr. Gladstone, and to come for the first time behind the scenes of English and foreign political life.

Their first meeting took place at Symonds's Hotel. Father's notes record the conversation very fully. It begins with a sort of anthem of praise of the *Northern Echo*.

"He came," says Father, "direct to the hotel from the station. I was sitting in the room at

about four-thirty when 'Mr. Gladstone' was announced, and in walked the Rt. Hon. W. E. G. He greeted Madame Novikoff most warmly, and I was then introduced to him. His face crinkled all over with his expressive smile as he heard my name. Turning towards me he said he really regarded himself as intimately acquainted with the *Northern Echo*, although he had never met me before. 'I can assure you,' he said, 'that it is a sincere matter of regret to me that I cannot read more of the *Echo*, for to read the *Echo* is to dispense with the necessity of reading other papers. It is admirably got up in every way, admirably got up.' Then taking his seat in an easy-chair he turned to Madame Novikoff, 'and how are you after all the trials of the year? It has been a terrible year, a very terrible year.'

" 'Yes,' she said, 'especially at the beginning, when the protocols seemed as if we were going to leave the Bulgarians to their fate.'

" 'Oh dear, dear, yes,' he said, 'it has indeed been a most trying year in every respect. Mrs. Gladstone has come up to town.' At this moment Miss Wenda Cartwright entered, and I rose to go. Madame Novikoff however asked me to stay, and gave me a cup of tea. Mr. Gladstone, also supplied with tea, was sitting on the right of Madame Novikoff. In front of her was Miss Cartwright, and I was on the extreme left.

" After a few words concerning his pleasure at Madame Novikoff's writings, Mr. Gladstone added something more in praise of the North of England.

“‘Yes, Mr. Gladstone,’ I said, ‘you have always done justice to the North.’ He added, ‘I sincerely hope that your paper is progressing.’ I told him yes, that last year it was from 10,000 to 12,000, and this year from 14,000 to 15,000 . . . He seemed surprised and pleased. I explained that I told him the circulation without reserve, although it was usually a secret.

“‘Yes,’ he said, ‘that was the one advantage the old Stamp Acts had, they at least enabled everyone to know to a copy what was the circulation of the different papers. I had the very greatest difficulty,’ he added, ‘in refraining from pen and paper after reading Dean Stanley’s letter.’

“‘You recognised the Dean?’ said Madame N.

“‘Certainly,’ said he, ‘there was not another man in all England could have written that letter.’

“‘I was in hopes you might reply to it,’ I said.

“‘Ah,’ he said, ‘you dealt with him so excellently in your leading articles, there was nothing left for me to do.’

“‘I am so glad you like the *Northern Echo*,’ said Madame N.

“‘Yes,’ he said, ‘it is indeed an admirable paper.’

“‘And so brilliantly written,’ added Madame N.

“‘Yes, I think so,’ said Mr. Gladstone, ‘but,’ he added with a merry little laugh, ‘perhaps you

and I are bad judges because we agree with it so completely. If we were opposed to it our opinion might be better worth having.'

"The conversation then turned upon the attitude of the London Press towards the war. The war-spirit, asserted Mr. Gladstone, existed chiefly in the Metropolitan districts. He added that out of the three thousand letters of his 'abusive correspondents' nine-tenths or even more, came from the Metropolitan districts. An immense proportion of these letters contained quotations from the *Daily Telegraph* leaders and correspondents, with paragraphs relating to the Russians underlined and garnished with expletives.

"'It is a curious fact,' he added, 'that I receive about forty to fifty of these horrible letters every day.'

"Mr. Gladstone then waxed very wroth concerning an article by Louis Kossuth which had appeared in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, dealing with the extradition of the Hungarian refugees. Mr. Gladstone described it as 'a most loathsome article, a foul and abominable piece of the most unmitigated selfishness that ever I have heard.'

"Mr. Gladstone also spoke very strongly in favour of publicity as a corrective to political corruption.

"'Corruption there must be,' he said 'wherever there is not the utmost publicity. Publicity, that is the great advantage, the great security of English political life.'"

## CHAPTER VI

### HIS FIRST PREMONITION

“The Salvation Army is a miracle of our time. It is the latest revelation of the potency of the invisible over the visible, the concrete manifestation of the power of the spirit over matter.”  
—W. T. STEAD. *Review of Reviews*, 1890.

THESE “glimpses of Olympus” in his flying visits to London were brief and brilliant rifts in the comparative monotony of Darlington life, which after 1878, when calm succeeded storm in the political horizon, returned more or less to its former routine.

The year 1879 brought him for the first time into touch with the Salvation Army, which made its first appearance at Darlington during the mid-summer of that year. The following is taken from his own account of the bloodless campaign by which that Quaker stronghold became the scene of one of General Booth’s earliest victories.

After describing the arrival of the “Hallelujah Lasses” in the town, and the enthusiasm they evoked—how the Livingstone Hall, holding from

2,000 to 2,500 people, was crowded every night for several weeks, he goes on to say:—

“At first respectable Darlington held aloof. Then the emissaries of respectability ventured down, in sheer curiosity, to see what was going on. They returned puzzled. Nothing was going on. No dancing, no extravagance, no tomfoolery, no sensationalism. The two girls, Captain Rose and Lieutenant Annie—one two-and-twenty, the other eighteen—conducted a religious service, not unlike an early Methodist meeting, with hearty responses, lively singing, and simple gospel addresses, brief and to the point. The penitents’ form and the after prayer-meeting, in which the lasses, going from seat to seat, personally addressed everyone who remained as to their spiritual welfare, were the only features in which it differed from an ordinary mission revival service. But the odd miraculous thing that bothered Darlington was the effect which it had. All the riff-raff of the town went to the Livingstone Hall, and many of them never returned the same men.

“At last I went to see the girls who had turned Darlington upside down. I was amazed. I found two delicate girls—one hardly able to write a letter; the other not yet nineteen—ministering to a crowded congregation which they had themselves collected out of the street, and building up an aggressive church-militant out of the human refuse which other churches regarded with blank despair. They had to

provide for maintaining services regularly every week-night and nearly all Sunday, in the largest hall in the town; they had to raise funds to pay the rent, meet the gas bill, clean the hall, repair broken windows and broken forms, and provide themselves with food and lodging. And they did it. The town was suffering severely from a depression in the iron trade, and the regular churches could with difficulty meet their liabilities. But these girls raised a new cause out of the ground, in the poorest part of the town, and made it self-supporting by the coppers of their collection. Judged by the most material standard, this was a great result. In the first six months a thousand persons had been down to the penitent form and a corps or a church was formed of nearly two hundred members, each of whom was privileged to speak, to pray, to sing, to visit, to march in procession, to take a collection, or to do anything that wanted doing.

“‘It will not last,’ said many, and dismissed the miracle as though it were less miraculous because it was not capable of endless repetition. I sat next a young mechanic one night in the meeting, and asked him what he thought about the business. ‘Dunno,’ he said, ‘they’re a queer lot.’ ‘Done any good?’ ‘Mebbe. There’s Knacker Jack—I know him.’ ‘Well, has it not been good for his wife and bairns?’ ‘Dunno.’ But I work at the same place as he does, and it has been good for his hosses. He used to strike ’em and knock ’em about dreadful. But since

the lasses got hold of him he's never laid his hand on 'em.' Even suppose that it did not last, and that the converts only stood so long and then fell away; then, for as long as they stand, a great and beneficent change has been effected, in which all surroundings share—from the police to the horses.

“It was my first personal experience of the Salvation Army and its methods. Born and bred among the quieter Congregationalists, I had some prejudice against noisy services, but here was a stubborn fact which I could not get over. There was the palpable, unmistakable result, material and moral, which before July, 1879, would have been declared utterly impossible—a miracle not to be wrought by man, no, not if all the churches and chapels in Darlington had combined to hold services in the Livingstone Hall. And the only visible means by which this result was brought about, was these two girls, neither of them well educated, both delicate, and without any friends or material resources whatever.

“The first letter I ever wrote to head-quarters was a brief note to the General complaining of the cruelty of sending two young women—one of whom seemed threatened with consumption—to undertake such exhausting work. I added, what I fully believed, that if they broke down and died he deserved to be indicted for manslaughter. The General's reply was characteristic: ‘You would never do for a general,’ he said, ‘a general must not be

afraid to spend his soldiers in order to carry positions.' ”

General Booth also wrote to my Father as follows soon after the first appearance of the *War Cry* :

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE SALVATION ARMY,  
272, WHITECHAPEL ROAD,  
LONDON, E.

*Jan. 9th, 1880.*

W. T. STEAD, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for the paper you were good enough to send me for the *War Cry*. I enclose a copy of No. 3. I am much gratified to know that you like the paper.

We must as you say push it, but we have much to learn, I find.

Miss Clapham is taking some rest before going to her new station. Let me commend to you the sisters who are succeeding her in Darlington and bespeak your kind interest.

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM BOOTH.

My Father had the greatest admiration for the consummate organising genius of General Booth and his family, he said that they constituted the most remarkable group of men and women that he knew, and he often declared that he had been very strongly tempted to abandon journalism and join the Salvation Army, but this he avowed was a “temptation of the Evil One, who always appealed to him on the lines of his

inclinations." So he did not give ear to the tempter. His acquaintance with the Booth family was destined indirectly to have tremendous results, though he was never more than an outside supporter of the Army. Bramwell Booth was, six years later, to stand by his side in the Dock of the Central Criminal Court of the Old Bailey. He was also largely responsible for the publication of "Darkest England and the Way Out." This was all still hidden in the future when the Army first took possession of the little Quaker Market-town. But the tide of Destiny was slowly moving to the flood, and he was drawing near to the end of the "Darlington chapter" of his life. One more glimpse of Grainey Hill, and then to London.

"Grainey Hill was an ideal place for children," he writes, "I had three acres and a cow, and besides the cow a perfect menagerie of goats, rabbits, poultry, dogs and cats, not to speak of the pony, which was almost regarded as a member of the family. To be brought up under the green trees in the midst of flowers and shrubs, free from the smoke and murmur of the town, in a life of perfect freedom from conventional restraint, in the midst of all the humanising influences of the constant responsible care of birds and beasts; to begin and close the day with praise and prayer, and to be constantly trusted to help mother in the house and father in the garden and field—what environment could be more idyllic? It was as the Garden of Eden

plus the children, of whom there were none in Paradise. Without our children it would not have been Paradise. . .

“The modern method of bringing up children, when the parents relegate all their duties to nurses and governesses and pack them off to boarding-schools, may be a necessity in some cases. But no more abominable trampling under foot of that divinely appointed means of grace, which children are to parents, can be conceived. You get no good of your children on such a system, and your offspring are almost orphaned from their birth. Not so, thank God, was parentage understood in our North-country home. The children were always with us. We shared their life to the full ; they shared ours so far as they could understand. And in such circumstances children develop fast. Especially is this the case when, as at Grainey Hill, the mother lived almost alone among her children, and depended upon them for all the solace of companionship and of sympathy which in a less secluded life might have been supplied from more varied sources. . . Our children were our only recreation, nor could mortal man desire anything more delightful than in study and in play to watch the unfolding of the innocent mind of the child.”

They lived at Grainey Hill for eight years, and then came the summons to London.

And now comes a curious and interesting manifestation of that foreseeing inner vision, or “second sight” which he possessed as surely as

any Hebrew prophet of old-time, but of which this is the first very definite expression that came consciously to him.<sup>1</sup>

“I can make no claim,” he says, “to the proud prerogative of the seer, but upon several occasions I have had some extraordinary premonitions of what was about to happen. I can give no explanation as to how they came, all I know is that they arrived, and when they arrived I recognised them beyond all possibility of mistake. I have had three or four very vivid and striking premonitions in my life which have been fulfilled to the letter . . .

“The first occasion on which I had an absolutely unmistakable intimation of the change about to occur in my own circumstances was in 1880, the year in which I left the editorship of the *Northern Echo*. . . .

“On New Year’s day, 1880, it was forcibly impressed upon my mind that I was to leave Darlington in the course of that year. I remember on the first of January meeting a journalistic *confrère* on my way from Darlington station to the *Northern Echo* office. After wishing him a Happy New Year, I said, ‘This is the last New Year’s Day I shall ever spend in Darlington. I shall leave the *Northern Echo* this year.’ My friend looked at me in some amazement, and said, ‘And where are you going to?’ ‘To London,’ I replied, ‘because it is the only place which could tempt me from my

<sup>1</sup> “Real Ghost Stories.”

present position, which is very comfortable, and where I have perfect freedom to say my say.' 'But,' said my friend, somewhat dubiously, 'what paper are you going to?' 'I have no idea in the world,' I said; 'neither do I know a single London paper which would offer me a position upon its staff, of any kind, let alone one on which I should have any liberty of utterance. I see no prospect of any opening anywhere. But I know for certain that before this year is out I shall be on the staff of a London paper.' 'Come,' said my friend, 'this is superstition, and with a wife and family I hope you will do nothing rashly.' 'You need have no fear as to that,' I said, 'I shall not seek any position elsewhere: it will have to come to me if I have to go to it. I am not going to throw myself out of a berth until I know where my next place is to be. Humanly speaking, I see no chance of my leaving Darlington, yet I have no more doubt than of my own existence that I shall be gone this time next year.' We parted. The General Election soon came upon us and when the time came for renewing my engagement on the *Northern Echo*, I had no option but to renew my contract, and bind myself to remain at Darlington until July, 1881. Although I signed the contract, when the day arrived on which I had either to give notice or renew my engagement, I could not shake from me the conviction that I was destined to leave Darlington at least six months before my engagement expired.

At that time the *Pall Mall Gazette* was edited by Mr. Greenwood, and was, of all the papers in the land the most anti-pathetic to the principles upon which I had conducted the *Northern Echo*. The possibility of my becoming assistant editor to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* seemed at that time about as remote as that of the Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland receiving a cardinal's hat from the Pope of Rome. Nevertheless, no sooner had Mr. Gladstone been seated in power than Mr. George Smith handed over the *Pall Mall Gazette* to his son-in-law, Mr. Henry Yates Thompson. Mr. Greenwood departed to found and edit the *St. James' Gazette*, and Mr. Morley<sup>1</sup> became editor. Even then I never dreamed of going to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Two other North-country editors and I, thinking that Mr. Morley was left in rather a difficulty by the secession of several of the *Pall Mall* staff, agreed to send up occasional contributions, solely for the purpose of enabling Mr. Morley to get through the temporary difficulty in which he was placed by being suddenly summoned to edit a daily paper under such circumstances. Midsummer had hardly passed before Mr. Thompson came down to Darlington and offered me the assistant editorship. The proprietor of the *Northern Echo* kindly waived his right to my services in deference to the request of Mr. Morley. As a result I left the *Northern Echo* in September, 1880, and my presentiment was fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Morley.

“At the time when it was first impressed upon my mind, no living being probably anticipated the possibility of such a change occurring in the *Pall Mall Gazette* as would render it possible for me to become assistant editor, so that the presentiment could in no way have been due to any possible calculation of chances on my part.”

Referring to the premonition he wrote to Mr. J. Hyslop Bell:—

“July 28th, 1880.

You may remember that when we had our last discussion about probabilities of the future, I spoke about the possibility that a call might come summoning me to go hence. I said that I had not the remotest idea from whence the call might come, and at that time there certainly seemed about as much chance of the summons coming from the *Pall Mall Gazette* as from the *Daily Telegraph*.”

“So,” he adds elsewhere, “the idyllic life at Darlington came to a close . . . But I refused to go until I could find a place under green trees where I could stable the pony and surround the children with the simple natural life to which they had been accustomed. I found a new home for them, admirably suited to their needs, at Cambridge House, Wimbledon.”

It was some little time before this ideal “nest” was discovered. He came up to town for three months before finally bringing mother and the children from Darlington, and during that interval

he lived in rooms at the Inns of Court Hotel, and sometimes with his chief, Mr. Morley, at the latter's residence at Putney. Mother came up on a visit, and they walked across to Wimbledon one Sunday afternoon to see the house that was destined afterwards, in the fulness of time, to be the Inner Sanctuary of Julia's Bureau.

He became assistant editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* under Mr. Morley in 1880 and took full command of that paper in 1884. Later he thus briefly outlined the general policy he had followed whilst in Darlington. On his "threefold mission," as he loved to call it, "Peace ; Woman ; Spirits ;" only the two first as yet had begun to find expression. His efforts on behalf of an Anglo-Russian Alliance marked the beginning of his long and strenuous fight for peace. He says:—

"When I was editing the *Northern Echo* I was a thorough-going Gladstonian of a very stalwart fighting kind, with a wholesome conviction that Tories were children of the Devil, and that the supreme duty of a Liberal journalist was to win as many seats as possible for the Liberal Party. We were very successful, and even in the dark hour of Conservatism in 1874 we achieved the almost unprecedented feat of carrying all the Durham seats for the Liberal Party. Unfortunately, we lost some of them on petition, but the return of the 'Durham Thirteen,' as they were called, was a somewhat notable feat, in which I was very glad to have assisted. It was this which led me to publish

my first book which was called *The Durham Thirteen*, which contained the biographies of the thirteen members who were returned in the Durham constituency. Unfortunately, the election petition spoilt the thirteen, and there has never been a 'Durham Thirteen' since.

"In the *Northern Echo* I preached just the same as I preach now,<sup>1</sup> advocating Industrial Arbitration and Imperial Extension, much to the horror of the good Quakers, who found, I believe, the money with which the *Echo* was established. I was also a heretic on the subject of Capital Punishment, and was always a very strong opponent of the Permissive Bill.

"On the other hand, I was, from the first, a vehement supporter of Mrs. Josephine Butler in her Crusade against the C.D. Acts. I remember very well how my mother and my wife's mother used to go canvassing our village for signatures against these Acts before I went into journalism at all. It is one of the subjects on which I have always been quite mad. I am ready to allow anybody to discuss anything in any newspaper that I edit: they may deny the existence of God or of the soul: they may blaspheme all the angels and all the saints: they may maintain that I am the latest authentic incarnation of the Devil. But one thing I have never allowed them to do, and that is to say a word in favour of the C.D. Acts, or of any modification of the system which makes women the chattels and slaves of the administration for the purpose

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1893.

of administering to the worst passions of the other sex. That is the only subject upon which I never allow anybody to say a word upon the devil's side in any paper under my control.

“It is very curious that I utterly failed to obtain any extraneous literary employment all the time that I was on the *Northern Echo*. I was shut down and kept down to my own half-penny paper. My efforts to obtain literary work or external engagements were a total failure, and a very good thing it was for me too, although I did not think so at the time. What made me was the Bulgarian Atrocities.”

## CHAPTER VII

### HIS FIRST SÉANCE

“Young man, you are going to be the St. Paul of Spiritualism.”  
—Prophecy made at his first séance, 1881.

UP to and before this period of his life (1880), there is no record whatever of any leanings on his part towards the study of the Occult. The unseen forces which were steadily moving him along the path of destiny, had their own way of working. The time was not yet ripe for his conscious communion with the denizens of the Life Beyond, the “Land of Realities,” as he was wont to call it in after years. But the bright flame of spiritual fervour glowed within his soul; he was unceasingly conscious of being impelled by the great guiding Power, towards Whom all his thoughts and actions were constantly referred as boy, as youth, as man.

But now comes the very first recorded evidence of an awakening interest in “Spiritualism.”

It is related by Mr. Mark Fooks, the doyen of North-country journalists, who saw much of him in those early days. Mr. Fooks had called to take

leave of him on the eve of his departure from Darlington and found the little homestead of Grainey Hill in the chaos of "mid-removal," when the rooms are dismantled and there remains nothing to be done but sit about on boxes and trunks, awaiting the final departure of the household gods. They talked, and their conversation took a psychic turn. Mr. Fooks writes :—

"As we sat talking he asked me some questions about my experiences in spiritualism ; it being known in Darlington that I had some knowledge of the matter. For an hour or more I detailed some of the evidence I had received. One matter seemed to have struck him more particularly, for after he got to London, he wrote me about printing the details in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

"It was from this conversation with me that his interest in psychic matters seems to have been awakened. If ever I met him in London afterwards, which was rarely, he generally opened out his latest experiences in connection with psychic matters, and more than once remarked 'you are my spiritual father in this thing.'"

Mr. Fooks, writing to him in 1880, thus referred to the incident :

"I have thought often and repeatedly of the last night at Grainey Hill. I feel I hardly ought to have been there at such a time as *the last*. I was somewhat of an intruder on what would be more or less a sacred occasion to yourself and

your good wife. However, kindly forgive me. In one sense—one personal to myself—I am glad I was there. It is a night, somehow I feel, to be remembered,—the talk we had and the walk home under the stars.”

Shortly after this, and soon after he came to London, occurred an event in his life which, although of apparently little importance at the time, he afterwards came to regard as a signpost pointing onwards to the path that lay ahead; one of the signposts on his journey through life.

“Young man, you are going to be the St. Paul of Spiritualism.”

This remarkable prophecy was made to him in 1881, when he attended his first séance. He would often tell how, when the séance was over, and as he was taking his leave, the medium, Mr. Burns, rose and solemnly addressed to him the words quoted above.

The following is his own account of the séance written with a view to publication, which accounts for the prophecy being omitted.

#### “MY FIRST SÉANCE.

“Two nights before the Speaker’s *Coup d’État*, when the Obstructionists had brought the Constitutional Machine to a standstill by their opposition to the Coercion Bill, I turned away from the wearying monologue which went on without ceasing in St. Stephen’s, and sought for relief from the dreariness of the present by attempting to peer behind the impalpable veil

which shrouds the future from our gaze. It was with an uneasy sense of wrong-doing that I made my way to the haunt of the modern Witch of Endor, and sought from sorcery a vision of the things to come. I consoled myself by thinking that I could not waste my time more utterly by listening to the mutterings of the oracle than by enduring the dreary drone of Members, speaking against time, in an empty House; and silencing as best I could the uneasy suspicion of being a party to a vulgar fraud, I ventured into the nineteenth century substitute for the Cave of Delphi. I found it without difficulty, and was admitted without question. The place of the Pythian Priestess was taken by a short squat little man whose tripod was a substantial armchair at one end of a square table, around which sat some dozen persons who, like myself, were apparently anxious to gain some relief from the monotony of the present by peering into the mysteries of the future. Two or three were apparently of good education. The others seemed to be servant girls and artisans. I was a total stranger to all present, none of whom I knew nor did they know either my name or my occupation. Admission was free, but at the close freewill offerings were collected from those who cared to subscribe for maintenance of the shrine.

“The proceedings were divided into two parts, the first in which the oracle made response to unspoken questions, provided they could be answered by ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ The hand of the

Sorcerer smote the table once for *No*, thrice for *Yes*, and when the Oracle was uncertain, he struck it twice. The movement of his hand and arm was convulsive, as if beyond his control. And the curious thing about it was that no answer was returned if the enquirer uttered his question aloud. To a question framed in the mind, to which no utterance was given, an answer was returned immediately; but if the lips moved or the tongue spoke, the Oracle was dumb. Everyone present had the right to ask as many inaudible questions about any subjects, past, present, or to come, as he pleased, and naturally enough most of the questions which were put, so far as could be gathered from the conversation which subsequently took place, related to the private concerns of the questioner. Most of those present seemed satisfied with the nature of the responses. Some were moved to tears. In no case was a mistake apparent. Information was given about persons named in letters, which were unopened, by the Sorcerer, which, in one case at least, was strangely near the mark. At last my turn came. Full of the scandalous scene which at that moment was going on in Parliament, I asked mentally, 'Will the Government get their Coercion Bill through this Session?' There was a pause, as if the Oracle was to be dumb. I repeated it mentally two or three times, and then came an emphatic YES. Instantly I asked (always, be it remembered, in my own mind, without syllabing

my thoughts), 'Will it be passed before Easter?' And as instantly came an affirmative reply. 'Will the Cabinet remain intact?' I thought; and immediately the Sorcerer answered NO. Somewhat staggered I asked, 'who will go out?' But as this question could not be answered by *Yes* or *No*, there was no reply. As the Oracle was dumb I changed my thought—query, into an answerable form. 'Will it be Mr. Forster?' No. 'Mr. Chamberlain?' Doubtful. I did not prosecute the enquiry further. I did not regard the matter seriously enough. Nor was it till sometime after the Duke of Argyle left the Cabinet that the memory of the Sorcerer's prediction led me to recall the other prophecies in which he had indulged.

"'Will Mr. Gladstone survive the worry of the Session?' I asked, after a few seconds' delay, during which I was collecting my thoughts. Instantly, although there was no sign that I had put a question, came the answer YES. 'Will the House of Lords pass the Land Bill?' YES. I then desisted from further questioning, and waited for the second act.

"After a period of silence the Pythian Priest, upon his armchair tripod, began to moan and writhe as if in pain, and, after sundry grunts and groans, greeted the company with a squeaky voice, and we were told that he was now 'possessed,'—they told me, at the close of the Sitting, by none other than the famous Mother Shipton,—who would answer any question on any subject those present cared to ask about. Not knowing that

it was Mother Shipton, I did not understand exactly the point of some of the questions, but gathered generally that there was to be a very virulent form of disease prevalent in London, to avoid which absolute cleanliness of body and great simplicity of diet was indispensable. To eat whole-wheat bread and vegetables, and drink water unpolluted by tea or coffee, to say nothing of all alcoholic drinks, were some of the old dame's directions, to which I paid but scant attention. When my turn came, I asked the Sorcerer if there would be war in the East of Europe. He replied somewhat vaguely, but by dint of cross-examination I was told that the prevalent expectation that the Greek Frontier Question would result in war in April was wrong. War would certainly not break out in two months, nor even, I believe, although I am not quite sure, in four. Reverting to Ireland the Sorcerer, or Mother Shipton, furnished me with a forecast of the future which is not without interest. The state of things in Ireland, said he, or she, is very bad and would have been worse but for the precautions the Government have taken. The Coercion Bill would be passed, but it would not be employed to dragoon the people or to put down agitation. There would be more bark than bite. Precautions against possible dangers rather than measures to crush the Land League movement would be taken. But they would not pacify Ireland. Neither would the Land Bill. The movement was in the hands of men who wished to direct it, not so much for the

reform of the Land Laws, as against the English Government. For two years things would go on simmering into insurrection. Ultimately some armed steamers from America with a force of American Irish on board would evade English cruisers, cross the Atlantic, and land their forces on the North-West coast of Ireland. Their landing would be the signal for the outburst of an insurrection. The peasants were armed, and they would rise against the English Government. Then they would be crushed, and the insurrection stamped out, and Ireland, I understood, would once more be at peace. But the Land Agitation, although thus destined to a bloody end, when diverted from its legitimate object, was useful not only for the sake of the Irish, but equally for the sake of the English. 'It is a great educational movement. Ireland is teaching England and Scotland, and in two or three years you will have the agitation just as ripe in this country as it is now in Ireland.' The Sorcerer, his eyes being closed, went on, with much animation, to predict the downfall of our landed aristocracy, and the total revolution of our economic system. 'On this side with us, those nobles,' said, what was supposed to be the voice of Mother Shipton, 'have no more land than other people and are far below many of those whom when on earth they would have spurned from their doors.' And Mother Shipton chuckled with malignant glee at the thought of the retributive justice which awaited the aristocrats on the "Other Side." But she went on to dilate on the coming revolution

in a way that somewhat surprised me. All capitalists, railway shareholders, factory owners, and the like, were soon to learn that their day of unrestricted power was at an end. Before long, she said, they would be told to take as their share a certain percentage. I forget whether she said three, three-and-a-half or five. And all the rest of the profits will be divided among the workmen.

“All this and much more was to be done. ‘But what will the House of Lords say to this?’ I asked, as the prediction came to a close. ‘The House of Lords will have to put its own house in order.’ ‘And the crown, will it survive!’ ‘That depends,’ was the cautious reply. ‘But,’ I objected, ‘what about the Obstructives?’ ‘Oh,’ she replied contemptuously, ‘they will be snuffed out in a moment when the time comes.’ I smiled incredulously when I heard the confident prediction, but within thirty-six hours the Speaker launched his fiat and Mother Shipton’s words, in that respect at least, came promptly true.”

Commenting upon this evening later, he wrote :

“I did not think much about it at the time ; but on looking back to the evening I spent in the Sorcerer’s Cave, I begin to think that perhaps my time was spent at least as profitably as if I had passed the weary hours at the House of Commons listening to the oratory of Mr. Biggar, Mr. Finnigan, and Mr. Healy.”

## CHAPTER VIII

1880—1885

“If I had to single out any one chapter in the Bible which I am conscious of having influenced me most, I should say the first of Joshua, with its oft repeated exhortation to be strong and to be very courageous; and if I had to single out any particular verses it would be those which were taught me when a boy and which I long afterwards saw on the wall in General Gordon’s room in Southampton: ‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.’”—W. T. STEAD. “Books which have Influenced me.”

FATHER never actually kept a regular diary, yet his writings were always frankly autobiographical. The following private memorandum, made in 1880 when he joined the *P.M.G.*, reveals the idealism which formed the basis of his own editorial creed:—

“*Pall Mall Gazette.*

“*Ideal to be aimed at.* ‘Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.’

“To be ever in the van, going ahead, accepting the responsibilities and discharging the duties of leadership of our race in its upward strivings after the ideal—to hear new words



*W. & D. Downey.*

MY FATHER, 1881, WHEN EDITOR OF THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."



of command in every cry of the sorrowing, and be goaded and spurred on to fresh exertion by every spectacle of sin and misery.

“Every man and woman who falls short of the perfect manhood of Christ Jesus, cries out for help to realise that manhood which is their birth-right in Christ, with earnestness and emphasis, proportioned to his remoteness from the ideal (Lowell’s ‘A Parable,’ last verse<sup>1</sup>). Men make Christ’s image into paupers and prostitutes.

“To redeem the world, every agency for good is needed, and new agencies still.

“The great need, intelligent sympathy and imagination.

“True Catholicity, character, all else included, to be encouraged ; their baser parts discouraged, more by favour to the good than direct censure.

“To work on, to yearn on in faith.

“Christ, the best remedy for pessimism and despair. He saw all the chances, and seeing, chose as the best part, the life of shame, sorrow, and death. The prize was worth the sacrifice. If it was so for Him, it is not less so for us.”

Of the interval that elapsed between his arrival at the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1880 and his rousing

<sup>1</sup> Then Christ sought out an artisan,  
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man ;  
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin  
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set He in the midst of them,  
And as they drew back their garment-hem,  
For fear of defilement, “Lo, here,” said He,  
“The images ye have made of Me !”

the conscience of England in 1885 with the horrors of the Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon, it is impossible to give other than a brief survey. The pages of the *Pall Mall Gazette* of those days form the stirring chronicle of a time when, as has been said of him, "he practically moulded the England of his day to a larger degree than any man in it." He grappled with the problems of Time and the Hour. He waged unceasing warfare against jingoism in every shape or form. He became an enthusiastic advocate of a beneficent Imperialism and "the necessity for using the policeman to exorcise the soldier." In his own words, "I became an impassioned Imperialist, but my Imperialism was always an Imperialism of responsibility, or as I phrased it, an Imperialism, plus common-sense and the Ten Commandments": and he preached a gospel for Social Service in which "duties," not "rights" were the standard of equality.

He wrote: "Empire was to me not a source of pride, excepting in so far as it was the emblem of duty done, of burdens borne, for the sake of humanity."

But the events which stood out clearly in his own mind above all others, as the milestones of his life, during the period of the early eighties, were three:—his interview with General Gordon; his articles on "The Truth about the Navy"; and last and greatest; "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon."

Of the first named, his interview with Gordon, he wrote afterwards: "It was an historic interview, which made an abiding impression on my mind."

The interview was so historic that it made con-

temporary history. It made such an abiding impression on my Father's mind, and apparently also on the mind of General Gordon, that long years afterwards his spirit recalled the episode and took up the old thread of their discourse<sup>1</sup>; so, I feel, it will not be misplaced to give here a few details of the events which led up to it.

<sup>1</sup> Referring to this my Father wrote :—

“Nineteen years after Gordon had met his death, when Khartoum was captured, in company with the same officer,\* I was sitting with a medium, well known on the Continent, of the name of Mr. Alfred Peters. Towards the close of the *séance*, greatly to my astonishment, without the slightest expectation either on the part of my friend or myself, Mr. Peters was controlled by an intelligence whose identity neither of us could, for a moment, doubt. It was exactly as if General Gordon himself had taken a seat in the chair. His mannerism, which was very marked, his quick, brusque, humorous mode of speech was exactly reproduced. He took up our old conversation at Southampton twenty years ago, asked me if I remembered about matters, some of which I did remember, some of which I had forgotten, and none of which the medium could possibly have known. He talked away with the same keen intelligence, political acumen, and dogmatic assurance which distinguished him during his physical life. He recognised us both, spoke to us both in the same friendly fashion, and poured out a stream of conversation that was a mixture of theology, mysticism, and high politics, and his personal reminiscences bore in every sentence the true Gordon stamp. I have had many remarkable sittings in my life, but I do not remember any *séance* in which the control was more absolutely perfect. The character of General Gordon was strongly marked. He was intensely original, full of personality, and at the same time he had been dead so long that the medium, Mr. Peters, who was a mere boy when Gordon died, could not possibly have acquired his habits of speech, his mode of thought, or his recollection of the topics which he had discussed with me twenty years before.”

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\* Major-General Brocklehurst

With regard to the situation at the time, Father wrote:—"When in 1879 the Governments of England and France, acting through the Sultan and at the prompting of Bismarck, deposed Ismail Pasha and set up Tewfik on the throne of Egypt, they committed themselves to a pseudo-Protectorate of the Nile."

Our Protectorate of Egypt involved also the Protectorate of Egypt's dependency, the Soudan, which she had acquired in the year 1819, with much horrible bloodshed. We had therefore, in the opinion of statesmen best calculated to judge, a moral responsibility, which would not allow of our abandoning Khartoum.

In an interview which my Father had with ex-Khedive Ismail, in London, the latter stated that the "disturbance in the Soudan had been caused, to a great extent, by the weakness of the central government at Cairo, and by that absence of individual care and superintendence, which is necessary to the preservation of order in Egypt, and especially of her remoter provinces. In every part of the Soudan much power is in the hands of a number of religious chiefs and dervishes, who can easily be managed, but who are very dangerous and capable of doing infinite harm if neglected."

After the deposition of Khedive Ismail in 1879, General Gordon, who was at the head of the British troops in Egypt, resigned his command. Next broke out Arabi Pasha's revolt, and "hard times in the Soudan, the usual extortions, and general discontent owing to the suppression of the

slave trade, prepared a soil most favourable to the germination of religious seed cast upon the wayside by a fanatic Mahdi" . . . but, "with all the Eastern Soudan to give away, it ought not to be impossible to come to terms, even with a Mahdi ;" and, at any rate, nothing could possibly annihilate the responsibility of England for maintaining order in Egypt, having taken in her own hands the "Protectorate of the Nile."

At that point, having been summoned from Jerusalem by the King of the Belgians to take charge of an anti-slavery expedition up the Congo, General Gordon arrived in England from Brussels. He proceeded at once to his sister's house on the outskirts of Southampton, and it was there that the famous interview with my Father took place.

Father went down to Southampton and, "seated on a couch covered with leopard skins, in the quiet Southampton drawing room," succeeded in obtaining from Gordon's own lips a frank and free statement of his opinion on the crisis, indeed the "only authentic statement of General Gordon's views on the Soudan which has been made public."

His phenomenal memory enabled him to dictate immediately afterwards an almost verbatim account of the conversation, the accuracy of which was vouchsafed for by the only other person present.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Captain Brocklehurst, now Major-General Brocklehurst. This was the first occasion on which Father and General Brocklehurst met ; it marked the beginning of what was to be a lifelong friendship.

It was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and afterwards as a special supplement under the title of "England, Gordon and the Soudan."

An immediate change in the situation followed the publication of the interview. Father wrote:—

"Since Mordecai the Jew was led in triumph through the streets of Shushan, there surely but seldom has been so sudden an alteration in human fortunes. But yesterday not a Minister would even do Gordon the honour of asking his counsel. To-day he is the master of the situation—the virtual Sovereign of the Soudan."

Many years later, when the sad and terrible episode of Gordon's forlorn struggle and heroic stand had become one more brilliant memory in English history, he thus briefly summed up the end of the story:—

"I succeeded in compelling the Government to send out General Gordon, believing that it was shameful on our part to proclaim the abandonment of the country and to take no adequate steps to secure the safe retirement of the abandoned garrisons. General Gordon being besieged in Khartoum, I insisted upon the despatch of Lord Wolseley to rescue him from the perilous position in which he was placed by a Government which had refused either to allow him a free hand, or to supply him with an adequate force to carry out his instructions. This led many to hold me responsible for the war in the Soudan, but an examination of every-

thing I wrote in those days will vindicate me from such an accusation. When Gordon fell I was the first to protest against the wild cry for vengeance that was raised in this country, and no one felt more humiliated than myself at the horrible blasphemy perpetrated ten years later by Lord Kitchener when he desecrated the tomb of the Mahdi and held a solemn Christian service of thanksgiving in the midst of the corpses of those who were slain in the avenging of Gordon."

It was at the close of this, their only earthly meeting, and after the conversation had passed from the responsibilities of governments to the wider issues of human destiny, that General Gordon gave to him, as they parted, his own little pocket copy of "The Imitation" of Thomas à Kempis, in which he had marked the following passages :—

"Follow thou Me. For what is it to thee whether this man be such or such, or that others do or say thus and thus?"

And again :—

"It is written, let not thy peace be in the tongues of men; for whether they put a good or bad construction on what thou doest, thou art not therefore another man. Where is true peace and true glory? Is it not in Me? And he who covets not to please men and fears not their displeasure has much peace."

It was soon after this that he took the firm stand with regard to the British Navy which was to render him the *bête-noire* of the professional peace-party, who believe, he said: "that it is wrong to have any fleet at all," and, from this time forward, he never varied in his contention that "*on the supremacy of the British Navy depends the peace of the whole world.*"

"I have always been a strong opponent of conscription," he wrote later. "Compulsory military service seemed to me detestable. But in 1884 I realised with horror that the British Navy had sunk to such a condition of comparative weakness that conscription might any day become inevitable, owing to the collapse of our first line of defence. I wrote a series of articles called 'The Truth about the Navy,' which led to the rebuilding of the British Navy and so averted a threatened danger. But the demand for an increased navy, which alone stood between us and the curse of compulsory service, was bitterly resented by those whose one idea of peace was to cut down armaments."

It was this famous series of articles, consisting simply of plain straightforward answers to twelve searching questions, under the title of "The Truth about the Navy," which first brought him into that close association with Lord Fisher,<sup>1</sup> which was maintained up to the very last. The articles, after appearing in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1884, under the *nom-de-plume* of "One Who Knows," were

<sup>1</sup> Then Captain Jack Fisher.

afterwards republished in pamphlet form, again enlarged to book form.

Though the "Truth about the Navy" was published at a time when the Franchise Agitation was at its climax, the articles succeeded in arousing an enormous sensation. The state of affairs so suddenly revealed by this unexpected searchlight from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, drew from the whole of the intelligent body of the nation the emphatic declaration that naval supremacy must be restored; and evoked from a more esoteric quarter—the Service itself—the unanimous opinion that the statements contained were "exceptionally moderate and accurate."

He made familiar and popular the phrase "Two Keels to One"—which has passed for ever into the English language, not as a mere party cry, but as an epigrammatic definition of what must be England's perpetual naval policy if our island is to retain her natural and necessary supremacy on the sea.

## CHAPTER IX

### HIS SECOND PREMONITION

“No person can have premonitions such as I have had without feeling that such premonitions are the only certainties of the future. They will be fulfilled, no matter how incredible they may appear ; and amid the endless shifting circumstances of our life, these fixed points, towards which we are inevitably tending, help to give steadiness to a career, and a feeling of security to which the majority of men are strangers.”—W. T. STEAD.

HIS assuming full control of the *Pall Mall Gazette* was curiously foretold to him at a time when, according to all human calculation, nothing appeared more unlikely. He always alluded to this as his “second premonition ;” and it came to him in much the same manner as did the first one which related to his leaving the *Northern Echo*.

“My second premonition,” he says in *Real Ghost Stories*, “was equally as clear as my first and without any suggestion from outward circumstances. It was in October, 1883. My wife and I were spending a brief holiday in the Isle of Wight, and I remember that the great troopers which had just brought back Lord Wolseley’s army

from the first Egyptian campaign, were lying in the Solent when we crossed. One morning, about noon, we were walking in the drizzling rain round St. Catherine's Point. It was a miserable day, the ground slippery and the foot-path here and there rather difficult to follow. Just as we were at about the ugliest part of our climb I felt distinctly, as it were, a voice within myself saying: 'You will have to look sharp and make ready, because by a certain date (which, as near as I can recollect, was 16th March of the next year), you will have sole charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.' I was just a little startled and rather awed, because, as Mr. Morley was then in full command and there was no expectation on his part of abandoning the post, the inference which I immediately drew was that he was going to die. So firmly was this impressed upon my mind that for two hours I did not speak about it to my wife. We took shelter for a time from the rain, but afterwards, on going home, I spoke, not without reluctance, on the subject that filled me with sadness, and said to my wife: 'Something has happened to me which has made a great impression upon my mind. When we were beside St. Catherine's lighthouse I got into my head that Mr. Morley was going to die.'

" 'Nonsense' said she, 'what made you think that?'

" 'Only this,' said I, 'that I received an intimation as clear and unmistakable as that which I had when I was going to leave Darling-

ton, that I had to look sharp and prepare for taking the sole charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on March 16th next. That is all, and I do not see how that is likely to happen unless Mr. Morley is going to die.'

" 'Nonsense,' said my wife, 'he is not going to die. He is going to get into Parliament; that is what is going to happen.'

" 'Well,' said I, 'that may be. Whether he dies or whether he gets into Parliament the one thing certain to me is that I shall have sole charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette* next year, and I am so convinced of this that when we return to London I shall make all my plans on the basis of that certainty.'

" And so I did. I do not hedge and hesitate at burning my boats. As soon as I arrived at the *Pall Mall Gazette* Office, I announced to Mr. Thompson, Mr. Morley, and to Mr. Milner,<sup>1</sup> who was then on the staff, that Mr. Morley was going to be in Parliament by March 16th next. I need hardly say I did not mention my first sinister intimation. I told Mr. Morley and the others exactly what had happened, namely, that I had received notice to be ready to take sole charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette* by March 16th next. They shrugged their shoulders, and Mr. Morley scouted the idea. He said he had almost given up the idea of entering Parliament, all preceding negotiations had fallen through, and he had come to the conclusion that he would stick to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. I said

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Milner.

he might have come to what conclusion he pleased, the fact remained that he would go. I remember having a talk at the time with Mr. Milner about it. I remarked that the worst of people having premonitions was that they carefully hide up their prophecies until after the event and then no one believed in them. 'This time no one shall have any doubt that I have had my premonition well in advance of the fact. It is now October. I have told everybody whom it concerns whom I know. If it happens not to come to pass I will never have faith in my premonitions any more and you may chaff me as much as you please for the superstition. But if it turns up trumps, please remember that I have played doubles or quits and won.'

"Nobody at the office paid much attention to my vision, and a couple of months later Mr. Morley came to consult me as to some slight change which he proposed to make in the terms of his engagement, which he was renewing for another year. As this change affected me slightly he came, with that courtesy and consideration which he always displayed in his dealings with his staff, to ask whether I should have any objection to this alteration. As he was beginning to explain what this alteration would be I interrupted him. 'Excuse me, Mr. Morley,' I said, 'when will this new arrangement come into effect?' 'In May, I think,' was the reply. 'Then,' said I, 'you need not trouble to discuss it with me. I shall have sole charge of the *Pall Mall Gazette*

before that time. You will not be here then, you will be in Parliament.'

"‘But,’ said Mr. Morley, ‘that is only your idea; what I want to know is whether you agree to the changes I propose to make, which somewhat affect your work in the office.’ ‘But,’ I replied, ‘it is no use your discussing that matter with me. You will not be here, and I shall be carrying on the *Pall Mall Gazette*; so what is the use of talking about it?’

"Then Mr. Morley lifted his chin slightly in the air, and looking at me, with somewhat natural disdain, he asked: ‘And pray, do you mean to tell me that I am not to make a business arrangement because you have had a vision?’

"‘Not at all,’ said I, ‘you, of course, will make what business arrangements you please. I cannot expect you to govern your conduct by my vision. But as I shall have charge of the paper it is no use your discussing the matter with me. Make what arrangements you please, so far as I am concerned they are waste-paper. I ask you nothing about the arrangement, because I know it will never come into effect so far as it relates to my work on the paper.’

"Finding that I was impracticable, Mr. Morley left and concluded his arrangement without consultation.

"One month later Mr. Ashton Dilke sickened with his fatal illness, and Mr. Morley was elected on February 24th, 1884, as Liberal candidate for Newcastle-on-Tyne.

“I remember that when the news came to Northumberland Street, the first remark which Mr. Thompson made was: ‘Well, Stead’s presentiment is coming right, after all.’ I remember all through that contest, when the issue was for some time somewhat in doubt, feeling quite certain that if Mr. Morley did not get in he would die, or he would find some other constituency. I had no vision as to the success of his candidature at Newcastle. The one thing certain was that I was to have charge of the paper, and that he was to be out of it.

“When he was elected the question came as to what should be done. The control of the paper passed almost entirely into my hands at once, and Mr. Morley would have left altogether on the day mentioned in my vision, had not Mr. Thompson kindly interfered to secure me a holiday before saddling me with the sole responsibility. Mr. Morley, therefore, remained till midsummer; but his connection with the paper was very slight, parliamentary duties, as he understood them, being incompatible with close day-to-day editing of an evening paper. Here, again, it could not possibly have been said that my premonition had any share in bringing about its own realisation. It was not known by Mr. Ashton Dilke’s most intimate friends in October that he would not be able to face another session. I did not even know he was ill, and my vision, so far from being based on any calculation of

Mr. Morley's chances of securing a seat in Parliament, was quite independent of all electoral changes. My vision, my message, my premonition, or whatever you please to call it, was strictly limited to one point, Mr. Morley only coming into it indirectly. I was to have charge of certain duties which necessitated his disappearance from Northumberland Street. Note also that my message did not say that I was to be *editor* of the *Pall Mall Gazette* on Mr. Morley's departure, nor was I ever in strict title editor of that paper. I edited it, but Mr. Yates Thompson was nominally editor-in-chief. Nor did I ever admit I was editor until I was in the dock at the Old Bailey, when it would have been cowardly to have seemed to evade the responsibility of a position which I practically occupied, although as a matter-of-fact the post was never actually conferred upon me."

In addition to my Father taking full command of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in that year, 1884 was likewise rendered memorable by the death of his father. He visited Howden for the last time on the occasion of his father's funeral. Always deeply sensitive to the associations of affection he could never afterwards face the thought of reopening that chapter of tender memories, when those who had made its happiness were gone from his sight.

Speaking of the "stress and strain of London life," he contrasted it with the "secluded domesticities of Darlington" upon which it had made inevitable inroads. "But," he added "at

Wimbledon, as at Darlington, we kept the children with us. Two others were born there, who went to day schools in later years, but the elder ones were educated under our own roof. We were exceptionally fortunate in obtaining the services of an admirable governess in Miss Isabel Adams, to whom after their mother, my children owe most of the training and discipline which has stood them in good stead in after life. She was a second mother to the boys, and we gratefully acknowledge the incalculable debt which we owe to her unfailing kindness, her unswerving rectitude, and her patient perseverance in her educational duties. After her came Mr. Underhill, a young man of considerable literary promise; and then came Dr. Borns, a German tutor, whose attainments were as great as his modesty; who was then and has been ever since, not only a companion but a counsellor and a friend”

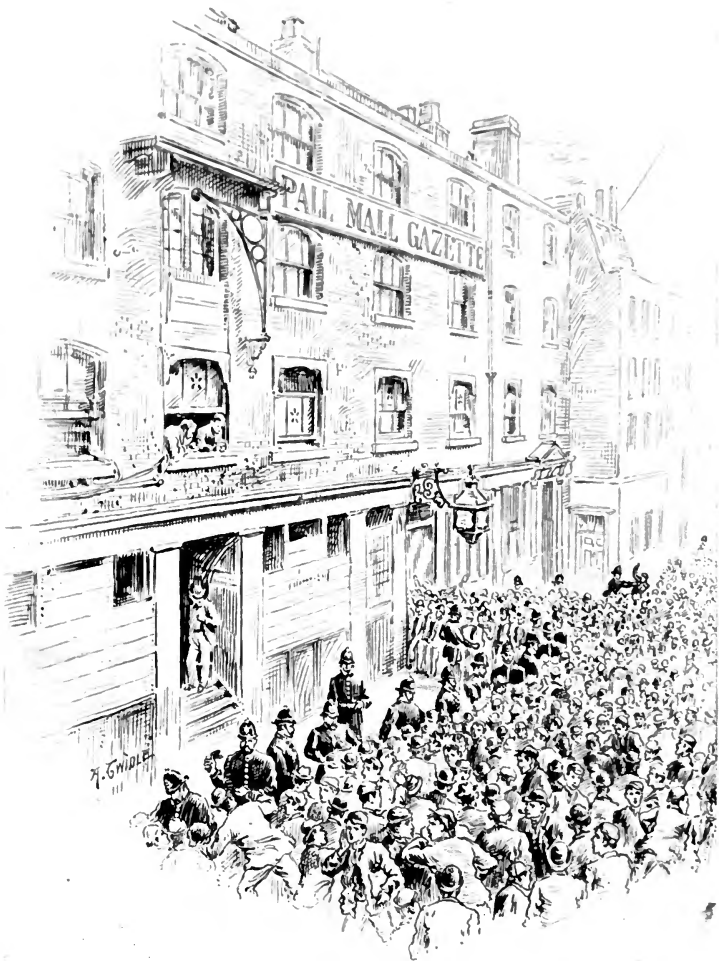
## CHAPTER X

### THE MAIDEN TRIBUTE

"The call of duty is the call of God. Whenever a call comes home to your heart to do some unselfish thing for your sister or brother, be they never so poor and miserable and vile, remember that that call comes to you from the great heart of God, and if you turn a deaf ear you deny Him and are none of His."—W. T. STEAD. Speech in Hyde Park, 1885.

"Oh, the agony of the thing! You know what a woman I am in these things, and therefore can judge how I suffer.—W. T. STEAD. In a private letter.

As 1885 dawned was there any foreshadowing of that great crusade which he was this year to wage against one of the greatest blots on his loved land? He gives no hint of any premonition in his writings. But in reading over his articles and letters about, and during, this time of strain and stress, we realize how when the order was given to set out, though the way seemed dark and terrible, there was no doubt in his mind as to his duty. We see how truly he felt the presence of the unseen forces guiding and directing him past all pitfalls and dangers to emerge scathless at last full of the joy of revelation that verily he had been "anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows."



SCENE OUTSIDE THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE" OFFICES DURING THE  
MAIDEN TRIBUTE AGITATION, 1885.



The following is a brief account of this mighty crusade written by him some years later :—

“It is not often that a man can look back upon his conviction and sentence as a criminal convict with pride and exultation. Such however is my case . . . I was sent to gaol on Nov. 10th, 1885, and every tenth of November since then has been as a Red-Letter Day in my life, and will be so until I die.

“The night of my conviction—the first nights—for I was tried on two counts and found guilty by two separate juries—remains indelibly impressed upon my memory. The crowded Court, the strained excitement, the hushed suspense, the outburst of feeling when the verdict was announced, all recur to me as if they had occurred but yesterday. It was a great experience and one which I would not have missed for anything. Every subsequent year has brought me fresh reason for gratitude that I was so convicted and sent to gaol.

“The story of how I came to be placed in the dock and arraigned for committing one of the very crimes which I had secured the passage of an Act of Parliament to punish more severely, need only be told in outline here. In the spring of 1885 the Chamberlain of the City of London, a venerable old man of seventy-five, came to me in great distress and informed me that owing to the unexpected defeat of Mr. Gladstone’s Government and the confusion occasioned by the installation of his successor, a Bill for strengthening the laws

<sup>1</sup> “Christian Endeavour World,” U.S.A.

for the protection of girls and young women, which had been introduced into the House of Commons by the outgoing Government, would be sacrificed. The need for such an amendment of the law was recognised by both political parties. The Bill was based upon the report of a Select Committee of the House of Lords. Everyone admitted that juvenile prostitution had increased to a terrible extent. All agreed that the law, as it stood, was powerless to deal with the evil. The Bill amending the law had been twice passed through the House of Lords, but it had always been held up in the House of Commons. After years of strenuous agitation, and the earnest prayers of all the Churches, they had hoped that at last they were to obtain the much needed reform. But the change of Ministry had dashed this hope to the ground. 'All our work,' said the Chamberlain, 'will be wasted unless you can rouse up public opinion and compel the new Government to take up the Bill and pass it into law.'

"Mrs. Josephine Butler came and added her intreaties to those of Mr. Scott, the City Chamberlain. I then said I would look into the matter and see what could be done.

"The Bill was a comprehensive measure. It aimed not merely at the corruption of minors but also at the White Slave Traffic—the export of English girls to purchasers in the vice markets abroad. The law as it stood declared that any child of thirteen years of age was legally competent to consent to her own seduction. It also

refused to allow little girls under eight to give evidence against the monsters who had outraged them, on the ground that the victims were too young to understand the nature of an oath. The law against abduction was criminally lax, and provided no adequate punishment of those who trafficked in womanhood. What the reformers wanted was to raise the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen, to allow children under eight to give evidence as to their assailants, and to stiffen the law against abduction and the traffic in vice. Like everyone else, I knew that the law ought to be amended, but also like everyone else, I knew that it had not the remotest chance of being amended as things stood.

“‘I do not know if you can do it,’ said the old Chamberlain, ‘but if you cannot then we are beaten. No one else will help us. You might be able to force the Bill through. Will you try?’

“I, naturally, wanted to try, but every instinct of prudence and self-preservation restrained me. The subject was tabooed by the Press. The very horror of the crime was the chief secret of its persistence. The task was almost hopeless. No ordinary means could overcome the obstacles which were presented by the political situation. Through a personal friend who was a member of the new Cabinet I took soundings as to the chance of getting the Bill passed. The answer I received was decisive and emphatic: ‘The new Ministry will not attempt any legislation whatever. It is utterly impossible to make an

exception in favour of this Bill. We are very sorry, but nothing can be done this session.'

"With such a non possumus staring me in the face, I, nevertheless, risked everything upon that forlorn hope. With the aid of a few faithful friends, I went disguised into the lowest haunts of criminal vice and obtained only too ample proof of the reality and extent of the evils complained of. I then published the Report of the Secret Commission of Enquiry into the Criminal Vice of London under the title of 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon,' in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, beginning on the sixth of July and closing its publication on the twelfth. The sensation which these articles produced was instantaneous and world-wide. They set London and the whole country in a blaze of indignation. An influential committee, consisting of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, Cardinal Manning, Mr. John Morley, and Sir Robert Reid, Q.C., investigated the accuracy of my statements.

"The Ministry capitulated to the storm of popular passion. The Bill which they had abandoned as hopeless, they revived and strengthened and passed into law with the utmost celerity and dispatch. It was one of the greatest achievements which any journalist single-handed had ever accomplished in the coercion of an unwilling legislature and a reluctant Ministry.

"After the law had received the Royal Assent it was discovered that in one of the first—nay the very first experiment which I had made to verify

at first hand the truth of the statement that British mothers were willing to sell the virginity of their girls for a five-pound note to the procurers of vice, I had omitted to take the necessary precautions to prove legally the fact. My only excuse was that I was utterly inexperienced, that I had of necessity to rely upon the assistance of people whose character made them very bad witnesses, and that from the first I had refused to do anything to incriminate individuals. I was an investigator exposing a vast system of organised crimes. I could not bring myself to be a detective worming myself into the confidence of criminals in order to betray their trust and to secure their punishment. Be that as it may, the fact was that the first child of thirteen procured for me in my disguise as an immoral man in return for the usual payment to the procuress and to the mother, was handed to me without the consent of the father, and without any written evidence as to the payment to the mother. The mother, of course, as soon as the hue and cry was raised, protested that she had only let her daughter go to be a servant girl. The father quite truly swore that he never consented for her to go at all. The opportunity was tempting. The opponents of the reform which the *Pall Mall Gazette* had forced upon the Government and the House of Commons, exulted over the chance which this case afforded them of dealing what they believed would be a fatal blow to the man who had defeated them.

“So the very legal officer, the Attorney-

General, who had been compelled by one agitation to carry the amending Bill through the House of Commons, prosecuted me and three or four of my comrades on the charge of abducting the girl in question.

“The trial created almost as great a sensation as the original publications. We were several days in the Police Court, and then we were sent to the Old Bailey for trial.

“A public defence fund of six thousand pounds was raised. Sir Charles Russell, afterwards Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Henry Matthews, afterwards Home Secretary, and other leading counsel were retained for the defence of my comrades. I defended myself. . . . The trial placed in the full light of day the facts which the majority of newspapers had carefully shrouded in obscurity. On the main question our evidence was overwhelming. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, Cardinal Manning, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Arthur Balfour, were among my witnesses subpoenaed to prove the purity of my motives.

“On the second hand, the existence of the evil, its extent, the hopelessness of any reform, and the fact that almost single-handed I had forced the legislature to pass the Bill, were not only proved but admitted to be true by the prosecution.

“All that the enemy could hope to secure by way of consolation, was a verdict against the defendants for failing to produce evidence to prove the consent of the parents to the abduction

of their daughter. It was admitted that the child had never been better cared for in her life. It was proved that the only reason why she had not been returned to her mother, was the belief, which the police shared, that if she went back she would be sold in deadly earnest next time. But the consent of the father had never been obtained, and the judge ruled that this was fatal to our defence and that the jury had no option but to return a verdict of guilty. But if I had but persisted in asking one question, this fatal fault would have been wiped out. I wanted to ask the mother for her marriage lines. Sir Charles Russell, who was leading counsel on our side, protested against a question that imputed immorality to any woman, no matter how degraded she might be, unless there was solid basis to go upon. I said that I had nothing to go upon beyond the fact that she was admittedly a drunken woman, who in my belief had sold her own daughter into prostitution. "That," said the great barrister, "is not enough. I will never be a party to such licence of cross-examination." I gladly concurred, for I had frequently protested against the way in which women were insulted in the witness-box by cross-examining counsel. But months after I had served my sentence and had come out of gaol, it was discovered at Somerset House that the child had been born out of wedlock, and that the nominal father had no legal rights over the girl who bore his name. It was then too late, and I have never ceased to be grateful that the fact was not discovered

till afterwards. If I had asked that question I should probably have been acquitted and so have lost that experience in prison which was one of the most valuable lessons of my life. . . .

“The trial lasted several days. The Court was crowded, and had been so from start to finish. . . . The break-down in the witness-box of one of our witnesses, who frankly declared that she would perjure herself rather than betray her companions, left the issue in little doubt. The Judge had spent the whole day summing up against us. His animus was undisguised. He constructed a series of questions, to which the jury would have to answer yes or no, with such care that it was simply impossible for them to do other than return the verdict of guilty. But so signal had been the vindication of the motives and the method of the defendants, that there were many who believed that the jury, despite the charge of the Judge, would persist in returning a verdict of not guilty.

“I had no such expectations. I knew that I should be convicted. I knew also that I should have to spend two months in gaol. My friends rallied me about the absurdity of my forecast. It was one of the intuitions which enable us sometimes to foresee what is about to happen.”

It was in fact another of those strange foreshadowings of the future of which two have already been recorded. It was as definite and unmistakable

as either of the others. Comparing it afterwards with them, my Father wrote:—

“It was even more remarkable and entirely precluded any possibility of my premonition having any influence whatever in bringing about its realisation. . . . When the trial was drawing to a close, conviction being certain, the question was naturally discussed what the sentence would be. Many of my friends, including those actively engaged in the trial on both sides, were strongly of opinion that under the circumstances I should only be bound over in my own recognisance to come up for judgment when called upon. . . . The jury had found me guilty, but strongly recommended me to mercy on the ground, as they said, that I had been deceived by my agent. . . . But I was never a moment in doubt. I knew I was going to gaol from the moment Rebecca Jarrett broke down in the witness-box. This may be said to be nothing extraordinary ; but what was extraordinary was, that I had the most absolute conviction that I was going to gaol for *two months*. I was told by those who considered themselves in a position to speak with authority that I was perfectly safe, that I should not be imprisoned, and that I should make preparations to go abroad for a holiday as soon as the trial was over. To all such representations I always replied by asserting with the most implicit confidence that I was certain to go to gaol and that my sentence would be two months.”

“For more than a week the dock at the Old Bailey had been the centre of interest throughout the whole country. The dock itself is an inspiration. Many of the men who have made history, from William Penn downwards, have faced hostile judges from that coign of vantage. The well of the Court was crowded with counsel. The leaders of the Bar were there, and, on either side, gathered the friends of the opposing parties. The jury were absent for a considerable time, and the crowded Court buzzed with eager conversation as everybody canvassed the possible verdict with his neighbours. I think that I was about the most unconcerned person in court. When you know what is going to happen you do not get so excited as those who are still in suspense. In the dock with me were Bramwell Booth, chief of the staff of the Salvation Army, and another devoted member of the Army, Madame Combes, who had rendered yeoman service in the enquiry. With them also was an old war correspondent of Greek descent, who had aided me in my excursions into regions where he was much more familiar than myself. The remaining occupants of the dock were a Frenchwoman of infamous repute, who was convicted and died in gaol, and a converted procuress who had aided me in exposing the traffic by which she had formerly made her livelihood. Our friends, legal and otherwise, were crowded round the dock, confidently expressing their belief in our acquittal.

“Suddenly there was a thrilling whisper:—

‘They are coming, they are coming.’ Everyone hushed his talk. Those who had seats sat down. Those who crowded the corridors craned their necks towards the jury box. The twelve good men and true, headed by their foreman, filed back into the box. Then the Judge, in a silence profound as death, asked if they had agreed upon their verdict. ‘We have,’ said the foreman. Everyone held his breath and waited to hear the next fateful words. It was a verdict of ‘Not Guilty’ against Bramwell Booth and Madame Combes. Of ‘Guilty’ against the Frenchwoman and the ex-procuress, ‘Guilty’ also against the Greek war correspondent, and ‘Guilty’ against me. But in my case the jury added an extraordinary rider. They found me guilty of being deceived by my agents. They recommended me to mercy, and they *wished to put on record their high appreciation of the services I had rendered the nation by securing the passage of a much needed law for the protection of young girls.*

“When the last word was spoken the tension was relaxed and the whole court hummed with excitement. I never can forget looking down from the dock upon the crowd below. Some of my friends were very angry. But I could not for the life of me see how the jury could have done otherwise. The foreman of the jury called upon my wife and explained, with tears in his eyes, how utterly impossible he had found it to answer the Judge’s questions in any other way. ‘Tell him,’ I wrote to my wife from gaol, ‘Tell him not to grieve. If I had been in

his place I should have done the same as he did.'

"Next day was Lord Mayor's Day, and I spent hours walking up and down the streets through the thousands who turned out to see London's annual pageant. I was going to be secluded from my fellow creatures for some months. I wanted to take my fill of the crowd before I returned to my cell.

"The next day the second charge springing out of the same incident was tried before a second jury. I took no part in the proceedings, and when the inevitable verdict came and we stood up for sentence, the Judge sentenced me to three months' imprisonment. I was so certain that I was going to prison for two months that I with difficulty restrained myself from saying: 'My Lord, have you not made a mistake? It ought to be two months.' I fortunately restrained myself. When I got into my cell I found that the sentence ran from the opening of the Session, and that the precise period of detention I had to undergo was two months and seven days. The Judge had come as near verifying my prediction as it was possible for him to do.<sup>1</sup>

"When the sentence was pronounced, all our friends crowded round us cheering us with all manner of friendly assurances, and not less friendly imprecations on the prosecution. My dear wife,

<sup>1</sup> Had he actually been sentenced to two months' imprisonment he could only have been detained in prison one month and seven days. Hence the curious accuracy of his prevision.

who had displayed the most splendid courage through it all, bade me good-bye, and then the gaoler led us down dark corridors into Newgate. The contrast between the dark crowded court and the cold silent cell was very great. Another hour passed and then we were packed into the prison van and driven through the streets of London to Coldbath-in-the-Fields prison."

When he was standing for his trial at the Old Bailey, a poor outcast girl who was dying of disease in a hospital, asked that the only shilling which she possessed in the world might be given to the fund which was being raised for the defence. It was handed to him when he came out of gaol with, written on its paper cover: "Dying girl in hospital gives her last shilling." He carried it about with him always, never allowing it to pass out of his possession for a single day, and he had it with him to the end.

He wrote of it as "The shilling which I most prize of all the pieces of money in my possession."

## CHAPTER XI

### IN GAOL

“Be a Christ.”

“Never tell anyone any more to be a Christian. Always tell them to be a Christ.”—Message received in Holloway Gaol.

“These words contain the essence of the Christian religion.”

THE news of his conviction and sentence struck like setting a match to gunpowder. The effect was instantaneous, explosive, seeming to liberate the pent-up horror that had gripped the whole country, while the deadly drama was slowly being unfolded at the Old Bailey, day by day. Avalanches of telegrams poured in upon Queen Victoria, the Prime Minister and the Home Office. Protests and petitions were showered upon the Government. An urgent petition from Howden-on-Tyne, “praying for a reduction in the sentence,” sped on its way to the Home Secretary by the night mail, on the very day of his conviction. The news had reached Newcastle at five o’clock in the afternoon, and the good people of the village of his boyhood lost no time in voicing their sentiments. The petition was signed by



FATHER AS A CRIMINAL CONVICT, COLDBATH-IN-THE-FIELDS  
PRISON.

November 10th. 1885.



every minister of religion in Howden, and headed by the vicar of the Parish, the Rev. John Hughes.

Meanwhile, in prison, direct spiritual solace came to him quickly during the first twenty-four hours, while he was still treated as an ordinary criminal convict, sleeping on a plank bed and picking oakum. The spirit of the Master visited him indeed in the warm love of his friends. Cardinal Manning, as ever, was a tower of strength. He wrote at once:

“ Nov. 11th, 1885.

MY DEAR MR. STEAD,

‘ All things work together for good to them that love God.’ You have served Him with a single eye. And ‘ The work has been done,’ as you wrote on the sentence. No sentence can undo it. You quoted my words in the North. You have now the crown upon your work—that is, to suffer for errors of judgment and a literal breach of the law which left the moral life of England almost without defence. I have so strongly felt this, and I have so clearly seen through the animosities against you, that I believe what has now befallen you will work some unforeseen and greater good for your consolation. Whatsoever it may be in my power to do shall be done. May God give you His Peace. Believe me always yours very faithfully,  
HENRY E. Card. Archp.”

From the pulpit, the voice of Canon Wilberforce gave expression to the indignation of noble manhood. He likened the “ scathing exposure of moral leprosy,” in the articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to

the law of Moses, which held that "when leprosy in all its hideous defilement was full upon the sufferer's body he was no longer ceremonially unclean, for the reason that in that stage the disease was less contagious, partly because the utter loathsomeness of the sight would in itself discourage contact ; and he found in the storm of indignation and vituperation which had burst upon the *Pall Mall Gazette* from certain quarters "an additional proof that it is characteristic of an age of peculiar self-indulgence, to deprecate plain speaking about plain sins, to endure unblushingly the visible manifestation of evil, and prudishly to hide the head when such evils are denounced from pulpit, press, or platform, by their proper names." He declared that "the majority of the violent abuse which has been showered upon the head of the revealer of the 'Apocalypse of Evil' had come from the frivolous, the worldly, the self-pleasing, who have so exhausted their vocabulary in abuse of the *Pall Mall Gazette* that they appear not to have a curse to spare for the defilers of the Holy Ghost, the child torturers, the incarnate fiends who have perpetrated the abominations which the *Pall Mall Gazette* has exposed." . . Archdeacon Wilberforce, Dec., 1885.

Meanwhile it was with my Father in Holloway Gaol as with Madame Guyon, the famous French mystic of the seventeenth century, of whom it was written that on her imprisonment on a charge of heresy :—"God was pleased to give her not only entire resignation, but a triumphant and joyful peace."

Like Madame Guyon, too, this feeling of peace and high and supreme confidence in the loving wisdom of God, sustained him all through the long weeks of his incarceration. He wrote to Dr. Clifford: "I am full of joy as to the present and of hope and confidence as to the future." And at Christmas, when he "knew what it meant," he wrote on the cards which he sent from gaol: "God, even my God, hath anointed me with the oil of gladness above my fellows." It seemed indeed, as Hugh Price Hughes said of him, that he was "animated in some degree with the sacred fire of the old prophets."

But the deepest note is sounded in his letter to his sister on Christmas Eve. It was headed "Christmas letter to be read to the family." The following is an extract from this letter:—

"If any of you imagine that I, being a prisoner, am needing consolation and that you ought to address me at this Xmas-tide in accents of crape, don't. . . . 'Weep not for me though you know I am here'—a free rendering of an old hymn—is my admonition to you. But rather rejoice; yea, exceedingly rejoice. For I am here in the pleasantest little room imaginable, with a snug arm-chair and a blazing fire, and the walls all gay with Christmas cards and evergreens, and the cupboard full of Christmas cheer; and what is far more, my heart full of joy and peace and good-will to all men, including Mr. Justice Lopes and all the rest.

"It is true now and then I have squirms. The

other day when we all had to sing in the gaol chapel, 'Hark ! the herald angels sing' it was as if a dead hand from out the past gripped my heart, and my eyes filled with tears, and through the tears I saw not the close-cropped yellow-jacketed congregation below, but a yard full of people with fiddles and hymn books and out of a bedroom window up above, peered out faces that were curiously like yours and mine, and I heard the fiddles and the singing of long ago, and then away tramped the little crowd out into the darkness of the Christmas morning, and the faces at the window disappeared, and then the hot tears dropped heavy on the floor, and there I was with my fellow-comrades singing as best I could for the sobbing of my heart :—

Hark ! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King.

The old tune and the old words, but ah, the old voices were no more, nor the fiddles, nor all the sacred past. And this morning, too, when I awoke at three and remembered it was father's birthday, there was a great spasm as of pain. Dear man, how he used to meet me always at the station, and wake us in the morning, and how he was in all things 'Our Father' to us, enabling us to understand what God is. And all the sad, sweet memories of the last time when I bade him good-bye for ever and helped to undress him and put him to bed and saw him afterwards no more. Oh, my God ! my God ! it was almost more than I could bear.

“But it passed, and then came the proud consolation that there are more people who know and love and try to imitate father to-day because his eldest son is in gaol, than ever before since father began to live.

“‘That good man, Stead,’ that Waugh put upon his kind little extravagant eulogy of me, refers properly, not to me, but to father. He was a good man, I am not, never was, and, I fear, never will be. I often feel as if I were far worse than any of the other convicts. They had not such a home as ours, such a father and such a mother.

“And now I must wish you all a merry Christmas, and a happy and useful New Year. I enclose you my Christmas card, got up in a hurry with the existing materials. Nothing new in it but a text, an edited text, the appropriateness of which few will understand, but which I know to be the right text.

“But it is a true text, and therefore appropriate. It came into my mind very forcibly a fortnight since, and I will have that and no other.

“I have indeed had a very happy and joyous time. I am sorry about Jarrett and Heywood Smith, and I also sometimes get bothered about money. ‘My grace is sufficient for thee,’ I interpret too often as if it had an addendum, except so far as cash is concerned, in which my faith gets weak.

“With that exception, I have great serenity of soul. I spend my time in working. I have

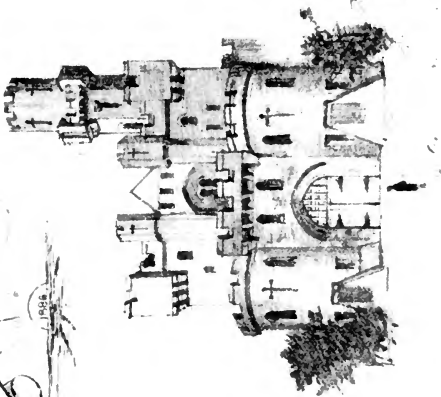
written all the leaders but one since I came here, and several of the reviews. I have written an article on 'Government by Journalism.'

"When I have my hour's walk I perambulate the infirmary grounds round and round like a horse in a threshing machine, seeing apocalyptic visions of a new Earth, in which the only thing I see quite distinctly is that I am called to play a great part and then get killed at the end of it all. How, what, where, I don't know. I think I wrote you, did I not? about my idea of founding a Secular Salvation Army that will consist of all who are willing to bestir themselves and take trouble for England's sake, with my newspaper as its war cry and myself as its General. It is a great idea. It links the church idea on to the journal and combines both for saving the world on its secular side. This is all written out full in my 'Government by Journalism.'

"What I have to do when I come out I do not know. Thompson has effectually gagged the *P. M. G.* by taking contracts for advertisements on the understanding that there are to be no more 'virgins' in the paper. It has to be like other papers.

"I have a feeling as if I shall spend Sunday nights in preaching, as a kind of itinerant apostle of the new faith, which, after all, is about the oldest there is.

"Do you know what I think Jesus Christ would do if He came now? He would go to church and chapel ever so many times and listen, and no one would speak to Him. He



from  
HOLLOWAY GAOL



"God, even my God, hath anointed me with the oil of gladness above my fellows."

William J. Head

THE CARD HE SENT FROM HOLLOWAY GAOL.



would look to see who sat round Him and He would see no ragged people, no thieves, no harlots, only respectable people. And He would hear all these respectable people singing hymns to Christ, and giving all the glory to Christ, and then after standing it a long time, Jesus would stand up some day in the middle of the church and just say two words, "DAMN CHRIST"! and then He would go out and go down some slum and put His arms round the neck of some poor lost orphan girl, who was having a bitter cry, and say 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.'

"And that is true. And I am going to preach that to everybody everywhere 'cause I think Christ must be mortal sick and just a little mad at the way people who call themselves by His name, go bowing and scraping and singing to a dead idol, which they call Christ, and all the while never say a word, or give a sixpence, or shed a tear, or take a single step towards those whom Christ left us to take care of. The hardest cross Christ has to bear is the cross that is made of those who call themselves His own Church.

"I am not Christ. I am only a harum-scarum fellow who often feels as if he was worse than anyone. But when I see people getting up petitions about *me*, and worrying themselves about *me*, and writing and talking and wanting to help *me*,—I say it is very kind of you good people, and not, perhaps on the whole, wasted, because I have got to be—thanks chiefly to my

enemies, who are always your best friends—a sign and symbol of a cause, and there is reason to hope that while they petition and write and worry about *me*, it will lead them to do something for the others who really need it. But when it gets no further and they only talk and petition for *me*, and never visit a poor woman, or help a poor girl, or try by personal sacrifice to keep a poor lad straight, then I feel wrath and say, ‘Damn William Stead,’ for you are making an idol of *him* and burning incense before *him*. And all the while, if you had ever entered really, into the only spirit that makes William Stead ever worth thinking of, you would say God is taking care of William Stead, let us take care of some of those whom God seems to have forgotten.

“So at least I muse and dream and wonder how soon I shall be anathematized where now I am lauded to the skies. Probably very soon. . .

“I enclose you a very remarkable letter from Dr. Wilkinson, the Bishop of Truro, whom Miss Ellice Hopkins calls ‘that Saint of God.’ In reply to his letter I wrote to him a long letter, saying, ‘Yes I know I shall be a great boss, bigger than anybody thinks. I told Liddon so two years ago, and it is coming more rapidly than seemed possible. I know I always jump to conclusions; I never ponder; when I do I go wrong. I seldom read the Bible regularly. I am a very dangerous person, and I have told God so many a time, as if He did not know that—and I have told Him that I would not put so much on one weak back

and He goes on putting more and more. And I told the Bishop that I knew what the end would be. That after the work was done which my living could do, I should be killed, and my killing would do more good than my life, and a lot more."

The letter speaks for itself. Perhaps the most wonderful passage is a premonition of his passing on. "*I knew what the end would be. That after the work was done which my living could do, I should be killed, and my killing would do more good than my life, and a lot more.*" Who knows, but this is so? After working and striving to bridge the grave and make death other than death to those around him, comes this dramatic end. Who knows, but his passing thus has opened many eyes to that other world where he now lives and works, and enabled more to realise its nearness and reality? It has made many, on life's journey, pause and think.

It was in gaol on Christmas morning that he heard again the voice as he had heard it twice before. This time it did not tell of future changes in his own life for which he was to prepare. On that anniversary of the Birth of Christ in 1885 there was given to him clearly and distinctly in his cell in Holloway Gaol, words which were to become as watchwords in his life and through him were to be passed on to so many.

Let him tell of how they came in his own words :—

" I had been trying to write a letter to a poor

L.

girl who had been rescued. She was finding the new life very dull and was in danger of falling back, and it was suggested that if I were to write to her it might have some influence over her for good.

“I left the letter unfinished to attend morning service, and was looking down from the organ-loft on my six hundred fellow-prisoners when I heard a voice : ‘ Why are you telling that girl to be a Christian ? Never tell anyone any more to be a Christian. Always tell them to be a Christ.’ My mind revolted, and I said : ‘ What blasphemy.’ But a voice went on : ‘ *The word Christian has become a mere label covering much of self, little of Christ.*’

“On Christmas Eve I was writing a letter to my wife, to tell her what my message was, and I was just about writing this sentence : ‘ And a voice came to me and said, ‘ Be a Christ,’ and I have not been able to get this voice out of my mind.’ In the middle of the sentence I heard the Christmas Bells ringing and laid down my pen to listen to their chiming. When I took up my pen what do you think I found I had written ? ‘ Be a Christ,’ and I have not been. I had written the truth, and I left the sentence as I found it.

“I pondered the matter deeply. I wrote to all those on whose judgment and spiritual insight I felt I could rely—to Cardinal Manning, to Hugh Price Hughes, to Josephine Butler, to Benjamin Waugh, and others. What would these spiritually minded men and women think

of it? With one exception all said: 'These words contain the essence of the Christian Religion.'

"On Boxing day there was a 'merry Christmas party' in my cell; the children, then five in number, were there with their mother.

"What romps we had! blindman's buff, puss-in-the-corner, and all the other merry Christmas games. Never was the grim old prison a scene of a happier festival."

## CHAPTER XII

### 1887 TO 1890. HIS FIRST PEACE MISSION

INTO the three years, from 1886 to 1889, many things were crowded, but it is only possible to touch on a few here.

In 1887 he took up the famous Langworthy case, in which he fought for the rights of Mrs. Langworthy, and triumphantly vindicated her.

But the greatest event during this time was his first visit to Russia, doubly interesting as being his first Peace Mission, and because it linked him up in a particular way with that country, so that in after years many Russians who had "passed on" came and talked with him at Julia's Bureau. After this visit he wrote "The Truth about Russia," in which he brought into view the practical political situation of Russia, and showed that Russia was a real country, governed by real people, with a real desire for progress. And not, as was a rather general idea at that time, a country where nothing existed but bloodshed and Siberia.

In his autobiographical sketch he sums up his Russian policy in the following words:

“All my life long I have been a thorough-going opponent of the Russophobic war spirit which has plunged Europe into the Crimean War, and which has repeatedly brought war both in Europe and in Asia. By advocating constantly the principle of the European Concert, and demanding the enforcement, if need be, by the armies and navies of Europe, of the treaty-guaranteed rights of the unfortunate Christians of the East, I was always more or less at variance with the orthodox Peace Party, whose one idea was non-intervention and abstention from all European complications. I protested against this doctrine because I believed it to be an abdication of the responsibility which we owed to those for whose good government we had made ourselves responsible by the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty of Berlin; and whenever the chronic misgovernment of Turkey became acute in massacres and atrocities I never ceased to urge upon England and upon the other Powers to use the overwhelming strength which they possessed for the purpose of compelling the Turks to carry out their treaty obligations.

“My first peace mission to the Continent took place in 1888, at a time when the popularity of General Boulanger seemed to threaten Europe with war. I went to St. Petersburg, and was received by the Emperor Alexander III

at an interview which has contributed not a little to allay the fear of an armed conflict. I do not think it is too much to say that, as the result of my conversation, I succeeded in establishing the true character of Alexander III as the peace-keeper of Europe. I was laughed at when I returned, but years afterwards, when Alexander III died, I had the honour of being told by the British Prime Minister of the day that I had been absolutely right, and that he and others who had laughed at me had been absolutely wrong.

“The permanent danger to the peace of Asia, and not of Asia alone, lies in the antagonism between Russia and England. For thirty years I have constantly laboured to promote a better understanding between the two countries. On two occasions, at least, when Russia and England were on the verge of war, my task was one of no little difficulty and danger; but the long and passionate apostolate of peace has at least succeeded in convincing all the more thoughtful Englishmen that the true interests of both countries is to be found in a good understanding and friendly relations.”

The following year (1889) he visited Rome, and had “the opportunity of enquiring at first hand how far my aspirations were shared by the Holy See.” The following paragraph, taken from an article written by him for the *Universal Review*, and republished in his preface to “The Pope and the New Era,” under which title he issued his

letters from the Vatican, gives an insight into his own religious ideals :

“The true religion is that which makes most men most like Christ. And what is the ideal which Christ translated into a realised life? For practical purposes this : To take trouble to do good to others. A simple formula, but the rudimentary and essential truth of the whole Christian religion. To take trouble is to sacrifice time. All time is a portion of life. To lay down one's life for the brethren—which is sometimes literally the duty of the citizen who is called to die for his fellows—is the constant and daily duty demanded by all the thousand-and-one practical sacrifices which duty and affection call upon us to make for men.”

Writing on the impressions made on him by his visit, he says :—<sup>1</sup>

“The chief conviction which was borne in upon my mind, on looking at the Papacy more closely, was a sorrowful sense of the lamentable chasm which has yawned between the Church and the vital realities of modern life. But no amount of prejudice can prevent my seeing that there is great good in the Church, and that there are possibilities in it of much greater good than any which it has yet realised. The problem is how best to develop the good and eliminate the bad. Surely the solution is not difficult. How can you drive out the darkness better than by letting in the light? How can

<sup>1</sup> “The Pope and the New Era.”

you keep the unfruitful works of empty ceremonial and idle services from encroaching upon the time and minds of the faithful than by cultivating the fruitful works of philanthropy?"

A few months later, in 1890, he paid his first visit to Ober Ammergau, and realised how in their portrayal of the Passion Play those humble peasants were enabling all to see and realise the man Christ as a man among men—without his aureole of Divinity—a human figure to elicit sympathy; compassion and love; "they enabled us to realise the story that transformed the world." He learned more, he said, of the inner secret of the Catholic Church in Ober Ammergau than he had learned in Rome.

<sup>1</sup> "There, condensed into eight hours and less, is the whole stock-in-trade of the Christian Church. It was in its effort to impress that story upon the heart of man that there came into being all that is distinctively Roman. To teach truth by symbols, to speak through the eye as much as the ear, to leave no gate of approach unsummoned by the bearer of the glad tidings of great joy, and, above all, in so doing to use every human element of pathos, of tragedy, and of awe that can touch the heart or impress the imagination—that was the mission of the Church; and as it got further and further afield, and had to deal with rude and ruder barbarians, the tendency grew to print in still larger capitals. The Catholic

<sup>1</sup> "The Story that transformed the World."

Church, in short, did for religion what the new journalism has done for the Press. It has sensationalised in order to get a hearing among the masses."

This same year he resigned the editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette* and founded the *Review of Reviews*. In the first number he gives his reason for launching out on his greater responsibility in the following words:—

"There exists at this moment no institution which even aspires to be to the English-speaking world what the Catholic Church in its prime was to the intelligence of Christendom. To call attention to the need for such an institution, adjusted, of course, to the altered circumstances of the New Era, to enlist the co-operation of all those who will work towards the creation of some such common centre for the inter-communication of ideas, and the universal diffusion of the ascertained results of human experience in a form accessible to all men, are the ultimate objects for which this *Review* has been established."

Looking back after twenty-one years he was able to say, "Nor can anyone discover in these forty-two volumes a page which does not ring true to the keynote sounded in the first number of the *Review*."

On the first page of the copy of "The Pope and the New Era" on his Library shelf he wrote the following characteristic words:—

“The Pope, if up to date, ought to publish the *Review of Reviews*, which is an attempt to render accessible to all the best thoughts to be found in the periodical literature of the world. Before founding the *Review* I went to Rome to see what chance there was of the Pope undertaking the task. Finding there was none, I did it myself.”

The following year he founded the *American Review of Reviews*, and the year after the *Australian Review of Reviews*, “For the avowed purpose,” he wrote later, “of promoting the reunion of the English-speaking race and of preaching the doctrine of the Imperialism of Responsibility as opposed to the Jingoism of passion, prejudice, and pride.”

It was during this period, in 1888, that he met Madame Blavatsky. Writing of that meeting he says :—

<sup>1</sup>“It was in the year 1888 that Madame Blavatsky took up her abode in London. Madam Novikoff was charmed by her powerful intellect, which commanded her homage altogether apart from her pretension to have explored with steady foot the bewildering mazes of the occult world. She was, besides, a great Russian patriot.

“Madam Novikoff wrote to me one day :— ‘I made Madame Blavatsky translate the enclosed letter for you as I thought it so very interesting. Don’t you think so? By the bye, she is dying to see you; so, unless you commit a murder,

<sup>1</sup> The M.P. for Russia.

shall you not go there with me some afternoon ?’

“I did not respond to the appeal. My interest in the occult which had been stimulated by a curious prediction made at the first séance I ever attended in 1881, had languished under the stress of mundane pre-occupations. Madam Novikoff repeated her invitation more insistently than before. Even then I do not think I should have consented to go had Madame Blavatsky not been a Russian. However, to make a long story short, I went. I was delighted with, and at the same time somewhat repelled, by Madame Blavatsky. Power was there, rude and massive, but she had the manners of a man, and a very unconventional man, rather than those of a lady. But we got on very well together, and Madame Blavatsky gave me her portrait, certifying that I might call myself what I pleased, but that she knew I was a good theosophist.

“The pleasant relations thus established with Madame Blavatsky had unexpected results. When the ‘Secret Doctrine’ came in for review to the *Pall Mall* Office I shrank in dismay from the task of mastering its contents. I took it down to Mrs. Besant, who had for some time past been attending séances and interesting herself in the other world and asked her if she would review it. She grappled with the task, was fascinated by its contents, and when she finished her review she asked me if I could introduce her to the author. I did so with pleasure. From that introduction dates the

latest evolution in Mrs. Besant's career. Madame Blavatsky became everything to Mrs. Besant. She was proud and glad to kneel at her feet and drink in her teachings as if they were the oracles of Divine Wisdom. When Madame Blavatsky died, Mrs. Besant was appointed her successor. She is now President of the Theosophical Society. But, humanly speaking, if Madam Novikoff had not been so insistent in making me call upon Madame Blavatsky the Theosophical Society might never have secured the adhesion of Annie Besant."

## CHAPTER XIII

### " JULIA "

One of the most promising and gifted of the women journalists of my acquaintance.—W. T. STEAD.

It was at this time (1890) that Julia A. Ames—an American journalist, one of the editors of the *Union Signal*, Chicago — ardent supporter of Temperance Reform and a great friend of and co-worker with Frances Willard, of the W.C.T.U., paid her first visit to Europe and fulfilled one of the ambitions of her life, which was to see Europe and witness the Passion Play at Ober Ammergau. One of her first visits, after her arrival in London, was to Mowbray House to see my Father and ask his advice as to the best route to Ober Ammergau. They talked, and he gave her the required directions, and his book "The Story that Transformed the World."

On her return from the Continent, she again visited my Father, this time at Cambridge House, Wimbledon, where she met my mother and some of the family, and had tea in the garden, under the shade of an old oak tree at the end of the lawn.

How little either Julia or my Father realised, on that bright summer day, how closely they were to be linked together in the great work which lay ahead, how they were to work together to build the bridge between the two worlds, how the name of Julia was to be known all over the world, and the house, in the garden of which they were sitting, was, in the course of years, to become the inner sanctuary of "Julia's" Bureau, and the old oak tree was to be spoken of as "Julia's Oak," is evident from the fact that although they discussed many subjects, Spiritualism was never once referred to.

These were the only two occasions on which my Father and Julia met. At the time Julia wrote to a friend :—"The chief feature of my visit to London was my interview with Mr. W. T. Stead, at the office of the *Review of Reviews*."

Miss Ames was not a Spiritualist—she was a highly religious woman and a Methodist, very level-headed and possessing a great amount of common sense. My Father writes of her : "She was about thirty years of age, an ardent and enthusiastic Christian, and one of the most promising and gifted of the women journalists of my acquaintance."

Shortly after her return to America, Miss Ames was taken ill with pneumonia and died at Boston, and my Father, to quote his own words, "never had the slightest idea I should hear from her again."



"HOLLY-BUSH"—THE SEASIDE COTTAGE WHERE HE SPENT  
MUCH OF HIS TIME IN LATER YEARS.



CAMBRIDGE HOUSE, WIMBLEDON.



## CHAPTER XIV

### REAL GHOST STORIES

“After all is said and done, we shall all be ghosts ourselves some day, and it is only natural we should be interested in ascertaining something more or less definite about the experiences of those who have already been disencumbered of their bodies.”—  
W. T. STEAD. Preface to “Real Ghost Stories.”

GRADUALLY, however, his mind was opening to the Spiritual forces impelling him onwards, and he was becoming more and more conscious of the thinness of the veil between. He began now to take an active interest in trying to find out more about the Borderland phenomena.

For his Christmas Number in 1891 he collected Ghost stories from all over the country and published them under the title of “Real Ghost Stories.” So great was the demand for these stories that the first number was followed in a few months by a companion entitled “More Ghost Stories.” His “Prefatory Word” gives an idea of his outlook at this period :—

“Many people will object—some have already objected—to the subject of this book. It is an

offence to some to take a ghost too seriously ; with others it is a still greater offence not to take ghosts seriously enough. One set of objections can be paired off against the other ; neither objection has very solid foundation. The time has surely come when the fair claim of ghosts to the impartial attention and careful observation of mankind should no longer be ignored. In earlier times people believed in them so much that they cut their acquaintance ; in later times people believe in them so little that they will not even admit their existence. Thus these mysterious visitants have hitherto failed to enter into that friendly relation with mankind which many of them seem sincerely to desire. But what with the superstitious credulity of the one age and the equally superstitious unbelief of another, it is necessary to begin from the beginning and to convince a sceptical world that apparitions really appear. In order to do this it is necessary to insist that your ghost should no longer be ignored as a phenomenon of Nature. He has a right to be examined and observed, studied and defined, which is equal to that of any other natural phenomenon. It is true that he is a rather difficult phenomenon ; his comings and goings are rather intermittent and fitful, his substance is too shadowy to be handled, and he has avoided hitherto equally the obtrusive inquisitiveness of the microscope and telescope. A phenomenon which you can neither handle nor weigh, analyse nor dissect, is naturally regarded as intractable and troublesome ; nevertheless,

however intractable and troublesome he may be to reduce to any of the existing scientific categories, we have no right to allow his idiosyncrasies to deprive him of his innate right to be regarded as a phenomenon.

“Some take exception on the ground that there is something irreligious and contrary to Christianity in the chronicling of such phenomena. It is fortunate that Mary Magdalene and the early disciples did not hold that theory. So far from its being irreligious to ascertain facts, there is a subtle impiety in the refusal to face phenomena, whether natural or supernatural. Either these things exist or they do not. If they do not exist, then obviously there can be no harm in a searching examination of the delusion which possessed the mind of almost every worthy in the Old Testament, and which was constantly affirmed by the authors of the New. If, on the other hand, they do exist, and are perceptible under certain conditions to our senses, it will be difficult to affirm the impiety of endeavouring to ascertain what is their nature, and what light they are able to throw upon the kingdom of the Unseen. We have no right to shut our eyes to facts and close our ears to evidence merely because Moses forbade the Hebrews to allow witches to live, or because some of the phenomena carry with them suggestions that do not altogether harmonise with the conventional orthodox theories of future life. The whole question that lies at bottom is whether this world is divine or diabolic. Those who believe

it divine are bound by that belief to regard every phenomenon as a window through which man may gain fresh glimpses of the wonder and the glory of the Infinite. In this region, as in all others, faith and fear go ill together.

“If it can be proved that it is occasionally possible for persons at the uttermost ends of the world to communicate instantaneously with each other, and even in some cases to make a vivid picture of themselves stand before the eyes of those to whom they speak, no prejudice as to the unhealthy nature of the inquiry should be allowed to stand in the way of the examination of such a fact with a view to ascertaining whether or not this latent capacity of the human mind can be utilised for the benefit of mankind.

“There seems to be a growing interest in all the occult phenomena to which this work is devoted. It is in evidence on every hand. The topic is in the air, and will be discussed and is being discussed, whether we take notice of it or not. That it has its dangers those who have studied it most closely are most aware, but these dangers will exist in any case, and if those who ought to guide are silent, these perils will be encountered without the safeguards which experience would dictate and prudence suggest. It seems to me that it would be difficult to do better service in this direction than to strengthen the hands of those who have for many years past been trying to rationalise the consideration of the Science of Ghosts.

“As the net result of my very cursory survey

and amateur experimenting, I have come to a very decided opinion that for the majority—the vast majority of men and women—the subject had better be left alone so far as the direct intentional production of phenomena is concerned. This applies to all spiritualist séances, hypnotist experiments, and dabbling in magic. Those who meddle in such matters from idle curiosity run serious risks. To put it mildly, they may become the subjects of hallucinations indistinguishable from the delusions of the insane, or they may lose all control over their actions and become, as in cases of post-hypnotic suggestion, the absolute slaves of another and evil will. At the same time, while deprecating the deliberate inducing of these phenomena on the part of Tom, Dick and Harry, there can be no objection to the scientific study of any and every subject that can engage the human mind. It is no argument against the laboratory of the chemist that children occasionally hurt themselves in making hydrogen out of zinc nails and sulphuric acid, nor do we suppress the manufacture of explosives because every year amateur pyrotechnists burn their fingers. If in these occult studies the scientific investigator can hope to discover the secret of telepathic communication, the art of transporting ourselves invisibly and instantly to the end of the earth, of seeing clairvoyantly everything that has been done since the world began, it would be a crime against the progress of the race to place any bar upon such inquiries and experiments. But they are distinctly for the few who have leisure,

culture, and the intellectual faculties indispensable for the profitable conduct of such investigations.

“What, then, becomes of our favourite formula, the democratisation of knowledge? It remains where it was. The democratisation of railways does not mean that every man, woman, and child is to be allowed to drive the engine, It does mean that they have all to have free access to the train if they take their tickets. So the democratisation of the Science of Ghosts does not mean that everyone is to set up a séance in his own house, or practise black magic in his own back parlour. What it means is that instead of the subject being scouted and tabooed and ridiculed, and all information hidden from the common people, it shall be openly discussed, freely handled, and the results of investigation made known to every one. There is nothing in the world so healthy as light. It is because the light has not been let in upon this realm that the atmosphere is so mephitic. ‘Light, more light!’ must be in this, as in all other realms of nature, the constant cry of the searcher for truth.”

In Part I, he discusses at some length the ghost that dwells in each of us.

“Thrilling as are some of the stories of the apparitions of the living and the dead,” he says, “they are less sensational than the suggestion recently made by hypnotists and psychical researchers of England and France, that each of us has a ghost inside him. They say that we are

all haunted by a Spiritual Presence, of whose existence we are only fitfully and sometimes never conscious, but which nevertheless inhabits the innermost recesses of our personality. The theory of these researchers is that besides the body and the mind, meaning by the mind the Conscious Personality, there is also within our material frame the soul or Unconscious Personality, the nature of which is shrouded in unfathomable mystery. The latest word of advanced science has thus landed us back in the apostolic assertion that man is composed of body, soul, and spirit; and there are some who see in the scientific doctrine of the Unconscious Personality, a welcome confirmation from an unexpected quarter, of the existence of the soul.

“The strife to which recent researches into the nature and constitution of our mental processes calls attention concerns our conscious selves. It suggests almost inconceivable possibilities as to our own nature, and leaves us appalled on the brink of a new world of being, of which, until recently, most of us were unaware.

“‘I,’ what am I? What is our Ego? Is this Conscious Personality which receives impressions through the five senses, and through them alone, is it the only dweller in this mortal tabernacle? May there not be other personalities, or at least one other that is not conscious, when we are awake, and alert, and about, but which comes into semi-consciousness when we sleep, and can be developed into complete consciousness when the other personality is thrown

into a state of hypnotic trance? In other words am I one personality or two? Is my nature dual? As I have two hemispheres in my brain, have I two minds or two souls?

“If I were free to use the simplest illustration without any pretence at scientific exactitude, I should say that the new theory supposes that there are inside each of us not one personality but two, and that these two correspond to the husband and wife. There is the Conscious Personality, which stands for the husband. It is vigorous, alert, active, positive, monopolising all the means of communication and production. So intense is its consciousness that it ignores the very existence of its partner, excepting as a mere appendage and convenience to itself. Then there is the Unconscious Personality, which corresponds to the wife, who keeps cupboard and storehouse, and the old stocking which treasures up the accumulated wealth of impressions acquired by the Conscious Personality, but who is never able to assert any right to anything, or to the use of sense or limb except when her lord and master is asleep or entranced. When the Conscious Personality has acquired any habit or faculty so completely that it becomes instinctive, it is handed on to the Unconscious Personality to keep and use, the Conscious Ego giving it no longer any attention. Deprived, like the wife in countries where the subjection of woman is the universal law, of all right to an independent existence, or to the use of the senses, or of the limbs, the Unconscious Personality has discovered ways

and means of communicating other than through the recognised organs of sense. How vast and powerful are those hidden organs of the Unconscious Personality we can only dimly see. It is through them that Divine revelation is vouchsafed to man. The visions of the mystic, the prophecies of the seer, the inspiration of the sibyl, all come through this Unconscious Soul. It is through this dumb and suppressed Ego that we communicate by telepathy—that thought is transferred without using the five senses. This under-soul is in touch with the over-soul, which, in Emerson's noble phrase, 'abolishes time and space.' 'This influence of the senses has,' he says, 'in most men, overpowered their mind to that degree that the walls of time and space have come to look real and unsurmountable; and to speak with levity of these limits is in the world the sign of insanity.'

"In proportion as the active, domineering Conscious Personality extinguishes his submissive unconscious partner, materialism flourishes, and man becomes blind to the Divinity that underlies all things. Hence in all religions the first step is to silence the noisy, bustling master of our earthly tabernacle, who, having monopolised the five senses, will listen to no voice which it cannot hear, and to allow the silent mistress to be open-souled to God. Hence the stress which all spiritual religions have laid upon contemplation, upon prayer and fasting. Hence we read in the Scriptures of losing life that we may find it; for things of

time and sense are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

But it is at the end of the book in his "Parting Word" that he gives, the key to his reasons for these searchings. He says:

"The greatest gain, however, that is likely to accrue from the study of these phenomena, will arise from the deepened certainty which it gives as to the permanence of the individual after death. Of immortality I say nothing. That cannot, from the nature of things, be demonstrated. But of a life after death—a life in which those who live on this side of the grave retain their identity in the other world—that may yet be demonstrated by tests as exact and as conclusive as any of which the science of psychology admits. When dust returns to dust and ashes to ashes, the Ego lives on; the personal identity, the consciousness of the individual, does not seem to be even momentarily impaired. It does not seem to be too bold a speculation to believe that the patient methods of inductive science, the careful examination of evidence, and the repeatedly renewed experiments of investigators, will before long completely re-establish the failing belief in the reality of the world beyond the grave, and leave us with as little room for doubt as to the existence of the spirit after death, as we have now for doubting the existence of Behring Straits or of the Pyramids. It is possible that this bringing of life and immortality to light,

or at least the establishment of the certainty of a future life upon impregnable scientific foundations, may seem to some by no means an unmixed blessing. To many it would undoubtedly add a new terror to death. The thought of a prolonged existence in a more spiritual sphere, where you would witness the working out of the dread consequences of the breach of laws and of the neglect of responsibilities, is often anything but attractive to the mind of man. To rest, and that for ever, even in the grave, seems sometimes the boon of boons. It would seem to be an unattainable one. For, if the testimonies of many credible witnesses may be believed, there is no death. The form—the vesture—perishes, but the soul, the Ego, the essential principle, lives on. Revelation has always affirmed this. It seems as if Science were once more to vindicate her claim to be regarded as the handmaid of Religion by affording conclusive demonstration of its reality. Whether we like this or dislike it, is immaterial. The supreme question is, *What is the truth?* And whatever drawbacks there may be to the theory of the future life, there is at least one enormous compensating advantage in knowing that the accounts between man and his Maker are not finally closed when he ceases to breathe on earth, and that the Almighty has still the infinite expanse of eternity in which to vindicate the justice of His dealings with every human soul.”

## CHAPTER XV

### AUTOMATIC WRITING. HOW HE BEGAN TO WRITE

“Stead may make a great many mistakes, but he is the man we require for a great work, for he has faith—that Master spirit once said, ‘without faith you can do nothing’ and it is only a man who has faith who can accomplish a great work.—FREDERICK, 1892.

“It was not until the early summer of 1892,”<sup>1</sup> he writes, “that I first was conscious of the capacity to write automatically. It came about in this way. A young lady, who was then in my office, the daughter of an Indian officer, had for some time possessed the faculty of automatic writing. She only half believed in her power herself, and was at first very reluctant to try it in my presence.

“One day, in the spring, she was staying with a friend in Surrey, and tried the experiment as to whether or not her hand would write. To her surprise, it was immediately controlled by an intelligence calling himself ‘Frederick’ who wrote a very neat hand, clear and distinct, very

<sup>1</sup> Borderland, 1893.

different from that of any of her other controls. He always began, 'I am here.—Frederick.' On this occasion, her hand, when under the alleged control of 'Frederick,' gave a detailed account of circumstances of interest to a friend who was present, and on whose account it was that Frederick alleged that he had come.

"The following is the message written by Frederick on this occasion:—

" 'I am here—Frederick.

" 'I want to tell Mr. P. that if he does not take care he is going to be swindled out of some money, but if he takes care he can avoid this. He is endeavouring to sell some property in A. through the agency of Mr. Z. Mr. Z. tells him he cannot get more than a certain sum for the property. If he will wait till the next mail—' The writing finished and the lady, whom I will call Miss C., knowing nothing of the purport of the message, turned to the gentleman and showing him what her hand had written, said 'This may be the greatest nonsense.' He, however, was very much struck by it and said, 'I am selling some property in A. and Mr. Z. is my solicitor. I think he is an honest man, but I will wait till next mail comes in.' The next week he received a letter by the next mail to say the property was worth two or three hundred pounds more.

"On returning to town, the lady communicated to me the experience which had befallen her, and, after some little pressing, agreed to try and see if 'Frederick' would write in my presence.

He did so at once, and many communications—some of which were very sensible, others more doubtful—were made by the alleged ‘Frederick’ through her hand.

“On one occasion ‘Frederick’ wrote that Mrs. D., naming a deceased lady, whose son was known to me, was standing close to me, almost touching my shoulder, and wished to communicate with me. He then gave several messages, which he said he had received from her, relating to her son, all of which sounded sensible enough.

“On another occasion he suddenly announced that this lady was there again, and wished to communicate something to me which she would not tell him. I said that it would be impossible for her to communicate with me directly, as I was blind, deaf and dumb in all psychical matters. Whereupon ‘Frederick’ wrote that Mrs. D. said that she could write through my hand if I were to give her a chance. I at once took the pencil in my hand, and waited for the control. I waited for five minutes, and nothing having come, my hand remaining absolutely motionless, I laid the pencil down, and said it was no use. ‘Frederick’ then wrote—always using the lady’s hand—‘I was not patient enough; that I ought to give Mrs. D. more time.’ After some objection, I said I would give her another five minutes. That period passed with same result. I laid down the pencil, saying it was no good. ‘I am absolutely devoid of any mediumistic power. If Mrs. D. wishes to communicate any-

thing with me, she must communicate through "Frederick" and his medium. I shall never be able to get any direct writing.'

"A week or two later, 'Frederick' wrote saying that 'Mrs. D. was there again, this time weeping bitterly.'

"'What is the matter with the good lady?'" I asked.

"'She says,' 'Frederick' wrote, "'that she has something to communicate with Mr. Stead, but that he is impatient, he will not give her a chance of using his hand.'

"I said, somewhat roughly, that I had given her two chances, and that I could not go on fooling around for ever with a spook that would not write when it got the chance.

"'Frederick' then wrote that Mrs. D. begged for another trial.

"I said, 'Well, I will give her one more trial, but I have not the time to waste sitting with a pencil in my hand, waiting for it to move, when I know all the time it never will write anything.'

"'Frederick' then wrote that Mrs. D. would be willing, if I would give her nine minutes in the morning before I began work.

"I said I would, and the next morning I tried. Before I had sat three minutes my hand began to move, very tremulously at first, and making marks that were at first almost unintelligible. After a little these marks became more legible, and, at last, slowly, and apparently with infinite difficulty, a message was written out, imploring

me to do what I could to save her son. When that one brief message was written the power seemed to be exhausted, and my hand would write no more.

“The next development was that my hand was controlled by something who called itself ‘Henry L.’ and professed to be a disembodied spirit who, in his lifetime, had been violently opposed to me in Manchester, but who now attended in order to help Mrs. D. to control my hand, as he had more power than she had. I received a variety of messages from him, some of which were sensible enough, but finding that I could not verify any of the statements which he made as to his own identity, and as he repeatedly made egregiously absurd statements concerning my friends, I discarded him, and would not let him write again. Mrs. D. wrote fitfully, but always with great difficulty.”

In the Bureau Archives are to be found many of these original messages, and I think it will be of interest to many to read the following selections. Only one is dated, but they were all taken through Miss C.’s hand about this time.

FREDERICK.

“June 23rd (1892), (Mrs. D.) I am here Frederick. . . . . She is here now and she says that if you will let her (have), make a trial, she will try to write through *you yourself*. Yes, but be patient and help her. She has never made an (attempt).

“She is so eager that she will not be long in learning to control him. She has never—

(then come some faint scrawls over the paper, quite unintelligible, my Father holding the pen).

“She has only just begun to write and has never tried before, it does not depend on him, it is not his fault, his thought on the lady, for she needs to speak, she begs me to tell him that.

(more faint scrawls).

FREDERICK.

“He (Mr. Stead) has a lady standing near him who seems to be in deep grief. She is weeping but she has tried. Let Mr. Stead go on trying, for he is a very good medium and he can be well controlled for he is so much in sympathy with many of us. He must only be patient and he will obtain great results.

(more faint scrawls quite unintelligible).

“She is *most* anxious to speak to you and is in such close touch with you that she will soon be able to manage the writing by your hand. The thing she wishes to tell you is private and she will not speak through me.

“You wished to know if she had been trying to write through you and I was about to say yes, when I was prevented—she tells me to say she could speak more freely if she writes through

you. . . . You will rapidly develop and you do not need to sit at it long.

“They tell me I am to say you (Mr. Stead) are not making the best use of your spiritual faculties.

“I am sure that if he (Mr. Stead) goes on he will have a latent spiritual faculty developed. He is a strong medium. And we will develop him.

“The men who have faith in the *possibilities* of *God* alone are able to reach great heights.

“I would like you to understand that I of myself can foresee nothing. What I am allowed to reveal to you I can—but much is hidden from me.

“*You should not disbelieve me—there are some people who would not believe if the GREAT SPIRIT revealed Himself direct to them. You may fancy that it is intellect, but it is presumption. Yes.*”

Writing through my Father's own hand on August 4th, 1898, a year later, Frederick wrote:—

“The work you have to do is to abolish death. You will do it, but don't be in too great a hurry.

“Never fear and remember that you have a work to do which you must do, not only for men but for spirits. You have done much. But you must do more.”

## CHAPTER XVI

### 1892. EASTNOR CASTLE

Now these things make it seem not scientific to refuse to believe."—W. T. STEAD.

SOON after this my Father, with my mother and my brother Will, went down to Eastnor Castle to stay with Lady Henry Somerset, from where he edited the local paper at Ledbury during Sir Charles Dilke's election campaign. A young lady, Miss E., was also staying at the Castle. One day she came to my Father and asked if he knew a good clairvoyant or medium. He said he did, and would introduce her to Mrs. Russell Davies on her return to town. He asked her why she wished to see one. She then told him that her greatest friend on earth, Miss Ames, had died the previous year. She told him she and Miss Ames had lived together and worked together for years, and that they had promised each other that the first to die would, if possible, come back and show herself to the survivor, so that the latter might thereby know of the certainty of another life—the possibility of communication.

“She had not been dead six weeks,” said Miss E., “before I was awakened one night with a sudden start—I was wide awake and I looked, and there by my bedside was Julia, looking radiantly happy, with a bright light all around her. I could not speak. She stayed about five minutes and then she faded away, and I only saw the light in the place where she had been standing. I thought afterwards this might have been an hallucination, as her death was recent, and I was in such terrible distress about her. But I know now it was no hallucination, but Julia herself, for she came again last night—I was wide-awake—I had not gone to sleep. She came to my bedside and looked at me very lovingly—I know she wanted to say something to me, but I couldn’t speak to her. There was *no mistake* about it; I saw her quite distinctly; I know it was Julia; she has come back to me as she promised. I cannot bear to think that she may have come back with a message for me, and yet I could not hear what she had to say. That is why I want to go to a medium to see if she can tell me what Julia wants to say to me.”

Having met and corresponded with Miss Ames before she died, my Father was intensely interested to know that she had actually appeared to her friend, and said he would be delighted to introduce Miss E. to Mrs. Russell Davies, but went on to say, “My hand has recently begun to write, and if you do not object, I will ask Julia if she will use my hand, for she knew me, although slightly, and it



FAMILY GROUP, 1891.

*Russell & Sons.*



would, at any rate, do no harm to make the experiment."

Miss E. said she would be very glad if he would do so.

He promised to try the following morning, and so the matter was left.

"On the Sunday morning," he writes, "I was alone in my bedroom. I sat before the window, with the pencil in my hand and said:—

"‘Now Miss Ames, if you are about and care to use my hand, it is at your disposal if you have anything to say to Miss E.’

"Almost immediately my hand began to write, not in my accustomed handwriting, and not in the handwriting of either Mrs. D. or Henry L. The handwriting was clear and distinct. It ran thus:—

"‘Julia Ames—tell Miss E. not to worry so much about Lady Henry Somerset. We will take care of Lady Henry.’

"‘This was written slowly and deliberately, and I watched every word as it was being written. Then I said, ‘that is all very well, but how do I know that this is not merely the unconscious action of my own subliminal consciousness? How do I know it is you? Can you give me a test?’

"‘My hand wrote: ‘Yes; ask her if she remembers what I said to her when last we came to Mine —,’ then the writing got straggly, and looked like ‘ura.’ I said ‘this is no sense.’ Then my hand wrote: ‘You have got it wrong.’

I said, 'Then write the letters in capitals,' and my hand wrote MINERVA. When I saw it was 'Minerva' I felt sure there must be some mistake. Then it occurred to me that 'Minerva' might be the name of some American town, and I asked:—

“‘Is Minerva a place?’

“My hand wrote, ‘No.’

“‘Is it a person? Do you mean Minerva the heathen goddess?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘But,’ I said, ‘this is nonsense. How could you and Miss E. come to Minerva?’

“Then my hand wrote, ‘Never mind; give that message to Miss E., she will understand. Julia Ames.’

“I felt bothered. It was a serious message to deliver, and it is a serious thing to tell anyone that you have received a message from a disembodied spirit of a friend. I went down to breakfast thinking, perhaps I had better say nothing to Miss E. about it, as the test was so obviously absurd.

“However Miss E. pressed me to give her the message. I read it to her. I said that the message might be all right, but that anybody could have written that, and that the thing that troubled me was the extreme absurdity of the test. She pressed me to tell her. I hesitated, telling her, quite truly, that I thought it was such utter nonsense that it made the whole thing ridiculous. At last, however, still apologising, I read the message.—

“‘Ask Miss E. if she remembers what I said to her the last time we came to Minerva.’

“‘To my surprise Miss E. looked very grave and said ‘I remember it quite distinctly.’

“‘Remember what?’ I said, ‘there is no sense in that.’

“‘Yes,’ said Miss E., ‘she then said just the same about Lady Henry as your hand has written this morning.’

“‘But,’ I said, ‘how could you come to Minerva. This is nonsense.’

“‘Then Miss E. smiled. ‘Of course, I forgot, you do not know anything about Minerva. This is how it came about. Miss Ames said, before she died, ‘The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union has come into existence as a great power in America. It is like the Minerva who sprang full grown from the temples of Jupiter, and she suggested we should call Miss Willard Minerva. She bought a Cameo brooch of Minerva and gave it to Miss Willard and always called her ‘Minerva,’ till the day she died.’

“‘Really?’ said I.

“‘Yes,’ said Miss E., ‘and the last time we saw Minerva together was the day before Julia died. Miss Willard came to the hospital to bid her good-bye, and it was then Julia spoke to me about not worrying about Lady Henry.’

“‘I felt utterly taken aback. The very thing that seemed to me the most utterly absurd thus seemed to prove the identity of the communicating intelligence.

“‘Well then,’ I said, ‘it would really seem as

if Miss Ames had written with my hand. That being so, I had better sit down again at once, and you can ask any question that you like.'

"No sooner said than done. Miss E. asked several questions, which were answered at once by my hand, but they were not of an evidential character. After going on for some time, I said :—

"'Excuse me, Miss E.; this may be very interesting to you, but it is nothing to me. Would you mind if I were to ask Julia a question?'

"Then addressing my hand, or Julia, if she were present, I said :—

"What you have written for Miss E. may be very good for Miss E., but it is no good for me. The 'Minerva' test was very good, I admit, but I want another test. Can you give me one?'

"My hand wrote 'Yes.'

"'Very well,' said I. 'I want you to refer to some incident in your life; any trivial incident will do, which could not possibly be known to me, but which Miss E. could remember. Can you do that?'

"Again my hand wrote, 'Yes.'

"'Go on, then,' said I.

"My hand then wrote, 'Ask Miss E. to remember, when we were together, how she fell down, and hurt her spine.'

"'Well,' said I, as I spelt out the words which my pen had just traced, 'that certainly is a good

test so far as I am concerned. I never knew you did hurt your spine.'

"But, on looking across to Miss E., I saw that her face was blank and bewildered.

" 'Now,' said I, 'what do you say to that?'

" 'But,' said Miss E., 'I do not remember ever having hurt my spine.'

" 'Then,' I said, addressing my hand, 'there, you see, your test has broken down. I asked you to give me a test, and you have given one, and Miss E. knows nothing at all about it. So your test has failed.'

" 'No,' wrote my hand, 'I am quite right. She has forgotten.'

" 'Anybody could say that,' said I. 'That is no proof. But can you bring it to her mind?'

" 'Yes, I can.'

" 'Go on, then,' said I. 'How long ago was it?'

" 'Seven years ago.'

" 'Where was it?'

" 'At Streaton, Illinois. We were going home together when she slipped her foot on a kerb-stone, and fell down, and hurt the small of her back.'

" I read the message to Miss E., who was sitting the other side of the table. No sooner had I finished than she exclaimed.

" 'I remember now quite well. We were walking home from the office together, and I slipped my foot and fell. I did hurt the small of my back. I remember it perfectly.'

“Then Miss Ames startled us by writing the following:—<sup>1</sup>

“‘I want you to tell Lady Henry Somerset not to make any engagements to speak in England in the month of October because she will then be in Denver.’

“I read it out to Miss E., who said, ‘You are wrong; she is going to start a big temperance campaign and she cannot go.’

“I told this to Lady Henry, and she said, ‘This is impossible. I can’t go. I have a great deal of platform work to do. It is very extraordinary. I cannot explain it, but it is nonsense.’

My Father returned to London, and Julia continued to use his hand to send messages to Miss E. One day she wrote: “Lady Henry has made an appointment to speak in Manchester in October. She won’t be able to, because she will be in Denver in October.”

Miss E. corroborated the statement as to the appointment, and said, “She is going to speak in the Free Trade Hall and hold a Temperance Alliance Meeting.”

About a week or a fortnight passed and Julia wrote again: “What is the use of my giving warnings of what is about to happen. Lady Henry

<sup>1</sup> “Lady Henry Somerset has very kindly given me permission to mention this incident. I am very grateful to her for allowing me to do so, especially as she did not agree with my Father’s views on Spiritualism. To quote from her letter “my great admiration for your Father never made me for one moment agree with his views on Spiritualism.”

E. W. S.

has made an appointment to speak in Swansea—she will have to cancel it.”

He told Miss E., who said, “Yes it is quite true, the appointment has been made.”

On the 11th September Julia wrote, “I need not say anything more about Lady Henry’s visit to Denver, that is settled now, and you will no longer doubt that I am making a guess when I tell you beforehand what is coming in order that you may prepare for it.”

Notwithstanding this, Miss E. persisted that it was absolutely impossible for Lady Henry to go to Denver. But within less than a month everything came about exactly as Julia had foretold.

Miss Willard’s mother died, and Miss Willard was so prostrate with grief that Lady Henry went back with her to Denver. They were there in October—and all engagements were cancelled exactly as Julia had foretold.

“I asked Julia,” he writes, “how it was she could foresee things. She wrote: ‘We can only foresee what is given to us to see; we cannot see all that we want to see. For instance, I cannot foresee all that you are going to do. I can foresee some things that are going to happen to you, and some of those things I am allowed to tell you. There are other things I am not allowed to tell you. I am not likely to mistake what I actually see.’”

About this time she wrote an account of her

experience after dying. After describing how she found herself outside her body, she went on :—" I waited about a little, then the door opened ; then Mrs.— came in. She was very sad."

Then, again, she said that she was taken to a place where she had to meet friends who had passed on before. She said : " When we got there I met several of my friends. There was, among others. . ." She then described how she came back to see Miss E. and Miss A., and then she broke off with the following sentence :—" After leaving Minerva I went to see Mrs. B."

" The half-hour was up," he continues, " and I had to leave for church. I did not like sending the letter. I knew nothing of the names that had been mentioned. The narrative was so extraordinary that I wished it so much to be true, and yet I feared so much that the names might be all wrong, that I did not send it to Miss E.

" My hand wrote the next day :—' I want you to send my letter to E.'

" I said, ' But you have not finished it.' It wrote : ' I will finish it another day.'

" My real reason for not sending it was a dread lest the names might be all wrong. But my hand continuing to write, pressed me to send it. I posted it, and waited with some fear and trembling for the result. On the 29th July, Miss E. came to the office. She began almost immediately :—

“ ‘Oh, Mr. Stead, there seems to be no doubt. It must be Julia who is writing. *You* do not know any of these people.’

“ ‘What,’ said I, with a feeling of intense relief, ‘then were the names right?’

“ ‘Yes,’ said Miss E., ‘all the names were right. I know all of them, excepting one.’

“ ‘Who are they?’ said I.

“ ‘There was that Mrs. H., Mrs. H. was the nurse who attended Julia when dying.’

“ ‘Then the others. Who was Amy?’

“ ‘Amy,’ said Miss E., ‘was Julia’s baby sister, who died when she was three years old.’

“ ‘And Mrs. W.?’

“ ‘Mrs. W. was her married sister, who died some time ago. Mrs. M., I do not know who she was. The name is indistinct. Mr. W. was her brother-in-law. He also is dead.’

“ I then felt I was upon firm ground, and from that time for several months Julia wrote every Sunday with my hand to Miss E. In these letters Julia’s object seems to have been similar to that of any person living at a distance, who, having now established her identity, wished to communicate as a friend with a friend, without troubling herself any further about evidential tests.

“ One day in August that year, Julia suddenly wrote:—

“ ‘Why do you think that it is strange that I can write with your hand? Any one can write with your hand.’ I asked what she meant, and she answered, ‘Any of your friends.’ ‘On

this earth?' I asked incredulously. She wrote, 'Try it.' 'Need they know about it?' 'No.' 'Then,' I said, 'there will be an end of all secrets in the world. She wrote, 'No; mind is in contact with mind all over the world. Any one to whom you can speak if you are within range of the physical senses you can speak to mentally wherever he is, because the mind is not trammelled by the limitations of matter.' She explained that the real self, the Ego, had both mind and body as its instruments, by which it could communicate with the outside world. Both were instruments, either could be used, but each was not always informed of the use which had been made of the other. That is to say, it was perfectly possible for the Ego to use *your* mind to direct *my* hand, without finding it necessary to inform *your* physical consciousness that any such communication had taken place. But the mind would no more communicate a secret which the Ego did not wish to be known, than the tongue would be guilty of such an indiscretion, for tongue and mind are alike the servants of the real self.

"I was rather incredulous, but I began experimenting with a friend in London who was sympathetic. I found that it succeeded to a marvel. That is to say, I found that my friend had no difficulty whatever in using my hand to communicate information or the expression of the mood of the moment. When my friend, whom I will call 'A,' was writing,

I said to him in the middle of the communication, 'Are you really writing, or is it only my subliminal consciousness?' My hand wrote, 'I will try and prove to you that I am really writing. There is an object in my hand just now which I will bring to your office. I am sitting at my table. It is a small present that I want to make to you. It is an old thistle.'

"'What!' I said, 'a thistle?'

"Yes, an old thistle; it played a part in my life that made it dear to me. I will give it to you to-morrow. I will explain to you when I give it. I hope you will accept it.'

"Next day, when my friend came, I asked him if he had brought a present for me. He said no, he had not. He had thought of bringing one, but he had left it at home. I asked him what it was. He said it was such an absurd thing he did not like to mention it. When I pressed him, he said it was a piece of scented soap! I was considerably disgusted at this apparent failure, and told him why. He said at once, 'That is very curious. Everything happened as you have written there, and it is a thistle, and an old thistle. But it is a thistle that is stamped on the piece of soap. I will bring it to you next time I see you. It did play a part in my life,' which he then proceeded to explain. I have the soap now in my possession. It is stamped with a thistle.

"He wrote with my hand, from time to time describing his movements. The first dispatch

which is worth quoting was one I received on Saturday, September 18th. It will be noticed that there are inaccuracies, but they are very slight.

“ I went to Waterloo Station by the 12.0 train and got to Hampton Court about 1.0. When I got out I went to an hotel and had dinner. It cost nearly 3s. After dinner I went to the picture galleries. I was very much pleased with the painting of many of the ceilings ; I was also interested in most of the portraits by Lely. After seeing the galleries I went out into the grounds. How beautiful they are ! I saw the great vine, that lovely English garden, the avenue of elms, the canal, the great water sheet, the three views, the fountain, the gold fishes, and then I lost myself in the maze. I got home about nine o'clock. It cost me altogether about 6s.

“ On communicating this to ‘ A,’ he said that everything was right with two exceptions. He went down by the 2.0 train and not by the 12.0, and got to Hampton Court about 3.0. The dinner cost him 2s. 11d., which was ‘ nearly 3s.,’ and the total cost of the expedition was 6s. 3d. The places were visited in the order in which they were named. The only mistake was the train by which ‘ A ’ went to Hampton Court.

“ From that time forward any incident was reported as a matter of course by him. Occasionally an incident would be slightly mis-stated, but, broadly speaking, out of 100 statements 90 were as correctly written by my hand as if ‘ A ’ had written them himself.

“For several months past I have received, almost every day, communications from my friend when anything interested him, or he felt he had anything to communicate with me. Often they are but brief memoranda regarding a visit to a church or a business appointment, or a visit to some friend. Frequently mention is made of books he has been reading, and the usual information given as to the state of health, of good spirits or depression, which one friend might send to another.”

Referring to his capacity to communicate with different persons Father says :—

“I would like to state in answer to obvious criticism that I do not profess to give here records of all the unsuccessful experiments which I have made in order to ascertain whether I could or could not communicate with different persons. I may say broadly that I have found the capacity of my friends to communicate with me to differ immensely ; some seem to be utterly incapable of communicating with me in this fashion. Whether it is my fault, or whether it is theirs, I do not know, but when I have asked them to communicate my hand will always write as if from them—it will answer wrongly or at random ; sometimes it will write in the name of the friend to whom I appeal, messages precise and detailed, which on being referred to the person from whom they are supposed to emanate, are discovered to have no foundation.

“Nothing is more puzzling than this decep-

tion, a cross current which continually baffles the enquirer. Sometimes a perfectly accurate communication will be received from a friend at a distance, followed by another, ostensibly from the same person, which is totally incorrect, after which a third will be received that is perfectly true ; all of the three being matters upon which I had no means of information. On the other hand, there are persons who write constantly with my hand and rarely make mistakes, and when they do, it is usually found, on inquiry, that the mistake was due to some thought or intention in their own minds which existed only as a thought or intention, but which was reproduced by my hand as if it were an accomplished fact. It will be seen, therefore, that I do not claim for the human telephone—if I may so describe my automatic handwriting—anything approaching to the mechanical accuracy of the telephone, as we have it now, in operation ; but the subject is so new, the laws governing the operations of the human telephone are so little investigated, that it would be unreasonable to expect greater progress than has already been made.

“If a savage at one end of Timbuctoo were able to get switched on to a friend at the other end, and exchange with him one intelligible sentence, they would be hopeless idiots if they did not persevere in their experiments, knowing that if the telephone transmitted a single message correctly once, it had within it the potency of correct transmission ; all that remained to be done would be to eliminate elements of error one

after the other until the secret of its working was fully mastered."

He carried on experiments in Telepathic Automatic Handwriting intermittently to the day of his death, with varying success. With some people he had marvellous results, others were absolute failures.

Shortly before his death he wrote :

"My own experiences justify me in feeling confident that, given a little more time and patience, and the study of the laws that govern this system of thought-transference, it will be possible for us in time to communicate with each other as accurately without the aid of any instrument as we do now with the aid of the telephone or the wireless telegraph. I am an extremely busy man, and it is a constant marvel to me that I should ever be able to attain the requisite degree of passivity to secure accurate messages ; but, notwithstanding all the rush and whirl of my daily life, I have moments of detachment. If they were more frequent, I should make better progress.

"I sometimes say that I shall never be able to really solve this mystery of telepathy, until I have the good fortune to undergo another term of imprisonment. In the seclusion of a prison-cell I think that I might find out many things impossible to me in the hurly-burly of the busy world."

## CHAPTER XVII

### “A DRAMATIC INCIDENT”

“In the discovery of Auto-telepathic Writing I have stumbled upon a fact, the ultimate consequences of which it is impossible to see.”—W. T. STEAD. “Borderland.”

So impressed was my Father with the result of his investigations that he introduced some of his experiences into his next Christmas Annual, entitled “From the Old World to the New,” in the Preface to which he says :—

“The World’s Fair at Chicago will be the great event of 1893. All the world and his wife will be going to the Exhibition. Few questions will be more generally discussed this Christmas at family gatherings than the attraction of the Chicago trip.

“Therefore the Christmas number of the *Review of Reviews* this year is devoted, from first page to last page, to telling the British public about Chicago and its Exhibition, and the way there.

“Last year our Christmas Number, dealing with the shadowy underworld, achieved for

‘Real Ghosts’ an unprecedented success. ‘This year we make an equally unprecedented departure from the conventionalities of journalistic Christmasery, but we deal, not with the truth about the dim, obscure world of spirit, but with the latest embodiment of the genius, the enterprise and the labour of man in the material realms. Yet there is a living link between the two.

“Chicago Exhibition, Chicago itself—which is greater than the Exhibition, and the great Republic which welcomes all nations to the great festival of nations—these are but the latest temporary materialisation and realistic development of the great idea which possessed Columbus when, four hundred years ago, he steered his tiny caravel across the Unknown Sea and re-discovered the New World. In our last Christmas number we collected some of the shadowy fragments of evidence as to the reality and accessibility of the Invisible World, which, however incomplete and unsatisfactory, were more numerous and more conclusive than the disjointed rumours and abstract reasonings which led the Genoese navigator to take that voyage, the fourth centenary of which is being celebrated at Chicago. Last year we indicated the New World that man has still to explore. This year we record the latest results of the supreme triumph wrested by the faith and courage of a solitary adventurer from *the great mystery which had been guarded for ages by the ignorance, the timidity, and the superstition of mankind.*

“In telling the story of the voyage of a party of English tourists from Liverpool to Chicago, the writer has endeavoured to combine two somewhat incongruous elements—the love story of the Christmas Annual and the information of a guide-book. Side by side with these, in the main features of ‘From the Old World to the New,’ are incorporated two other elements viz., a more or less dramatic representation of conclusions arrived at after twelve months’ experimental study of psychical phenomena; and an exposition of the immense political possibilities that are latent in this World’s Fair.”

There is one incident in this book of 1892 which is rendered far more interesting now because of the manner of his own passing, so I give it in detail here. It is the description of how one man was saved from an iceberg. The ship on which he was travelling struck an iceberg and went down; all perished save this one man. How he was saved shall be told later in my Father’s own words.

The incident is purely fictitious, and supposed to take place on the *Majestic*—and it is a strange coincidence that her captain at that time was Captain Smith. The Captain Smith who, with the writer of the incident, was to meet his death—through an iceberg—as Captain of the ill-fated *Titanic*. His portrait even is published in the book, but the following footnote is appended

“I need not say that the whole of this story is purely imaginary; although I illustrate the

account of the voyage with a portrait of the *real* captain of the *Majestic*, he must not be in any way identified with the captain of this story. W. T. S."

The incident is copied directly from the book, and given here without introduction to the characters—as apart from the part they play in this they are of no interest here.

Place—mid-ocean between England and America.  
Time—afternoon.

"Mr. Compton was abruptly aroused from his reverie by a direct appeal from Mrs. Irwin.

"‘If you have ten minutes to spare, Mr. Compton, I will be glad to have a word with you by yourself.’

"‘Certainly, Madam, will you come to the library? It is sure to be empty just now, and we can speak at leisure.’

"They soon found themselves ensconced in a corner of the library. There were only one or two ladies present, and shortly afterwards these left Compton and Mrs. Irwin alone.

"‘I would not have ventured to trouble you,’ said Mrs. Irwin, ‘but I know that you are no stranger to occult things. If I had not seen that in the face of you, I should not have ventured to speak.’

"‘Yes, yes,’ said Compton, somewhat impatiently, ‘but what has that to do with it?’

"‘It has everthing to do with it, Sir,’ said she, ‘because, if you did not understand, it would be no use trying to explain. I must tell you that I

come of one of the oldest families in Ireland. We have the Banshee, of course, but what is more to the purpose, I have occasionally the gift of second sight. Now, last night.'—

“Compton, who had listened with hardly concealed impatience, suddenly manifested eager interest.

“‘My dear Mrs. Irwin,’ he exclaimed, ‘why did you not tell me this before? Nothing interests me so much as to come upon those rare but peculiarly gifted persons who have inherited, or acquired by some strange gift of the gods, the privilege—often a sombre and terrible privilege—of seeing into futurity, but you were saying?’—

“‘I was saying,’ said Mrs. Irwin, ‘that last night, as I was lying asleep in my berth, I was awakened by a sudden cry, as of men in mortal peril, and I roused myself to listen, and there before my eyes, as plain as you are sitting there, I saw a sailing ship among the icebergs. She had been stove in by the ice, and was fast sinking. The crew were crying piteously for help; it was their voices that roused me. Some of them had climbed upon the ice; others were on the sinking ship; which was drifting away as she sank. Even as I looked she settled rapidly by the bow, and went down with a plunge. The waters bubbled and foamed. I could see the heads of a few swimmers in the eddy. One after another they sank and I saw them no more. I saw that there were six men and a boy on the iceberg. Then, in a moment, the whole scene vanished, and I was alone in my berth, with the

wailing cry of the drowning sailors still ringing in my ears.'

" 'Did you note the appearance of any of the survivors?' said he, anxiously.

" 'As plainly as I am looking at you,' she replied. 'I noticed especially one man, very tall—over six feet, I should say—who wore a curious Scotch plaid around his shoulders and a Scotch cap on his head. He had a rough red beard, and one eye was either blind or closed up.'

" 'And did you see the name of the ship before it foundered?'

" 'Certainly I did; it was plain to see as it went down headforemost. I read the name on the stern. It was the *Ann and Jane*, of Montrose.'

" Compton rose from his chair and took a turn or two in deep thought. Then he stopped, and said :—

" Mrs. Irwin, you have trusted me, I will trust you. What you have said has decided me, or rather, has given me hope that we may be able to induce the captain of the *Majestic* to rescue these unfortunates, one of whom is a friend of mine.'

" 'But did you know about it before I spoke?' asked Mrs. Irwin.

" 'I need not explain to you,' said Compton, not heeding the interruption, 'for you understand that there is no impossibility in the instantaneous communication of intelligence from any distance, to others who have what

some have described as the sixth sense. To some it comes in the form of clairvoyance, to others as clairaudience, while to a third class, among whom I count myself, it comes in the shape of what is called automatic writing. I have many friends in all parts of the world, who also have this gift, and we use it constantly, to the almost entire disuse of the telegraph. At least once every day, each of us is under a pledge to place his hand at the disposal of any of the associated friends who may wish urgently to communicate with him. This morning at noon, when I placed my hand with the pen on my dispatch book, it wrote off, with feverish rapidity, a message which I will now read to you :

“ ‘John Thomas. Tuesday morning, four o’clock. The *Ann and Jane*, Montrose, struck on an iceberg in the fog in North Atlantic, and almost immediately foundered. Six men and a boy succeeded in reaching the ice alive. All others were drowned. For God’s sake, rescue us speedily ; otherwise death is certain from cold and hunger. We are close to the line of outward steamers.—JOHN THOMAS.’ ”

“ ‘The signature, you see,’ said Compton, ‘is the same as that appended to the last letter I received from him, which I hunted up after I had received this message. I have, therefore, no doubt that ‘John Thomas’ with five other men and a boy are exposed to a lingering death on the iceberg some hundred miles ahead.’ ”

“ ‘But,’ said Mrs. Irwin, ‘what can we do ?’ ”

“ ‘That,’ replied Compton, ‘is my difficulty.’ ”

To have gone to the captain with this message, without any confirmation but my word would probably have exposed me to certain ridicule, and might have led the captain to steer still further south. Now, however, that you have had the message, I will hesitate no longer.’”

“Without more ado, he sent a note to the captain begging to be allowed to communicate with him on a matter of urgent and immediate importance, involving questions of life and death.

“The messenger presently returned saying the captain would see him, and Mr. Compton followed him to the captain’s cabin. It is but seldom that any passenger ventures to intrude into that sanctum. But Mr. Compton was not an ordinary passenger. He had often crossed the Atlantic in vessels under the command of the present captain. He was known to be a man of power, of influence, and of wealth. More than that, he had, on more than one occasion, given invaluable information, procured no one knew how, or where, which had enabled the captain to avoid imminent dangers into which he was steaming at full speed. He was, therefore, assured of a respectful hearing, even from the autocrat of the *Majestic* on the verge of an ice fog.

“‘Now Mr. Compton,’ said the captain, ‘what is it you wish to say to me? I have only a few minutes to spare. We shall have to steer southward to avoid the ice floe which is drifting across our usual course.’

“‘I want you,’ said Mr. Compton imperturbably, ‘to continue your usual course in order

to pick up six men and a boy, who are stranded, on an iceberg from the ship *Ann and Jane*, of Montrose, which foundered at four o'clock this morning, after collision with the ice.'

"The captain stared. 'Really Mr. Compton, how do you know that? It is impossible for any one to know it.'

"Mr. Compton replied. 'There is the dispatch from one of my friends, John Thomas, who was on the ship, and is now on the iceberg, received by me in his own handwriting at noon this day.'

"The captain took the paper with an uneasy expression of countenance.

"'Entering the fog, sir,' said an officer, putting his head into the cabin.

"'Slacken speed,' said the captain. 'I shall be out in a moment.'

"He carefully read and re-read the paper, and then said:—

"'Well, really, if you were not Mr. Compton, I should consider you a lunatic. What possible reliance can be placed upon such a statement?'

"'I received this,' replied Compton significantly, 'in the same way that I received the message of 1889, which enabled you to ——.'

"'I remember,' said the captain, 'otherwise I should not be listening to you now.'

"'But this story has not come without confirmation'; and then Compton repeated Mrs. Irwin's clairvoyant vision.

"'What do I care for these old women's stories?' said the captain. But even if they were

true, what then? I have nearly 2,000 passengers and crew, all told, on board the *Majestic*. I dare not risk them and the ship, hunting for half-a-dozen castaways on an iceberg in the North Atlantic.'

"'But,' said Compton, 'if you are convinced that the men are there, dare you leave them to their fate?'

"'But I am not convinced. They may have died ere now, even if they were ever there at all.'

"'Might I ask you to give me pencil and paper,' said Compton.

"The captain handed him what he wanted. Compton at once grasped the pencil and placed it on the paper. Almost immediately it wrote:—

"'John Thomas. Iceberg. Three o'clock. At one o'clock the iceberg parted under our feet, three men and a boy were carried away. Three still remain, frost-bitten, without food or fire. We shall not be able to survive the night. When the *Ann and Jane* foundered we were on the outward liners' route, 45 by 45, on the extreme southern edge of the ice-floe. Since then, it has rather receded. For God's sake, do not desert us.—JOHN THOMAS.'

"The captain stared at the curious writing, which was not Compton's, and then stared at Compton.

"The latter merely said, 'How far are we off the position mentioned?'

"The captain looked at the chart.

"'We are steering by our present altered course

directly upon the spot where he says the berg is floating. If I believed your message I would steer still more to the southward, to give the ice a clear berth. It is no joke shaving round an iceberg in such a fog as this. But I do not believe your message, and I will not alter the course of the *Majestic* by one point, for all the witches and wizards that ever lived.'

"‘Captain,’ said Compton, ‘your niece is on board, I believe.’

"‘Yes,’ said the captain. ‘But what in the world has she to do with it?’

"‘If you will allow her to come here, and permit me to send for my friend, the professor, I think we shall be able to convince you that the sailors are waiting deliverance.’

"‘The captain rang the bell. ‘Bring my niece here, instantly,’ he said, ‘and Professor Glogoul. ‘Thank heaven,’ he added, the fog is so dense, no one will be able to see them come, or else they would think—and think rightly—that I had taken leave of my wits.’

"‘In a minute or two the niece and professor had both arrived.

"‘Captain,’ said Compton, ‘will you let your niece sit down? The professor hypnotised her in a previous voyage, and cured her of sea-sickness. He can cast her into hypnotic sleep with her consent, by merely making a pass over her face with his hand.’

"‘The captain growled. ‘Do what you like, only make haste. If it were anyone but Mr. Compton,’ he muttered under his breath, ‘if it

were anyone but Mr. Compton, I should very soon have cleared the cabin.'

"The captain's niece had hardly taken her seat when the professor's passes threw her into a hypnotic sleep. A few more passes and the professor said she was in the clairvoyant state.

" 'What is it that you want ? ' he asked.

" 'Tell her,' said Compton, 'to go ahead of the ship in the exact course she is now steering, and tell us what she sees.'

"The professor repeated the request. Almost immediately the captain's niece began to shiver and shudder, then she spoke—

" 'I go on for half-an-hour, then for an hour ; it gets colder and colder. I see ice, not icebergs, but floating ice. I go through this floating ice for an hour, for two hours, then the fog gets thinner and thinner, it almost disappears. I see icebergs, they shine beautifully in the sunlight. There are many of them stretching for miles and miles, as far as I can see. What a noise there is when they break and capsize.'

" 'Do you see any ship or any thing ? ' asked the professor.

" 'No, I see nothing, only icebergs. I go on and on for another hour. Then I see on an iceberg, near the foot, someone making signals. I come nearer, I see him plainly. He is a tall man with one eye and red hair. He is walking up and down. Beside him there is one man sitting, and another man who seems to be dead. It seems to be the edge of the iceberg. There is clear water beyond.

“‘That will do,’ said Compton.

“The professor blew lightly on the girl’s face.

“She opened her eyes and stood up, looking round with a dazed expression.

“‘Well,’ said Compton to the captain, ‘are you convinced?’

“‘Convinced,’ said the captain. ‘It’s all confounded nonsense. Out with you! If you ever had to steer the *Majestic* through an ice fog in the mid-Atlantic you would know better than to fool away the captain’s time by such a pack of tomfoolery.’

“The niece and the professor left the cabin.

“As Compton turned to go, he said, ‘Captain, that tall, one-eyed man on the iceberg is one of my friends. You will keep on your course, as you say—I desire nothing better. Will you promise me, if only for the sake of the past, that if you strike drift-ice in a hour and a half, and if you emerge from the fog two hours later on the edge of the floe of icebergs, you will keep a look-out and save John Thomas, if you can?’

“‘If, if, if,’ said the captain contemptuously. ‘Oh, yes, if all these things happen, I will promise, never fear, I can safely promise that!’

“As Compton left the cabin the captain remarked—

“‘They say it is always the cleverest men who have got the biggest bee in their bonnet, and upon my word I begin to believe it.’

“Meanwhile Mr. Compton was in his cabin watching the movements of his hand, as a

telegraphist watches the movements of the needle. It wrote a good deal. Messages were written out, and signed by telegraphic friends in Melbourne, London and Chicago. Then came the writing as before.

“‘John Thomas. Iceberg, 4.0. Are you coming? We cannot hold out much longer. One of the men is too frost-bitten to move. The fog is clearing.—JOHN THOMAS.’

“‘John Thomas. Iceberg, 4.30. The fog has gone. The sun is shining. We are on the outer edge of the iceberg field. If you skirt it, you cannot fail to see us—unless the iceberg falls over again. The frost-bitten man is dead. We can hold out till sunset—no later.—JOHN THOMAS.’

“Again more messages from other correspondents, which his hand wrote out without his eye following the lines. At half-past five came the writing:—

“‘John Thomas.—Iceberg, 5.30. I cannot now see the time. My companion can no longer keep his feet. My strength is failing.—JOHN THOMAS.’

“Compton could stand it no longer. Closing his dispatch book, he hurried upon deck. He saw and heard the floe-ice, and it seemed to him that the fog was not so dense. He saw the captain on the bridge. He went forward where the look-out was keeping a sharp look out on deck. Suddenly he heard the cry:—

“‘Icebergs on the starboard.’

“The captain shouted something inaudible

in the crash of the ice, the engine bell rang, the engines slowed down their speed, the steamer steered a trifle more to the southward, but still kept pounding her way onward. He could only see the ghastly shadows looming darkly to the northward. If his friend was on one of these phantasmal masses, what hope was there? Sick at heart he sought out Mrs. Irwin.

“‘Should you know the iceberg which you saw in your vision if you saw it again.’

“‘Certainly, I would,’ she replied. ‘It was very irregular with huge overhanging pinnacles. I could swear to it among a thousand.’

“‘Stand here, then, near the deck look-out and keep your eye fixed on the north. It may be that the mist will rise.’

“He went back to his cabin. The professor was awaiting him.

“‘Well?’ he said.

“‘It is not well,’ groaned Compton. As he opened his dispatch-book to see if any fresh message was waiting to be taken down, his hand wandered a little over the paper. Then it began:—

“‘John Thomas. Iceberg. My companion is dead. I am alone on the iceberg. I can no longer stand or walk. In another hour all will be over.—JOHN THOMAS.’

“‘Halloo!’ said the professor, ‘the fog has lifted!’ Compton rushed from the cabin, and tore madly to the bridge, where the captain was standing.

“‘Captain,’ he cried, ‘remember your promise!’

“And, as he spoke, he pointed to a great flotilla of icebergs. Behind the steamer the fog was as thick as a blanket. Before her was open water. On the north stretched the dazzling array of icebergs, ever shifting and moving. Now and again a great berg would capsize with reverberant roar. The captain was cowed. There was something uncanny and awesome about the incident. He had seen icebergs before, but he had seldom had such good luck as to pass clear by the southern edge of the floe, and then to have clear sky.

“He sent for Mr. Compton to the bridge.

“‘Captain,’ said Compton, before the other had time to speak, ‘remember your promise. Here we are in open water outside the fog, just off the southern edge of the icebergs. Will you save John Thomas?’

“The captain shrugged his shoulders. ‘How do I know where he is? Am I to use the *Majestic* with 2,000 souls on board to go hunting for John Thomas among that wilderness of icebergs? Ask yourself, is it reasonable?’

“Compton replied, ‘If I am able to point out the exact iceberg where John Thomas lies, will you stop and send a boat to bring him aboard?’

“‘Yes,’ said the captain, ‘I could not well refuse that.’

“The *Majestic* was now driving ahead at full speed. All the passengers were on deck enjoying

the novel and magnificent spectacle. Suddenly a cry was heard from the bows. It was a woman's voice, shrill and piercing.

"'There it is! That is it! That is the iceberg!'

"A rush was made forward. Mrs. Irwin was taken to the captain. Then she said, 'We are abreast of it, and will be past it in a minute. Oh, stop her, for the Lord's mercy! You are not going to leave three men to die!'

"The captain took no notice, but keenly scrutinised through his glasses the peculiar shaped iceberg which she indicated. 'Tis curious,' he muttered, 'I seem to see a speck of something on the base of that berg.'

"The bell in the engine room was sounded, the engines stopped, and the great steamer for the first time since leaving Queenstown, came to a standstill.

"A boat was put off, and John Thomas was saved."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### BORDERLAND

"The one great necessity for the production of an ideal city is faith."—W. T. STEAD.

"Forward is our Watchword; ever forward, let what will betide."—W. T. STEAD in *Borderland*.

"To myself I seem to have been as a child playing on the sea shore, while the immense ocean of truth lay unexplored before me."—ISAAC NEWTON.

IN 1893 he crossed the Atlantic for the first time and visited the Chicago Exhibition. During this visit he wrote "If Christ came to Chicago." He was inspired to write this book by Russell Lowell's little poem "The Parable." Begun with the simple object of recalling the Man Christ Jesus, it developed into an attempt to illustrate how a living faith in the citizen Christ would lead directly to the civic and social regeneration of Chicago, or any other great city.

On his return from America, feeling that something more definite ought to be attempted to bring the study of the phenomena of the Borderland more practically before the eyes of the public, and that an effort should be made to democratise psychic study, and to remove some of the superstitions regarding it, he founded "*Borderland*" a Psychic Quarterly.

“We seek the scientific verification of that Life and Immortality which were brought to light nineteen hundred years ago,” he wrote in 1893, in the first number.

“Life—for at present we are but half alive—that we may have life, and that we may have it more abundantly, that we may understand something more of the marvellous capacities latent in ourselves, that we may secure for everyday use the almost inconceivable powers possessed by our subjective selves, of which we have stray hints in the phenomena of hypnotism and dreams—that is one object.

“Immortality—or at least the persistence of the personality of man after the dissolution of this vesture of decay, that is the second object. It is indeed a corollary of the first. For if Life is manifested independently of the body, even while the body exists, it cannot be supposed to terminate merely because the organs of sense are no longer in use.

“Unless all religions are based upon a lie, that is to say, unless the most spiritually enlightened of the great leaders of our race, whose knowledge of the secret springs of the nature of man is attested by the enthusiastic devotion of the noblest of mankind in all eyes, there is a world beyond the impalpable veil, a world from which, if these Founders were not deceived, they received the inspiration and the impulse which gave them their influence among men.

“‘If a man dies shall he live again?’ That is the question. We seek to solve it, believing

that the true answer is that he no more dies when he lays aside his body than he dies when he puts off his overcoat.

“But belief is one thing. Certitude is another. What we have to do is to prove what is the fact so clearly that, as Mr. Minot Savage says, ‘to doubt it would be an impeachment of man’s intelligence.’

“It may be that we may fail in proving what we hope to be able to demonstrate. But the attempt may not be less fruitful on that account.

“The publication of *Borderland* is at least a practical illustration that some of us are determined to make the attempt.”

*Borderland* ran its course for four years, and the last number appeared in Oct., 1897. The reasons for its cessation were mostly of a personal nature, and also because he felt that having taken for four years a quarterly survey of the field and brought it in this way to a greater extent before the public, the most important thing for him now was to devote what time he had to spare to the *Borderland*, to original investigation. So he took what he hoped would be a temporary leave of his readers, hoping to meet them again after a year or two with results which would justify the temporary severance.

No further number, however, of *Borderland* was destined to be published, but the result of his investigations was, in the course of years, to be the founding of Julia’s Bureau.

Looking back over the period, he says :—

“The four volumes of *Borderland* are interesting and useful contributions to psychic study. No doubt faults can be found with their contents, no matter what stand-point we take. No one can find more faults in them than myself, but take them as a whole, they are intensely interesting. To use a familiar phrase, ‘they palpitate with actuality,’ and no one can cursorily read their contents without feeling they are face to face with a multitude of honest, earnest puzzle-headed persons, who are constantly familiar with some of the most extraordinary phenomena known to mortal men.’

“When we come to consider the actual survey and exploration of the *Borderland*, there is reason for a certain chastened satisfaction. Progress has been made, but not so much as we hoped for.

“So far as I personally am concerned, I can say that the chief lesson I have learned has been a better realisation of the extreme complexity of the so-called supernatural phenomena, and the absolute impossibility of explaining them by any single hypothesis. The more we know of the mysterious realm that surrounds us, the less ready are we to dogmatise. So marvellous are the things we know to be true, so utterly at variance are they with everything that is ordinarily accepted as true by the ordinary world, that there is hardly anything that can be regarded as antecedently impossible. Hence, more than ever do I feel it necessary to hold the judgment in suspense.

“One thing only am I more absolutely convinced of than ever, and that is that the ordinary limited materialism of man, and of the world on which he lives, is absolutely inadequate to account for what we know to be happening all the time. Whatever else may be true, the faith in which the majority of people live and die, which is based upon the assumption that there is nothing but matter, is absolutely and demonstrably false.”

Julia, who had frequently written messages through Father's hand to the readers of *Borderland*, gave this parting word of advice and comfort :—

“My dearest Friend :—My heart is somewhat sad within me at the thought that this may be the last time for some months that I shall have the much-prized opportunity of communicating with my friends, whom I have so often addressed through the pages of *Borderland*. It is now nearly four years since I began to write for them, and I have had much blessed evidence as to the help which my letters have given to many who had otherwise almost despaired.

“Now that for the present, and only for the present, my letters must cease, I feel more than ever impressed with the importance of insisting once more, more strongly than ever before, on the great truth that God is Love, and that all who love really and truly are in God and He in them. I have said this many times. But you do not seem to realise how literally true it is, and how absurd it will seem to you when you come over here and see how God has been kept

out of your lives because of the lack of love in your hearts. There is nothing in all the world so true, so vital, so universal as this. Love and God are the same, and when, from any cause, you hate or do not love, to that extent you shut God out from your life.

“If I had only one message to give, this is the message—*Love*.”

Soon after this, in the same year, he republished Julia's letters in a little book entitled “Letters from Julia.” “The one book,” he said, “which I have published which will be remembered long after I am dead.”

It was six times reprinted in the first eight years, and republished in 1905, under the title of “After Death, or Letters from Julia.” In the preface to this edition he wrote :—

“Eight years ago I collected together and published the series of messages contained in this volume under the title, ‘Letters from Julia, or Light from the Borderland, received by automatic writing from one who has gone before.’ Since then the little volume has been six times reprinted in England, and at least one translation has appeared abroad. I have received so many grateful letters from persons in all parts of the world, who, after sorrowing for their dead as those that have no hope, felt on reading this book as if their lost ones were in very truth restored to life, that I can no longer refuse to issue it to a wider public.

“As to the salient truth asserted in these messages, the return of one from beyond the

grave to inform those who remain behind of the life beyond, and of the light which the other world sheds upon this, I can only say that I believe it to be true. Those who reply by quoting Shakespeare's saying about the bourne from which no traveller returns, may be disposed of by the remark that Shakespeare himself was of a different opinion. If that saying be true, the Christian religion is based on falsehood, and not the Christian religion alone. The reminder, recently afforded, that to the Japanese the constant and conscious presence of the spirits of the departed is as much a reality of their everyday, work-a-day existence as their artillery and iron-clads, may do something to reconcile some of our superior latter-day Christians to a reassertion of one of the fundamental truths of the faith in which they profess to believe. When my friend describes her own experiences after death, I accept her statements as I accepted her description of what she saw at Ober Ammergau the year before she died. She was always a truthful woman, and I don't think that the change called death was likely to impair her veracity. At the same time, I do not for a moment believe that her experiences are to be accepted as those common to all departed. 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' and each soul goes to its own place.

"Apart from what is peculiar or personal to herself, two or three things common to all appear to be clearly asserted in these messages. The first is that death makes no break in the continuity of mental consciousness. Our person-

ality persists with so vivid a sense of its own identity that there is often at first some difficulty in realising that death has taken place. The second is that the period of growth and probation is no more complete at death than it is on leaving school, finishing an apprenticeship, or retiring from business. The environment is changed, but the principle of growth, of evolution, of endless progress toward ideal perfection, continues to be the law of life. The third is that it is not only possible but lawful, and not only lawful but an absolute duty on the part of mortals to renew and keep up a loving intercourse with the loved ones who have gone before. Such an imperious duty imposed by the loving heart is not to be thrust on one side by quoting inapplicable texts, by which the Hebrew law-giver, three thousand years ago, sought to deter the children of Israel from resorting to familiar spirits, and the black magic of primitive times. As earnestly as any writer in the Pentateuch, I raise my voice against any tampering with the unseen and potent spirits of evil which lie in wait for the soul. But our friends do not become evil demons merely because they have changed their bodily raiment. Of this let readers of these messages from beyond the grave form their own opinion."

This little book has been translated into German, French, Russian, Greek, Icelandic, Swedish and Hindustani, and has brought comfort to thousands all over the world.

## CHAPTER XIX

### “DOUBLES”

“The vision was not a mere passing glimpse of a commonplace figure in a crowd.”—W. T. STEAD.

“It was the ‘Double,’ he wrote in *Borderland*, 1896, ‘who introduced me to the study of things.’ Physical Readers of ‘Real Ghost Stories’ may remember that I began the collection by recounting how a friend of mine, then living down near Hindhead, claimed to possess the faculty of projecting her phantasmal Double, sometimes voluntarily, and sometimes without any conscious exercise of volition. It was this which fascinated me, and led me to the course of study of which the present number of *Borderland* is merely the latest fruit. Hence I always feel kindly to the Double. None of the other phenomena of the *Borderland* are at once so fascinating and so mysterious, so well authenticated, and so utterly inexplicable. It is by the aid of the Double, and by automatic handwriting with living persons, that there seems to me the best chance of solving the abysmal mystery of personality. Ghosts of

the dead are important, no doubt, but they are from the Other Side, and often seem to experience great difficulty in translating their thoughts into the language of earth, and not less difficulty in adjusting their fitful apparitions to the necessities of the psychical researcher. But with the Double it is different, for there is no chasm to be bridged in its case between the living and the dead, and with automatic communications from the living, when all allowance has been made for disturbing influences, cross currents, and the intruding influence of the medium's consciousness, it affords by far the best clue to the mysterious, subconscious region in which most of the phenomena of the Borderland either arise or come into our knowledge."

He himself only saw two "doubles" which he proved satisfactorily to himself as having been authentic cases—he gives the details at length in *Borderland*. One was the case of Mrs. F., whom he saw as he was walking down Norfolk Street to his office at Mowbray House. She was walking briskly in front of him, apparently going to the office.

"Mrs. F." he says, "had a marked individuality carried to extreme originality. She could not be easily mistaken for anyone else; there is only one Mrs. F. in London.

"I was considerably behind with my correspondence. 'Bother the woman' was my unspoken thought, 'I'll just run up to her and tell her I cannot see her to-day, I am too busy, and

my correspondence is waiting.' I half-quickened my step, when I checked myself. She had been ill. It would seem unkind now she had travelled all the way down to the office to refuse to see her. So I thought, 'I will catch up to her at the foot of the stairs and explain that I can only see her for a minute.' All this time she was walking about ten paces ahead of me. I saw her as distinctly as ever I saw anyone in my life. There was absolutely no possibility of my having mistaken her for another woman.

"‘My word, my lady,’ I thought to myself, as I saw her quick springing step up the steps, and noted the smart business-like toss of her chin in the air, ‘you have recovered and no mistake. You are more like a girl of eighteen than an invalid of over thirty.’"

When he entered the office he found only the lift boy and no trace of Mrs. F., whom the boy told him had been there but had left half an hour before, and he was certain she had not been in since. Having searched in vain all over the office for Mrs. F., he wrote her the following letter :—

*"November 24th, 1892.*

DEAR MRS. F.,

I am sorry to have missed you this afternoon, and I am the more so because your double seems to have come back when you had left. I returned about twenty-five minutes past three, and as I got half way down Norfolk Street I

saw you in front of me. I quickened my steps to catch up to you, but you got into the door before I could get within more than about thirty or forty yards. You went into the place with your usual quick step, and I thought to myself, 'Now, when I see Mrs. F. I will chaff her about being so extremely well that she can walk as briskly as ever she did when she was a young girl.' When I got in I expected to find you just going upstairs, or standing by the lift door, but you were not at either of these places, so I took the lift, expecting to see you when I reached the top, or that I would catch you on the stairhead, and, behold, I found that you had gone. Now, are you conscious of having come back, double or otherwise, or am I beginning to be Clairvoyant, or not?"

"To this I received," he says, "by return of post, a reply that at the time mentioned she was opposite Holborn Town Hall, about a mile from the office, for she looked up at the clock and noted that it was just half-past three. She was then thinking of a parcel she had left in my office, and was wishing she could go back to get it.

"Collateral evidence as to my making enquiries of the office boys, of my stenographer, and other persons in the office, can be adduced, but I don't think my readers will deem it necessary. The case rests upon the evidence of one percipient, viz., myself, and the testimony of the person seen as to her whereabouts at the moment of the vision of the double. If either Mrs. F. or I is lying, or under an hallucination,

then this story must be dismissed. But otherwise ? ”

The second case occurred on September 29th, 1895, when he saw the Double of a friend, a Mrs. A., at the evening service at the Congregational Church at Wimbledon—not only he himself, but I saw her, as well as the clergyman and the deacons. She was at the time ill in bed in her own house at a distant part of London. She entered after the service had commenced and took a seat near the front, at about five minutes past seven and remained till half-past eight. She was offered a book and refused it. She left before the congregation. Father, seeing her leave, hurried down from the gallery, where he was sitting, to speak to her, and ask her why it was she had come so far when she was so ill, and to take her to the train. When he got out he could find her nowhere,—went to the station and looked everywhere, but could find no trace of her. Wednesday morning he received a letter from her about some MSS., and telling how ill she had been on Sunday, but no mention of coming to Chapel, so he cycled over after lunch to make enquiries and found her very ill and weak, and heard to his surprise she had not been out all day on Sunday. In the afternoon she had been ill with spasms. The Doctor came to see her between five and six and ordered her to go to bed ; her servants and a relative saw her in bed between six and seven, and again saw her asleep about nine, when she awoke and finished writing a letter to Father, telling of her illness. He collected all the evidence

carefully, and proved that it was impossible for Mrs. A. to have gone from her house in any normal way to such a distant part of London, and returned to her house and bed between the times she was seen there. He proved absolutely that if it were not a case of a Double, it could not possibly be accounted for by any of the usual explanations. "Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace," he says, "replied that there is another explanation which, although not usual, may nevertheless be the key to the mystery. He suggests that Mrs. A. may have been instantaneously levitated across London in proper person as was Mrs. Guppy." However it was done, it had been proved to Father that it was possible for a person lying ill in one place to appear several miles distant in another place, apparently as material and physical as those who saw her.

The Double had a great fascination for him, and he was always keenly anxious to find out more and more of the possibilities in that direction.

Several people say they have seen my Father's Double, but it was never possible to get the evidence of more than the one person for each particular time, and although he had every reason to believe in the good faith of these persons, and believed they had in verity seen his Double, he was never able to prove it conclusively.

My Father was always ready and anxious to give anyone a hearing who claimed to have any manifestations of the sixth sense—and a fair chance of proving their powers. He looked on mediumship as a precious gift.

"Mediums," he once wrote, "are among the most valuable members of the community. They are like a *seeing* man in the world of the *blind*. They need to be sought for as hidden treasure, and preserved and cared for as the only instruments by which it is possible successfully to undertake the exploration of the other world. Instead of which, they are, as a rule, sneered at, derided and treated as if they were knaves and liars. Sometimes they are thrown into gaol, and everything, in short, that collective society can do to discourage the development of mediumship is being done and has been done for many years. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that good mediums are few and far between. I hope, however, that with increasing intelligence, the growth of the scientific spirit and the decay of superstition in Spiritualism, those individuals who are so much more highly evolved than the rest of their fellows as to be able to see what is invisible and inaudible to the majority of men, may be discovered in increasing numbers."

Clairvoyants, Crystal Gazers, Trance Mediums, Palmists, and every sort and description of person having any claim to the power to penetrate the veil, would be sure of patient hearing if they came to my Father. For was it not possible among the many that he might find one who would be a perfect instrument of communication—and then there would be no "stained glass," no colouring culled in passing through. The records of his investigations prove how sincere he was in the search.

## CHAPTER XX

### CHILDREN AND PEACE

ALL this time he was busily adding on all sides to the record of work attempted and work achieved.

He had a great love for children, and was never happier than when surrounded by them. In 1895 he published "The Books for the Bairns" in order to enable the children to have Classics, Fairy Tales, and indeed the whole gamut of childish literature for one penny a month. He delighted to fill his house at Hayling with as many children as possible during the summer months. One of the favourite books of the series is an account he wrote of a summer at Holly-Bush entitled "The Jolly Family at the Seaside." But it was not only of the smaller bairns that he thought; for the older bairns he published the "Masterpiece Library," which consisted of Penny Poets, Penny Novels and Penny Prose Classics. And about this time he founded the "Scholars' International Correspondence," which may well be looked upon as a step further in his work for Peace, for by thus enabling the children of different countries to know each other,



WITH THE CHILDREN AT HAYLING ISLAND.



he broke down many of the prejudices that help to make for war.

It was in 1898 that he first appeared conspicuously as an advocate of peace. He writes :

“In the autumn of 1898 the Emperor of Russia issued his famous Peace Rescript, which seemed to me to afford an unexampled opportunity for rousing popular attention to the need for arresting the portentous growth of militarism. I made a tour of Europe, visiting most of the capitals in order to ascertain what was thought of the proposal and to pave the way for an International Agitation in favour of the Tsar’s scheme. In order to satisfy myself as to the ideas of the Emperor, I went to Livadia, where I was twice received by Nicholas II., and discussed the subject with him at length. I was satisfied as to the sincerity of his desire to cope with the evils from which civilisation is suffering. I returned to London, and proclaimed with the hearty support of all the friends of peace, all the organised Peace Societies, and all the friends of peace in every country, a great crusade in favour of the Tsar’s proposal. The so-called ‘Peace Crusade’ was launched in London at a great meeting in St. James’s Hall, and was prosecuted more or less vigorously in concert with the active assistance of friends of peace in America, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Norway and Sweden, although in those latter countries the agitation owed little if anything to the impetus from London.

The friends of peace in Scandinavia were so well organised that memorials and meetings went on almost spontaneously. In Holland, Belgium, Germany and Austria the popular agitation in favour of peace was largely carried on in connection with the Crusade movement.

“The Peace Crusade in England was remarkable on account of the unanimity with which all sections of the community and all the different associations—religious, socialist and industrial—worked together for the common end. It was also remarkable from a financial point of view. The sum of between £4,000 and £5,000 was subscribed for carrying on the agitation. In addition to this I published and edited for three months a weekly paper, entitled *War Against War*. Both in size and circulation *War Against War* was an advance upon anything that has yet been issued in the way of a peace newspaper. As soon as the Crusade was closed in England I was commissioned to proceed to Russia to present the signatures of the Memorial to the Emperor. I was received by Nicholas II. at Tsarskoe Selo, and reported in detail concerning the movement, about which I found he was very well informed and extremely sympathetic. He asked me to report to him personally every week the progress of the discussions at The Hague.

“From St. Petersburg I returned to The Hague, where I remained during the whole meeting of the Conference. Besides reporting the proceedings direct to the Emperor, I hired a

portion of a local daily paper, the *Dagblad*, and published therein in French and Dutch the *chronique* of the Conference from day to day. Great difficulties were thrown in my way, but I succeeded in overcoming them, and the publication of the *Dagblad* did much to keep up the interest of the delegates in their own work as well as keeping the local public informed as to what was going on in their midst. I also reported The Hague Conference for the *Manchester Guardian*, and cabled a weekly letter to the United States, where it was published by newspapers from New York to San Francisco.

“During my stay at The Hague I was in constant communication with the delegates of England, Russia, France, Sweden and Norway, and I think I may, without boasting, say that there was no delegate present at the Conference who did not feel in one way or another the impact of the energy generated by the Peace Crusade.

“Returning home to my country, I was at once confronted by the terrible prospect that the troubles in South Africa would culminate in war. The men who were hurrying on the war, Milner, Rhodes, Jameson and others, at the Cape, were all my own personal friends.”

But so great was his sense of the mistake England was making and of his duty to do all he could to prevent her taking the fatal step that he threw himself with his whole soul into the agitation against the war.

“Both on the platform and in the Press,” he

says, "publicly and privately, I exerted myself to the uttermost to induce the English Government to apply the principles of The Hague Conference to the settlement of the dispute. Passion, however, was too much excited, and the plaintive appeals of President Kruger for arbitration were roughly rejected. Parliament was summoned, the reserves were called out, troops were hurried to South Africa, President Kruger issued his ultimatum, making one last despairing appeal for arbitration. This was rejected, and war began."

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN FATHER AND CECIL JOHN RHODES

"I have never met a man who, on broad Imperial lines, was so entirely of my way of thinking."—W. T. STEAD, on Rhodes.

It is impossible to speak of my Father in connection with South Africa without referring to his friendship with Cecil Rhodes.

Had Mr. Rhodes died during the eight years from 1891–99 my Father's life story from this time on might have read differently, as he would then have been charged with the chief responsibility of the disposal of Mr. Rhodes' fortune, according to the ideas so often discussed between them. Therefore I think it well to give here, in my Father's own words, a short account of his friendship with Mr. Rhodes, showing the reasons why Mr. Rhodes selected him for this great work—and later struck his name from the last Will.

"I first made the acquaintance of Mr. Rhodes in 1889," he writes, "but although that was the first occasion on which I met him, or was aware

of the ideas which he entertained, he had for some years been one of the most enthusiastic of my readers; ever since I succeeded to the direction of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and began the advocacy of what I called the Imperialism of responsibility as opposed to Jingoism, which has been the note of everything that I have said or written ever since. It was in the *Pall Mall Gazette* that I published an article on Anglo-American re-union which brought me a much-prized letter from Russell Lowell, in which he said: 'It is a beautiful dream, but it's none the worse on that account. Almost all the best things that we have in the world to-day began by being dreams.' It was in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in those days that I conducted a continuous and passionate apostolate in favour of a closer union with the Colonies. The ideal of associating the Colonies with us in the duty of Imperial Defence was another of the fundamental doctrines of what we called in those days 'the Gospel according to the *Pall Mall Gazette*.'

"Cecil Rhodes, brooding in intellectual solitude in the midst of the diamond diggers of Kimberley, welcomed with enthusiasm the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He found in it the crude ideas which he had embodied in his first will, expressed from day to day with as great an enthusiasm as his own, and with a much closer application to the great movements which were moulding the contemporary history of the world. It is probable (although he never

mentioned this) that the close personal friendship which existed between General Gordon and himself constituted a still closer tie between him and the editor of the journal whose interview had been instrumental in sending Gordon to Khartoum, and who, through all the dark and dreary siege, was the exponent of the ideas and the champion of the cause of that last of the Paladins. Whatever contributory causes there may have been, Mr. Rhodes always asserted that his own ideas had been profoundly modified and moulded by the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

“ But it was not until 1889 that I was first introduced to him. As I had been interested in the extension of British power in Africa and in the extension of the northern trade route, which rendered the northern expansion possible, I had constantly exerted myself in support of the ideas of Mr. Mackenzie, who was in more or less personal antagonism to the ideas of Mr. Rhodes. Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Rhodes both wished to secure the northern territory. Mr. Rhodes believed in thrusting the authority of Cape Colony northward, and Mr. Mackenzie was equally emphatic about placing Bechuana-land under the direct authority of the Crown. This difference of method, although it produced much personal estrangement, in no way affected their devotion to their common ideal. As I was on Mr. Mackenzie’s side, I had nothing to do with Mr. Rhodes; and when Sir Charles Mills (then Cape Agent-General) first proposed that I should meet him, I was so far from

realising what it meant that I refused. Sir Charles Mills repeated his invitation with a persistency and an earnestness which overcame my reluctance; I abandoned a previous engagement, and accepted his invitation to lunch, for the purpose of meeting Mr. Rhodes.

“Mr. Rhodes, said Sir Charles Mills, wished to make my acquaintance before he returned to Africa. I met Mr. Rhodes at the Cape Agency, and was introduced to him by Sir Charles Mills, on April 4th, 1889. After lunch Sir Charles Mills left us alone, and I had a three hours’ talk with Mr. Rhodes. To say that I was astonished by what he said to me is to say little. I had expected nothing—was indeed rather bored at the idea of having to meet him—and vexed at having to give up a previous engagement. But no sooner had Sir Charles Mills left the room than Mr. Rhodes fixed my attention by pouring out the long-dammed-up flood of his ideas. Immediately after I left him I wrote :—

“I have never met a man who, upon broad Imperial matters, was so entirely of my way of thinking.’

“On my expressing my surprise that we should be in such agreement, he laughed and said :—

“‘It is not to be wondered at, because I have taken my ideas from the *Pall Mall Gazette*.’

“The paper permeated South Africa, he said, and he had met it everywhere. He then told me what surprised me not a little, and what will

probably come to many of those who admire him to-day with a certain shock.

“He said that although he had read regularly the *Pall Mall Gazette* in South Africa, it was not until the year 1885 that he had realised that the editor of the paper, whose ideas he had assimilated so eagerly, was a person who was capable of defending his principles regardless of considerations of his own ease and safety. But when in 1885 I published ‘The Maiden Tribute’ and went to gaol for what I had done, he felt, ‘Here is the man I want—one who has not only the right principles, but is more anxious to promote them than to save his own skin.’ He tried to see me, drove up to Holloway Gaol and asked to be admitted, was refused, and drove away in a pretty fume. Lord Russell of Killowen had the same experience, with the same result. No one can see a prisoner without an order from the Home Office.

“Mr. Rhodes did not tell me what I learned only since his death from Mr. Maguire, that the solitary occasion on which Mr. Rhodes ever entered Exeter Hall was when, together with Mr. Maguire, he attended an indignation meeting, called to protest against my imprisonment, which was addressed among others, by Mrs. Josephine Butler and Mrs. Fawcett.

“He left for Africa without seeing me; but on his return in 1899 he said he would not sail until he had met me and told me all his plans. Hence he had made Sir Charles Mills arrange this interview in order to talk to me about them

all, and specially to discuss how he could help me to strengthen and extend my influence as editor.

“Writing to my wife immediately after I had left him, I said:—

“‘Mr. Rhodes is my man.

“‘I have just had three hours’ talk with him.

“‘He is full of a far more gorgeous idea in connection with the paper than ever I have had. I cannot tell you his scheme, because it is too secret. But it involves millions. . . . He expects to own, before he dies, four or five millions, all of which he will leave to carry out the scheme of which the paper is an integral part. . . . His ideas are federation, expansion, and consolidation of the Empire.

“‘He is about thirty-five, full of ideas, and regarding money only as a means to work his ideas. He believes more in wealth and endowments than I do. He is not religious in the ordinary sense, but has a deeply religious conception of his duty to the world, and thinks he can best serve it by working for England. He took to me; told me things he has told to no other man save X. . . . It seems all like a fairy dream.’

“It is not very surprising that it had that appearance. Never before or since have I met a millionaire who calmly declared his intention to devote all his millions to carry out the ideas which I had devoted my life to propagate.

“He was almost apologetic about his suggestion that his wealth might be useful. ‘Don’t despise money,’ he said. ‘Your ideas are all

right, but without money you can do nothing.' 'The twelve apostles did not find it so,' I said; and so the talk went on. He expounded to me his ideas about underpinning the Empire by a Society which would be to the Empire what the Society of Jesus was to the Papacy, and we talked on and on, upon very deep things indeed.

"Before we parted we had struck up a firm friendship which stood the strain even of the Raid and the War on my part, and of 'Shall I slay my Brother Boer?' and 'Hell let Loose' on his. From that moment I felt I understood Rhodes. I, almost alone, had the key to the real Rhodes, and I felt that from that day it was my duty and my privilege to endeavour to the best of my ability to interpret him to the world. I kept no written notes of that memorable conversation. But the spirit and drift of our talk, the following extract from a letter which I wrote to Mr. Rhodes three months later, may suffice to illustrate:—

"'I have been thinking a great deal since I first saw you about your great idea' (that of the Society, which he certainly did not take from the *Pall Mall Gazette*), 'and the more I think the more it possesses me, and the more I am shut up to the conclusion that the best way in which I can help towards its realisation is, as you said in a letter to me last month, by working towards the paper. . . . If, as it seems to me, your idea and mine is in its essence the undertaking, according to our lights, to rebuild the City of God and reconstitute in the nineteenth

century some modern equivalent, equipped with modern appliances, of the Mediæval Church of the ninth century, on a foundation as broad as Humanity, then some preliminary inspection of the planet would seem almost indispensable.'

"Any immediate action in this direction, however, was postponed until he made a success of Mashonaland. He wrote, 'If we made a success of this, it would be doubly easy to carry out the programme which I sketched out to you, a part of which would be the paper.'

"So he wrote from Lisbon on his way out. A year later (November 25th, 1890) he wrote:—

"'MY DEAR STEAD,—I am getting on all right, and you must remember that I am going on with the same ideas as we discussed after lunch at Sir Charles Mills' . . . I am sorry I never met Booth. I understand what he is exactly. When I come home again I must meet Cardinal Manning, but I am waiting until I make my Charter a success before we attempt our Society—you can understand.'

"By the time this letter reached me I was leaving the *Pall Mall Gazette* and preparing for the publication of the first number of the *Review of Reviews*. It was an enterprise in which Mr. Rhodes took the keenest interest. He regarded it as a practical step towards the realisation of his great idea, the re-union of the English-speaking world through the agency of a central organ served in every part of the world by affiliated Helpers.

"This interest he preserved to the last. He

told me with great glee when last in England, how he had his copy smuggled into Kimberley during the siege, at a time when martial law forbade its circulation, and although he made wry faces over some of my articles, he was to the end keenly interested in its success.

“Mr. Rhodes returned to England in 1891, and the day after his arrival he came round to Mowbray House and talked for three hours concerning his plans, his hopes, and his ideas. Fortunately, immediately after he left, I dictated to my secretary a full report of the conversation, which, as usual, was very discursive and ranged over a great number of subjects of the day. It was in this conversation, after a close and prolonged argument, that he expressed his readiness to adopt the course from which he had at first recoiled—viz., that of securing the unity of the English-speaking race by consenting to the absorption of the British Empire in the American Union if it could not be secured in any other way. In his first dream he clung passionately to the idea of British ascendancy—this was in 1877—in the English-speaking union of which he then thought John Bull was to be the predominant partner. But in 1891, abandoning in no whit his devotion to his own country, he expressed his deliberate conviction that English-speaking re-union was so great an end in itself as to justify even the sacrifice of the distinctive features and independent existence of the British Empire. At our first conversation in 1889 he had somewhat demurred to this frank and logical acceptance of

the consequences of his own principles ; but in 1891 all hesitation disappeared, and from that moment the ideal of English-speaking re-union assumed its natural and final place as the centre of his political aspirations. He resumed very eagerly his conversation as to the realisation of his projects. He was in high spirits, and expressed himself as delighted with the work which I had done in founding the *Review of Reviews*, and especially with the effort which was made to secure the co-operation of the more public-spirited persons of our way of thinking in every constituency in the country, which formed the inspiration of the Association of Helpers.<sup>1</sup>

“ ‘You have begun,’ said he, ‘to realise my idea. In the *Review* and the Association of Helpers you have made the beginning, which is capable afterwards of being extended so as to carry out our idea.’ ”

<sup>1</sup> “To establish a periodical, circulating throughout the English-speaking world, with its affiliates or associates in every town, and its correspondents in every village, read as men used to read their Bibles, not to waste an idle hour, but to discover the will of God and their duty to man ; whose staff and readers alike are bound together by a common faith and a readiness to do common service for a common end ; that, indeed, is an object for which it is worth while to make some sacrifice. Such a publication, so supported, would be at once an education and an inspiration ; and who can say, looking at the present condition of England, and of America, that it is not needed ?

“ ‘That,’ Father writes, ‘was my idea as I expressed it. That was Mr. Rhodes’ idea also. It was ‘our idea’—his idea of the secret society—broadened and made presentable to the public without in any way revealing the esoteric truth that lay behind. Mr. Rhodes recognised this, and eagerly welcomed it.’ ”

"We then discussed the persons who should be taken into our confidence. At that time he assured me he had spoken of it to no one, with the exception of myself and two others. He authorised me to communicate with two friends, now members of the Upper House, who were thoroughly in sympathy with the Gospel according to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and who had been as my right and left hands during my editorship of that paper.

"He entered at considerable length into the question of the disposition of his fortune after his death. He said that if he were to die then, the whole of his money was left absolutely at the disposition of X.

"‘But,’ he said, ‘the thought torments me sometimes when I wake at night that if I die, all my money will pass into the hands of a man who, however well-disposed, is absolutely incapable of understanding my ideas. I have endeavoured to explain them to him, but I could see from the look on his face that it made no impression, that the ideas did not enter his mind, and that I was simply wasting my time.’

"Mr. Rhodes went on to say that his friend’s son was even less sympathetic than the father, and he spoke with pathos of the thought of his returning to the world after he was dead, and seeing none of his money applied to the uses for the sake of which he had made his fortune.

"Therefore, he went on to say, he proposed

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to add my name to that of X., and to leave at the same time a letter which would give X. to understand that the money was to be disposed of by me, in the assured conviction that I should employ every penny of his millions in promoting the ideas to which we had both dedicated our lives.

"I was somewhat startled at this, and suggested that X. would be considerably amazed when he found himself saddled with such a joint-heir as myself, and I suggested to Mr. Rhodes that he had better explain the change which he was making in his will to X. while he was here in London.

"‘No,’ he said, ‘my letter will make it quite plain to him.’

"‘Well,’ I said, ‘but there may be trouble. When the will is opened and he discovers that the money is really left at my disposal, instead of at his, there may be ructions.’

"‘I don’t mind that,’ said Mr. Rhodes; ‘I shall be gone then.’

"Mr. Rhodes then superseded the will on a sheet of note-paper, which left his fortune to X., by a formal will, in which the whole of his real and personal estate was left to ‘X’ and to ‘W. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*.’ This will, the fourth in order, was signed in March, 1891.

"In 1892 Mr. Rhodes was back in London, and again the question of the disposition of his fortune came up, and he determined to make a fifth will. Before he gave his final instructions he discussed with me the question whether there

should not be a third party added, so that we should be three. We discussed one or two names, and he afterwards told me that he had added Mr. Hawksley as a third party. His reasons for doing this were that he liked Mr. Hawksley, and had explained, expounded, and discussed his views with him, and found him sympathetic. He went on to say :—

“ ‘ I think it is best that it should be left so. You know my ideas and will carry them out. But there will be a great deal of financial administration that X. will look after. Many legal questions will be involved, and these you can safely leave in the hands of Mr. Hawksley.’ ”

“ And so it was that when the fifth will, drafted in 1892, was signed by Mr. Rhodes in 1893, X., Mr. Hawksley and myself were left sole executors and joint heirs of Mr. Rhodes’ fortune, with the understanding that I was the custodian of the Rhodesian ideas, that I was to decide as to the method in which the money was to be used according to these ideas, subject to the advice of X. on financial matters, and of Mr. Hawksley on matters of law.

“ On bidding me good-bye, after having announced the completion of his arrangements, Mr. Rhodes stated that when he got to Africa he would write out his ideas, and send them to me in order that I might put them into literary dress and publish them under his name as his ideas. I carried out his instructions, and published the substance of this letter, with very slight modifications necessary to give it the clothing that he

desired, as a manifesto to the electors at the General Election of 1895.

“In 1894 Mr. Rhodes came to England and again discussed with me the working of the scheme, reported to me his impressions of the various Ministers and leaders of the Opposition whom he met, discussing each of them from the point of view as to how far he would assist in carrying out ‘our ideas.’ We also discussed together various projects for propaganda, the formation of libraries, the creation of lectureships, the dispatch of emissaries on missions of propagandism throughout the Empire, and the steps to be taken to pave the way for the foundation and the acquisition of a newspaper which was to be devoted to the service of the cause. There was at one time a discussion of a proposal to endow the Association of Helpers with the annual income of £5,000, but Mr. Rhodes postponed the execution of this scheme until he was able to make the endowment permanent. He was heavily drawn upon in the development of Rhodesia ; he did not wish to realise his securities just then, but he entered with the keenest interest into all these projects.

“‘I tell you everything,’ he said to me ; ‘I tell you all my plans. You tell me all your schemes, and when we get the northern country settled, we shall be able to carry them out. It is necessary,’ he added, ‘that I should tell you all my ideas, in order that you may know what to do if I should go. But,’ he went on, ‘I am still full of vigour and life, and I don’t expect that I

shall require anyone but myself to administer my money for many years to come.'

"It was at an interview in January, 1895, that Mr. Rhodes first announced to me his intention to found scholarships. He said he had added a codicil to his will making provision for these scholarships, which would entail an annual charge upon his estate of about £10,000 a year. He explained that there would be three for French Canadians and three for British. Each of the Australasian Colonies, including Western Australia and Tasmania, was to have three—that is to say, one each year; but the Cape, because it was his own Colony, was to have twice as many scholarships as any other Colony. This, he said, he had done in order to give us, as his executors and heirs, a friendly lead as to the kind of thing he wanted done with his money. The scholarships were to be tenable at Oxford.

"When Mr. Rhodes left England in February, 1895, he was at the zenith of his power. Alike in London and in South Africa, every obstacle seemed to bend before his determined will. It was difficult to say upon which political party he could count with greater confidence for support. He was independent of both parties, and on terms of more or less cordial friendship with one or two leaders in both of the alternative Governments. In Rhodesia the impis of Lobengula had been shattered, and a territory as large as the German Empire had been won for civilisation at a cost both in blood and treasure which is in signal contrast to the expenditure incurred for such

expeditions when directed from Downing Street. When he left England everything seemed to point to his being able to carry out his greater scheme, when we should be able to undertake the propagation of 'our ideas' on a wider scale throughout the world.

"And then, upon this fair and smiling prospect the abortive conspiracy in Johannesburg of the Raid cast its dark and menacing shadow over the scene. No one in all England had more reason than I to regret the diversion of Mr. Rhodes' energies from the path which he had traced for himself. Who can imagine to what pinnacle of greatness Mr. Rhodes might not have risen if the natural and normal pacific development of South Africa, which was progressing so steadily under his enlightened guidance, had not been rudely interrupted by the fiasco for which Mr. Rhodes was not primarily responsible.

"It was what seemed to me the inexplicable desire of Mr. Rhodes to obtain Bechuanaland as a jumping-off place which led to the first divergence of view between him and myself on the subject of South African policy. The impetuosity with which his emissaries pressed for the immediate transfer of Bechuanaland to the Chartered Company made me very uneasy, and I resolutely opposed the cession of the jumping-off place subsequently used by Dr. Jameson as a base for his Raid. Mr. Rhodes was very wrath, and growled like an angry bear at what he regarded as my perversity in objecting to a cession of territory for which I could see no reason, but as

to which he thought it ought to have been enough for me that he desired it. My opposition was unfortunately unavailing.

“In the two disastrous years which followed the Raid, although I saw Mr. Rhodes frequently, we talked little or nothing about his favourite Society. More pressing questions pre-occupied our attention. I regretted that Mr. Rhodes was not sent to gaol, and told him so quite frankly.

“For reasons which need not be stated, as they are sufficiently obvious, no attempt was made to bring Mr. Rhodes to justice. His superiors were publicly whitewashed, while the blow fell heavily upon his subordinates. When Mr. Rhodes came back to ‘face the music,’ he fully expected that he would be imprisoned, and had even planned out a course of reading by which he hoped to improve the enforced sojourn in a convict cell.

“Through all that trying time I can honestly say that I did my level best to help my friend out of the scrape in which he had placed himself without involving the nation at the same time in the disaster which subsequently overtook it. My endeavour to induce all parties to tell the truth and to shoulder the modicum of blame attaching to each for his share of the conspiracy, failed. Mr. Rhodes was offered up as a scapegoat. But although differing so widely on the vital question, with which was bound up the future of South Africa, my relations with Mr. Rhodes remained as affectionate and intimate as ever. The last time I saw him before the war broke out we

had a long talk, which failed to bring us to agreement. Mr. Rhodes said that he had tried his hand at settling the Transvaal business, but he had made such a mess of it that he absolutely refused to take any initiative in the matter again. The question was now in the hands of Lord Milner, and he appealed to me to support my old colleague, for whose nomination as High Commissioner I was largely responsible. I said that while I would support Milner in whatever policy he thought fit to pursue, so long as he confined himself to measures of peace, I could not believe, even on his authority, that the situation in South Africa would justify an appeal to arms. Mr. Rhodes replied :—

“ ‘ You will support Milner in any measure he may take short of war. I make no such limitation. I support Milner absolutely without reserve. If he says peace, I say peace ; if he says war, I say war. Whatever happens, I say ditto to Milner.’ ”

“ In justice to Mr. Rhodes it must be said that he was firmly convinced that President Kruger would yield, and that no resort to arms would be necessary. He went to South Africa, and I went to The Hague, and we never met again until after the siege of Kimberley.

“ It was in July, 1899, before the outbreak of the war, that Mr. Rhodes revoked his will of 1891, and substituted for it what is now known as his last will and testament. It is probable that the experience which we had gained since

the Raid of the difficulties of carrying out his original design led him to recast his will to give it a scope primarily educational, instead of leaving the whole of his estate to me and my joint-heirs to be applied as I thought best for the furtherance of his political idea. Anyhow, the whole scheme was recast. Trustees were appointed for carrying out various trusts, all of which, however, did not absorb more than half of the income of his estate. The idea which found expression in all his earlier wills reappeared solely in the final clause appointing his trustees and executors joint-heirs of the residue of the estate.

“In selecting the executors, trustees and joint-heirs, Mr. Rhodes substituted the name of Lord Grey for that of X., re-appointed Mr. Hawksley and myself, strengthened the financial element by adding the names of Mr. Beit and Mr. Mitchell, of the Standard Bank of South Africa, and then crowned the edifice by adding the name of Lord Rosebery. As the will stood at the beginning of the war, there were six executors, trustees and joint-heirs—to wit, Mr. Hawksley and myself, representing the original legatees, Lord Rosebery, Lord Grey, Mr. Beit, and Mr. Mitchell.

“Many discussions took place during the framing of this will. In those preliminary discussions I failed to induce Mr. Rhodes to persevere in his original intention to allow the scholarships to be held equally at Oxford and Cambridge, and wherein I think Mr. Rhodes was right. I was more fortunate, however, in

inducing him to extend the scope of his scholarships so as to include in the scheme the States and Territories of the American Union, but he refused to open his scholarships to women. So far as I was concerned, although still intensely interested in Mr. Rhodes' conceptions, the change that was then made immensely reduced my responsibility. To be merely one of half a dozen executors and trustees was a very different matter from being charged with the chief responsibility of using the whole of Mr. Rhodes' wealth for the purposes of political propaganda, which, if Mr. Rhodes had been killed by the Matabele or had died any time between 1891 and 1899, it would have been my duty to undertake.

"When, after the raising of the siege of Kimberley, Mr. Rhodes returned to London, I had a long talk with him at the Burlington Hotel in April, 1900. Mr. Rhodes, although more affectionate than he had ever been before in manner, did not in the least disguise his disappointment that I should have thrown myself so vehemently into the agitation against the war. It seemed to him extraordinary; but he charitably concluded it was due to my absorption in the Peace Conference at The Hague. His chief objection, which obviously was present to his mind when, nearly twelve months later, he removed my name from the will, was not so much the fact that I differed from him in judgment about the war, as that I was not willing to subordinate my judgment to

that of the majority of our associates who were on the spot.

“ He said :—

“ ‘ That is the curse which will be fatal to our ideas—insubordination. Do not you think it is very disobedient of you? How can our Society be worked if each one sets himself up as the sole judge of what ought to be done? Just look at the position here. We three are in South Africa, all of us your boys’ (for that was the familiar way in which he always spoke), ‘ I myself, Milner and Garrett, all of whom learned their politics from you. We are on the spot and we are unanimous in declaring this war to be necessary. You have never been in South Africa, and yet instead of deferring to the judgment of your own boys, you fling yourself into a violent opposition to the war. I should not have acted in that way about an English question or an American question. No matter how much I might have disliked the course which you advised, I would have said “ No, I know Stead ; I trust his judgment and he is on the spot. I support whatever policy he recommends.” ’ ”

“ ‘ It’s all very well,’ I replied, ‘ but you see, although I have never been in South Africa, I learned my South African policy at the feet of a man who was to me the greatest authority on the subject. He always impressed upon me one thing so strongly that it became a fixed idea in my mind, from which I could never depart. That principle was that you could not rule South Africa without the Dutch, and that if you

quarrelled with the Dutch, South Africa was lost to the Empire. My teacher,' I said, 'whose authority I reverence—perhaps you know him? His name was Cecil John Rhodes. Now I am true to the real, aboriginal Cecil John Rhodes, and I cannot desert the principles which he taught me merely because another who calls himself by the same name advises me to follow an exactly opposite policy.'

"Mr. Rhodes laughed and said: 'Oh, well, circumstances have changed. But after all, that does not matter now. The war is ending and that is a past issue.'

"Then, later on, when Mr. Hawksley came in, we had a long discussion concerning the number of marks to be allotted under each of the heads.

"Mr. Rhodes went back to Africa and I did not see him again till his return in 1901. In January of that year, he had added a codicil to his will, removing my name from the list of executors, fearing that the others might find it difficult to work with me. He wrote me at the same time saying I was 'too masterful' to work with the other executors.

"In the October of that year he added Lord Milner's name to the list of executors and joint-heirs, and in March, on his death-bed, he added the name of Dr. Jameson. The number of executors, therefore, is now seven.

"Looking back over this whole episode of my career—an episode now definitely closed—I remember with gratitude the help which I was able to give to Mr. Rhodes, and I regret that in

one great blunder which marred his career my opposition failed to turn him from his purpose. Both in what I aided him to do and in what I attempted to prevent his doing, I was faithful to the great ideal for the realisation of which we first shook hands in 1889.

“ Apart from the success or failure of political projects, I have the satisfaction of remembering the words which Mr. Rhodes spoke in April, 1900, when the war was at its height. Taking my hand in both of his with a tenderness quite unusual to him, he said to me:—

“ ‘Now I want you to understand that if, in future, you should unfortunately feel yourself compelled to attack me personally as vehemently as you have attacked my policy in this war, it will make no difference to our friendship. I am too grateful to you for all I have learned from you to allow anything that you may write or say to make any change in our relations.’

“ How few public men there are who would have said that ! And yet men marvel that I loved him—and love him still.”

## CHAPTER XXII

### PHOTOGRAPHING INVISIBLE BEINGS

“Millions of Spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.”  
—MILTON.

It was during the South African War that my Father obtained one of his best authenticated Spirit photographs, so I think that it is well to give here his own account of his experiments in that direction. He writes :—

“While recording the results at which I have arrived, I wish to repudiate any desire to dogmatise as to their significance or their origin. I merely record the facts, and although I may indicate conclusions and inferences which I have drawn from them, I attach no importance to anything but the facts themselves.

“There is living in London at the present moment an old man of seventy-one years of age ; a man of no education ; he can write, but he cannot spell, and he has for many years earned his living as a photographer. He was always in a small way of business, a quiet inoffensive man

who brought up his family respectably, and lived in peace with his neighbours, attracting no particular remark. . .

“When he started in business as a photographer, it was in the days when the wet process was almost universal, and he was much annoyed by finding, that when he exposed plates, other forms than that of the sitter would appear in the background. So many plates were spoiled by these unwelcome intruders that his partner became very angry, and insisted that the plates had not been washed before they were used. He protested this was not so, and asked his partner to bring a packet of completely new plates with which he would take a photograph and see what was the result. His partner accepted the challenge, and produced a plate which had never previously been used, but when the portrait of the next sitter was taken, there appeared a shadow form in the background. Angry and frightened at this unwelcome appearance he flung the plate to the ground with an oath, and from that time for very many years he was never again troubled by an occurrence of similar phenomena.

“About ten years ago he became interested in spiritualism, and to his surprise, and also to his regret, the shadow figures began to re-appear on the background of the photographs. He repeatedly had to destroy negatives and ask his customer to give him another sitting. It did his business harm, and in order to avoid this annoyance he left most of the photographing to his son.

“I happened to hear of these curious experiences of his and sought him out. I found him very reluctant to speak about the matter. He said frankly he did not know how the figures came; it had been a great annoyance to him, and it gave his shop a bad name. He did not wish anything to be said about the matter. In deference, however, to repeated pressing on my part, he consented to make experiments with me, and I had at various times a considerable number of sittings.

“At first I brought my own plates (half plate size). He allowed me to place them in his slide in the dark room, to put them in the camera, which I was allowed to turn inside-out, and after they were exposed, I was permitted to go into the dark room and develop them in his presence. Under these conditions I repeatedly obtained pictures of persons who were certainly not visible to me in the studio. I was allowed to do almost anything that I pleased, to alter the background, to change the position of the camera, to sit at any angle that I chose—in short to act as if the studio and all belonging to it was my own. And I repeatedly obtained what the old photographer called ‘shadow pictures,’ but none of them bore any resemblance to any person whom I had known.

“In all these earlier experiments the photographer, whom I will call Mr. B., made no charge, and the only request that he made was that I should not publish his name, or do anything to let his neighbours know of the curious

shadow pictures which were obtainable in his studio.

“After a time I was so thoroughly satisfied that the shadow photographs, or spirit forms, were not produced by any fraud on the part of the photographer, that I did not trouble to bring my own marked plates, I allowed him to use his own, and to do all the work of loading the slide and of developing the plate without my assistance or supervision. What I wanted was to see whether it would be possible for me to obtain a photograph of any person known to me in life who has passed over to the other side. The production of one such picture, if the person was unknown to the photographer, and he had no means of obtaining the photograph of the original while on earth, seemed to me so much better a test of the genuineness of the phenomena than could be secured by any amount of personal supervision of the process of photography, that I left him to operate without interference. The results he obtained when left to himself were precisely the same as those when the slides passed only through my own hands. But, although I obtained a great variety of portraits of unknown persons, I got none whom I could recognise.

“In a conversation with Mr. B. as to how these shadow pictures, as he called them, came on the plate, I found him almost as much at sea as myself. He said that he did not know how they came, but that he had noticed that they came more frequently and with greater

distinctness at some times than at others. He could never say beforehand whether they would come or not. He frequently informed me when my sitting began that he could guarantee nothing. And often the set of plates would bear no trace of any portrait save mine.

“He was very reluctant to continue the experiments, and used to complain that after exposing four plates with a view to obtaining such pictures he felt quite exhausted. And sometimes he complained his ‘innards seemed to be turned upside-down,’ to use his own phrase. I usually sat with him between two and three in the afternoon, and on the days which I came he always abstained from the usual glass of beer which he took with his mid-day meal. If I came unexpectedly, and he had had a single glass of beer, which formed his usual beverage, he would always assure me that I need not expect any good results. I, however, never found any particular difference between the results.

“We often discussed the matter together. And he was evidently working out a theory of his own, as anyone might under such circumstances. He knew that when he was excited or irritated he got bad results. Hence he often used to keep a music-box going, for the music, in his opinion, tended to set up good and tranquil conditions. He said he thought something must come out of him, what, he did not know, but something was taken out of him, and with this something he thought the entities, whoever they

were, built themselves up and acquired sufficient substance to reflect the rays of light so as to impress the sensitive plate in his camera. He also thought that his old camera had become, what he called, magnetised, and although it was an old-fashioned piece of furniture, which I not only examined myself, but have had examined by expert photographers, nothing could be discovered within or without it which would account for the results obtained. He also was of opinion that even although he did not touch the photographic plate, it was necessary for him to touch or to hold his hand over the photographic slide, and also to hold his hand over the plate when it was in the developing bath. His theory was that, in some way or other, this process magnetised the plate and brought out a shadow portrait.

“One peculiarity of almost all the shadow pictures obtained in all these series of experiments is that they have around them the same kind of white drapery which is so familiar to those who have taken part in a materialising séance. Sometimes this drapery is more voluminous than at others; often, when the conditions are good, the form which at first appears with its head encompassed with drapery will appear on the second plate without any drapery. On asking Mr. B. what explanation he could give for this, he said he did not know, but he believed that the bodily appearance assumed by the spirit was very sensitive and needed to be shielded from currents which might harm it.

But when harmony prevailed they could venture to remove the drapery, and be photographed without it. Whatever may be the value of Mr. B.'s theory, there is little doubt that something is given off from his body which can be photographed. The white mist that appears to emanate from him forms into cloudy folds out of which there protrudes a more or less clearly defined face with human features. Sometimes this white and misty cloud obscures the sitter, at other times it seems to be condensed as if it were in the process of being worked up into a definite form for the completion of which either time or some other conditions were lacking. It was also noticeable that the entity, whoever it may be which builds up the form, who is giving off sufficient solidity to impress its image upon the plate in the camera, having once created a form, will use it repeatedly without any change of position or expression. This will no doubt seem a great stumbling-block to many. But the fact is as I have stated it, and our first business is to ascertain facts, whether they tell for or against any particular hypothesis. It may be that the disembodied spirit, in order to establish its identity, constructs, out of the 'aura' given off by the photographer or other medium, a mask or cast bearing the unmistakable resemblance to the body which it wore in its sojourn on earth. Having once built it up for use in the studio, it may be easier to employ the same cast again and again instead of building up a new one at

each fresh sitting. Upon this point, however, I shall have something to say further on.

“I was very much interested in the results I obtained, although, as none of the photographs were identified, I did not deem the experiment completely successful. I was very anxious to induce Mr. B. to devote some months to an uninterrupted series of experiments, and asked him on what terms I could secure his services. But he absolutely refused; he said he did not like it, it made him unwell, made people speak ill of him, and it did not matter what terms were offered, he would not consent. He was an old man, he said, and he could not find out how these things came; and, in short, neither scientific curiosity nor financial consideration would induce him to consent to more than an occasional sitting. I therefore dropped the matter, and for some years I discontinued my experiments.

“I had a friend who often accompanied me to Mr. B.’s studio, where she had been photographed both with and without shadow pictures appearing on the background. We often promised each other that if either of us passed over we would come back and be photographed by Mr. B. if possible, in order to prove the reality of spirit return. Shortly after this my friend died. But it was not till nearly four years after her death, at the request of a friend who was very anxious to know whether she could communicate with those on the other side, that I went back to Mr. B.’s studio.

“He had always been slightly clairvoyant and clairaudiant. He told me that a few days before

I had written asking for the appointment, my deceased friend had appeared in the studio and told him that I was coming. This reminded me of her promise, and I said at once that I hoped he would be able to photograph her. He said he didn't know; he was rather frightened of her, for reasons into which I need not enter, but if she came he would see what he could do. My friend and I sat together. The first plate was exposed, nothing appeared in the background. When the second plate was placed in the camera Mr. B. nodded with a quick look of recognition. We saw nothing. After he had exposed the second plate, and before he developed it, he asked us to change seats. We did this, and as he was exposing the third plate: 'I am told to ask you to do this,' he said, and then when he closed the shutter he said, 'it is Mrs. M.' On the fourth plate there appeared a picture of a woman whom I had never seen before, and whom my friend had never seen, neither had Mr. B. When the plates came to be developed I found the second and third plates contained unmistakable likenesses of my friend Mrs. M. These portraits were immediately recognised by my friend as unmistakable likenesses to the deceased Mrs. M. It will be objected that she had frequently been photographed by the same photographer, and that he had simply faked a photograph from one of his old negatives. I don't believe that this is possible, for these portraits, although recognised immediately by everyone who knew her, including her nearest relative, are quite different from any photograph she ever had taken

in life. She certainly never was photographed enveloped in white drapery, nor do I believe that Mr. B. had any negative of any of her portraits in his possession. But I fully admit that from the point of view of one who wishes to exclude every possibility of error, the fact that Mrs. M. had been frequently photographed in her life-time by the same photographer, renders it impossible to regard these photographs as conclusive testimony as to their authenticity as a photograph of a form assumed by a disembodied spirit. I have mentioned that on the fourth plate there appeared a portrait of an unknown female. On my return I was showing the print of this shadow picture to a friend when she startled me by declaring that the shrouded form which appeared in the photograph behind me was a portrait of her mother who had died some months before in Dublin. I had never seen her mother, my friend did not know of her existence, neither did the photographer, nor does he to this day. It was only many months afterwards that I was able to obtain a photograph of my friend's mother, but it was taken when she was a comparatively young woman and bore no manner of resemblance to the portrait of the lady who appeared behind me. Her daughter, however, had not the slightest hesitation in asserting that it was her mother, and that she had recognised her instantly, and that it was a very good portrait of her as she appeared in the later years of her life. This startled me not a little, and convinced me that I had a good prospect of attaining some definite results as an outcome of my experiments.

“Mr. B., encouraged by this success, was willing to continue his experiments, and this time I insisted upon paying him for his work.

“From this time onward the occurrence of photographs that were recognisable on the background of the photographs taken by Mr. B., became frequent. Sometimes the plates were marked; but not invariably. For my part, I attach comparatively no importance to the marking of plates and the close supervision of the operator. The test of the genuineness of a photograph that is obtained when the unknown relative of an unknown sitter appears in the background of the photograph, is immeasurably superior to precautions any expert conjurer or trick photographer might evade. Again and again I sent friends to Mr. B., giving him no information as to who they were, nor telling him anything as to the identity of the persons’ deceased friend or relative whose portrait they wished to secure, and time and again when the negative was developed, the portrait would appear in the background, or sometimes in front of the sitter. This occurred so frequently that I am quite convinced of the impossibility of any fraud. One time it was a French editor, who finding the portrait of his deceased wife appear on the negative when developed, was so transported with delight that he insisted on kissing the photographer Mr. B., much to the old man’s embarrassment. On another occasion it was a Lancashire engineer, himself a photographer, who took marked plates and all possible precautions. He obtained portraits of two of his relatives and

another of an eminent personage with whom he had been in close relations. Or again, it was a near neighbour, who going as a total stranger to the studio, obtained the portrait of her deceased daughter.

“I attach no importance whatever to the appearance of portraits of well-known personages, which might easily be copied from existing pictures, but I attach immense importance to the production of the spirit photographs of unknown relatives of sitters who are unknown to the photographer, who receives them solely as a lady or gentleman who is one of my friends.

“Although, as I have said, I do not attach much importance to photographs appearing of well-known men, I confess that I was rather impressed by one of my most recent experiments. I received a message from a medium in Sheffield, who is unknown to me, saying that Cecil Rhodes, who had then been dead about nine months, had spoken to her *clairaudiantly*, and had told her to ask me to go to the photographer's, and that he would come and be photographed. The medium was a stranger to me, and I confess that I received the message with considerable scepticism. However, when she came up to town I accompanied her to the studio. She declared that she saw Cecil Rhodes, and that he spoke to her, and that he was standing behind me when the plate was exposed. When the plate came to be developed, although there was one well-defined figure standing behind me and several other faces half visible in the background, there was no portrait of Cecil

Rhodes. I was not surprised, and went away. A month afterwards I went to have another sitting with the photographer. I chatted with him for a short time, and then he left the room for a moment. When he came back he said to me : 'There is a round-faced well set-up man here with a short moustache and a dimple in his chin. Do you know him?' 'No,' I said, 'I don't know any such man.' 'Well, he seems to be very busy about you.' 'Well,' I said, 'if he comes upstairs, we shall see what we can get.' 'I don't know,' said he. When I was sitting, he said, 'There he is, and I see the letter R. Is it Robert or Richard, do you think?' 'I don't know any Robert or Richard,' I said. He took the picture. He then proceeded with the second plate, and said, 'That man is still here, and I see behind him a country road. I wonder what that means.' He went into the dark room, and presently came out and said, 'I see "road or roads." Do you know anyone of that name?' 'Of course,' I said, 'Cecil Rhodes.' 'Do you mean him as died in the Transvaal lately?' said he. I said 'Yes.' 'Well,' he said, 'was he a man like that?' 'Well, he had a moustache,' I said. And sure enough, when the plate was developed, there was Cecil Rhodes looking fifteen years younger than when he died.

"Some other plates were exposed. One was entirely blank, on two others the mist was formed into a kind of clot of light, but no figure was visible, the fifth had a portrait of an unknown man, and on the sixth, when it came to be developed, there was the same portrait of

Cecil Rhodes that had appeared on the first, but without the white drapery round the head.

“Of course it may be said that it was well-known I was connected with Cecil Rhodes and that the photographer therefore would have no difficulty in faking a portrait. I admit all that, and therefore I would not have introduced this if it had stood alone as any evidence showing that it was a *bonâ fide* photograph of an invisible being. But it does not stand alone, and I have almost every reason to believe in the almost stupid honesty, if I may use such a phrase, of the photographer. I am naturally much interested in these latest portraits of the African Colossus. They are, at any rate, entirely new, no such portraits, to the best of my knowledge (and I have made a collection of all I can lay my hands on), exactly resembling those portraits which I obtained at Mr. B.’s studio.

“I will conclude the account of my experiments by telling how I secured a portrait under circumstances which preclude any possibility of fake or fraud. One day when I entered the studio, Mr. B. said to me, ‘There is a man come with you who has been here before; he came here some days ago when I was by myself; he looked very wild, and he had a gun in his hand, and I did not like the look of him. I don’t like guns, so I asked him to go away, for I was frightened of the gun, and he went. But now he has come with you, and he has not got his gun any more, so we will let him stop.’ I was rather amused at the old man’s story and said,

‘Well, see if you can photograph him.’ ‘I don’t know as I can,’ he said, ‘I never know what I can get,’—which is quite true, for often the photographs which he says he sees clairvoyantly do not come out on the plate. While he was photographing me, I said to him, ‘If you can tell this man to go away, you can ask him his name.’ ‘Yes,’ said he. ‘Will you do so?’ I said. ‘Yes,’ he said. After seeming to ask the question mentally, he said, ‘He says his name is Piet Botha.’ ‘Piet Botha,’ I said, ‘I know no such name. There are Louis and Phillip, and Chris Botha. I have never heard of Piet; still they are a numerous family and there are plenty of Bothas in South Africa, and it will be interesting to ask General Botha, when he arrives, whether he knows of any Piet Botha.’ When the negative was developed, sure enough there appeared behind me a photograph of a stalwart bearded person, who might have been a Boer or a Russian Moujik, but who was certainly unknown to me. I had never seen a portrait of anyone which bore any resemblance to the photograph.

“When General Botha arrived I did not get an opportunity of asking him about the photograph, but some time afterwards I asked Mr. Fischer, one of the delegation from the South African Republics, to look at the photograph, and if he got an opportunity to ask General Botha if he knew of such a man as Piet Botha. Mr. Fischer said he thought he had seen the face before, but he could not be certain. He departed with the photograph. Some days afterwards Mr. Wessels, a member of the Delegation with Mr. Fischer,

came down to my office. He said, 'I want to know about that photograph that you gave Mr. Fischer.' 'Yes,' I said, 'what about it?' 'I want to know where you got it.' I told him. He replied disdainfully, 'I don't believe in such things; it is superstition; besides, that man didn't know Mr. B.; he has never been in London; how could he come there?' 'What,' I said, 'do you know him?' 'Know him,' said Mr. Wessels, 'he is my brother-in-law.' 'Really,' I said; 'what did they call him?' 'Pietrus Johannes Botha, but we always called him Piet for short.' 'Is he dead, then?' I said. 'Yes,' said Mr. Wessels, 'he was the first Boer officer who was killed in the siege of Kimberley; but there is a mystery about this; you didn't know him?' 'No,' I said. 'And never heard of him?' 'No,' I said. 'But,' he said, 'I have the man's portrait in my house in South Africa; how could you get it?' 'But,' I said, 'I never have had it.' 'I don't understand,' said he, moodily, and so departed. I afterwards showed the photograph to another Free-State Boer who knew Piet Botha very well, and he had not the slightest hesitation in declaring that it was an unmistakable likeness of his dead friend.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Referring to this photo elsewhere, he wrote:—

"This at least is not a case which telepathy can explain. Nor can the hypothesis of fraud hold water. It was by the merest accident that I asked the photographer to see if the spirit would give his name. No one in England, so far as I have been able to ascertain, knew that any Piet Botha ever existed.

"As if to render all explanation of fraud or contrivance still more incredible, it may be mentioned that the *Daily Graphic* of October, 1889, which announced that a Commandant Botha had

“This is a plain, straightforward narrative of my experiences ; they are still going on. But if I continue them for ever I don't see how I am going to obtain better results than those which I have already secured. At the same time, I must admit that when I have taken my own kodak to the studio and taken a photograph immediately before Mr. B. had exposed his plate, I got no results. The same failure occurred with another photographer, whom I took, who took his own camera and his own plates, and took a photograph immediately before and immediately after Mr. B. had exposed his plate, and secured no result. Mr. B.'s explanation of this is that, he thinks, he does in some way or other magnetise, as he terms it, the plate, and that there is some effluence from his hand which is as necessary for the development of the psychic figure as the developing liquid is for the development of an ordinary photograph. This explanation will no doubt be derided as, I presume, wiseacres would have derided the first photographers when they insisted upon the necessity of darkness whilst developing their plates. What I hold to be established is that in the presence of this particular individual Mr. B., who at present is the only person known to me who is able to produce these photographs, it is possible to obtain under test conditions, photographs that are unmistakable portraits of deceased persons ; the said de-

been killed in the siege of Kimberley, published a portrait alleged to be that of the dead commandant, which not only does not bear the remotest resemblance to the Piet Botha of my photograph, but which was described as Commandant Hans Botha !”

ceased persons being entirely unknown to him, and in some cases equally unknown to the sitter. Neither was any portrait of such person accessible either to the sitter or the photographer ; neither was either the sitter or the photographer conscious of the very existence of these persons, whose identity was subsequently recognised by their friends.<sup>1</sup>

“I am willing to admit that no conceivable conditions in the way of marking plates and supervising the actions or the operations of the photographer are of the least use ; in so much as an expert conjurer can easily deceive the eye of the unskilled observer. But what I do maintain is that it is impossible for the cleverest trick photographer and the ablest conjurer in the world to produce a photograph, at a moment's notice, of an unknown relative of an unknown sitter, this portrait to be unmistakably recognisable by all survivors who knew the original in life. This, Mr. B. has done again and again. And it seems to me that a great step has been made towards establishing the possibility of verifying by photography the reality of the existence of other intelligences than our own.”

The photographer alluded to in this article is Mr. Boursnell. He died shortly after it was written, and although Father experimented with others, he never obtained such convincing and satisfactory results.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Katharine Bates was present when the Piet Botha photograph was taken under the exact conditions specified by my Father.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE DAILY PAPER

“It is my aim to band together all the readers of *The Daily Paper* into a great co-operative partnership for the achievement of common ends ; to make the newspaper itself not merely a nerve centre for the collection and distribution of news, but for the inspiration, direction and organisation of the moral, social, political and intellectual force of the whole community.”—  
W. T. STEAD. *Review of Reviews*, 1903.

IN 1903, everything seemed to show that at last he was to achieve what had long been one of his greatest ambitions. This was to have a daily paper of his own—he had once or twice made the attempt. In 1893 he brought forward a plea for floating a daily paper in a Christmas number, entitled, *Two and Two make Four*—but nothing came of it. But now in 1903, the time truly appeared to be ripe. So he thought, until December, 1903, and then there came a warning. Not in the same manner as his premonitions already described. This came in the form of a dream—I give it in his own words:—

“On Saturday night last (December 12th,

1903), I was suddenly wakened up by a very vivid dream, which burnt itself into my mind more than any dream which I remember having had for a long time. I had been very much overdriven, and felt the strain of the *Daily Paper* more than I perhaps ought to have done. I dreamed that I was at some place I had never been in before, at some place in which the green hills rose up directly from the waters of a lake, round which boarding-houses and hotels were scattered. When I approached the place I was startled to see a boy walking upon the clouds in the air. He seemed to find no difficulty whatever in doing so. He made snowballs out of the clouds, and pelted the people down below. Then after a time, getting tired of this, he descended to the ground, and I saw with astonishment that he had short stilts.

“The scene suddenly changed, and another boy stood by the side of a flying machine, which was being launched on a carriage with wheels, down a steep inclined plane, which ran directly into the waters of the lake. The boy in the flying machine took hold of the lever to start the engine, but before it was launched the other boy who had been walking in the clouds, read something which sounded almost like a funeral service over him. It was somewhat to the effect that in some enterprises it was necessary to risk all, and that if life was sacrificed, it was well spent in a worthy cause.

“Hardly had he said this, when the airship was unfastened and ran rapidly down the steep

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declivity into the water, much as boats run down into the water-chute at Earl's Court. Striking the water, it rose and soared triumphantly into the air. Nothing could have been more brilliant than the launching, and in a few moments the ship was flying at an enormous height above the earth, quite steadily. We were all congratulating ourselves upon the success, when suddenly the ship began to wobble, and then fell, striking the earth with a horrid crash, killing its unfortunate occupant.

"All of which seemed to me very much like the *Daily Paper*. I was the occupant, and the ship was the paper itself, which we shall launch, but the effect to maintain it at its height will break me down, and then smash will come everything.'"

Everything happened as in the dream. The *Daily Paper* was brilliantly launched in January, 1904—but the strain of work was too much for my Father, and after seeing the first Number to press, he broke down completely. He managed by the loyal support of those around him, headed by my brother Will, to keep it going for some weeks, but it soon became apparent that it was impossible to continue, and on February 9th the last number appeared.

A sea voyage was prescribed as the only thing likely to pull him round, so a few weeks later my Father and I sailed on the *Athenic* for South Africa.

Till we reached Teneriffe he was ill, but worse



IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1904.



than the illness was the terrible depression caused by the feeling that he had failed badly in carrying out what had appeared to be his specially appointed work. Suddenly, just before arriving at Teneriffe, he came on deck looking more like himself than I had seen him do for weeks. I was naturally delighted. Then he told me he had realised what a weak and infirm soldier he was to bear defeat so badly. "The Senior Partner knows best," he said, "and although I appear to have staked my all and lost, it is, I know now, for the best—I expect I needed a severe lesson, and I have had it. I feel there is work for me in South Africa—and so the Senior Partner is thus forcing me to go."

After this there was no trace of the former depression, and for the rest of the voyage he was full of life and vigour—working hard all the morning—dictating and reading—for an hour he studied French with me—after lunch he slept—and nearly all the rest of the time was spent playing with the children.

The visit to Africa was full of interest. We met a great many people, British and Boer, and heard the views of both sides on the late war. He urged everywhere a policy of peace and conciliation, and did all he possibly could to convince the Boers of the good faith of the British Liberals and their sincerity in promising the Boers full control in South Africa—if only they would accept the grant of independence and self-government under the British flag.

He was violently denounced by the Jingoists,

but he felt it was his mission, and that the reason he was in South Africa at that moment was that he might endeavour to make the Boers realise the privileges enjoyed by everyone who lived under the British flag. He has not had long to wait for his vindication.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### HIS BELIEF IN PRAYER

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith."—I. John 5, 4.

"We must trust God to show us the way when the time comes. It is a good saying; until you have learned to trust wholly, you need not expect to be trusted wholly."—W. T. STEAD (private letter).

FATHER believed in prayer. "He prayeth most who loveth most" was true for him. He loved humanity and longed to help it, and because he did so he prayed to the Senior Partner to help him.

When the call came to go forth into the world and fight, whether for the womanhood of his country, for Peace, or any of the many *causes* he fought for during his life—he prayed.

I remember when quite a small child, on the occasion of his first visit to Russia, the pony trap which was to take him to the station, waiting at the front door, whilst we all gathered in the drawing-room and Father prayed for guidance

and help, and ended his prayer by repeating the 23rd Psalm.

Prayer with him was no mere perfunctory repetition of words. It was a real application to the Power he called the "Senior Partner" for help and guidance.

He believed in prayer meetings and urged that prayer meetings should be held in Churches and Chapels all over the country, whenever England stood in need of help and guidance. At the little Congregational Church at Hayling Island he always stayed for the prayer meeting and prayed.

Many and many a time when the call came to address some public meeting he surprised the audience and those around him on the platform when he rose to speak, with the words "Let us pray," and then simply and directly he would appeal to God for guidance and help.

He was often encumbered with cares and puzzled as to what to do, but he never doubted the Senior Partner would make the way clear in His own good time.

In his incursion into the psychic realm, as in everything else, he prayed for guidance. I was with him at many séances, and I only remember one or two at which he did not open with a prayer for direction and protection—for he felt in this work, perhaps more than any other, there was very great need of help and guidance.

When some great cause called him and he had to go forth and battle, he prayed and looked to others to pray also ; with one friend this was particularly

the case. To this friend I am indebted for the following word picture which shows by one concrete instance how firmly he believed in the power of prayer.

When the Welsh Revival broke out in 1904, he was deeply impressed, and after going to Wales to *see* for himself, he published a pamphlet on the Revival—as he wrote each chapter, this friend prayed. 200,000 copies were sold in England and over a half million in America. Following on this pamphlet, from all over England came requests for him to speak on the Revival—this, however, was physically impossible at the time.

“In March, 1905,” writes this friend, “the National Free Church Council meetings were held in Manchester, and your father was asked to speak at a men’s meeting in the Free Trade Hall. At once he wrote to me, asking if I could be present, as he had only consented to speak on condition that some women were there, and as he had to speak on the Revival he very much desired my presence. He was coming to stay with us, so of course I gladly promised to be present. It was a great meeting, over 3,000 men present—the great building packed to its utmost capacity. The question with us was, Will the Revival break out to-night?—all else was swallowed up in that. It was his first public appearance after the war, and the audience rose to greet him. It was clear they had come to hear him,—they rose to their feet, old white-headed men, brilliant young ones, they waved

and clapped and cheered and cheered. They had forgotten the Revival, they were cheering the man who opposed the Boer War. The Free Churches were coming to their senses, he was as unmoved by their cheers as he had been by their frowns in the dark days, and at last, lifting up his hand in his commanding way for silence, to the overwhelming surprise of that audience, he cried, 'Let us pray.' Immediately the atmosphere changed, we were lifted into the presence of the 'Most High,' an awed hush stole over that assembly, spiritual forces began to work, and when at the close of the prayer he said, 'Now we will sing one verse of "Lord I hear of showers of blessing,"' the thousands of voices thundered the old words out 'Even me, even me' 'Let some droppings fall on me.' They were a prayer tense and earnest, as from the heart of one man. Then he began to speak, giving me one look first, which I knew meant pray. Every breath was a prayer. I sat in a quiet corner unseen, with locked hands and the tears dripping on them, pleading, pleading, God would use him as the instrument to draw those men that night. Deeper and deeper grew the feeling as he told, quietly and briefly the story of what he had seen and heard, and what he believed God was doing in Wales and questioning was He going to do it in England? My pleading had become a veritable agony; the Holy Spirit's brooding presence an awesome thing in its solemn intensity, when suddenly he said something that

held me and drew me. I lifted my head and listened—was transfixed by his face and words,—stopped my pleading and followed him intently. Once he looked uneasily towards me. I did not know what he meant. His words were burning with fire and beauty. Then something happened ; he was swung off in another direction. Men caught their breath, the tension lessened, he sat down, and though every soul was deeply moved,—scores of their eyes were wet, yet the tongues of flame were held back; they came not that night. And we sat, two sad and disappointed creatures, and when at last the meeting was over and he came down from the platform and reaching my side, he seized my arm fiercely, saying, ‘You were praying for me to-night, were you not?’ I nodded. ‘And you stopped in the middle of my speech. Oh, why did you, why did you? All the power went out of me, I could feel it go, and could not imagine what was the matter with me, till I glanced at you and saw you listening. Never, never do that again. To think we might have been in the thick of the Revival this very night, if you had been faithful.’”

## CHAPTER XXV

### WILLIE

"His was a noble life, brief in span, but full of service from his boyhood up."—W. T. STEAD.

THREE years after his African visit he watched the passing of his dearly loved eldest son, and wept beside the beloved body, which would no more be used by the loving, tender spirit which for thirty-three years had worn it as its earthly dress.

There had ever been a great love between father and son. As soon as he was old enough to understand anything Willie took an interest in his father's work, and his greatest ambition was to be an editor like his father. He became his father's secretary when scarcely into his teens and from that time till he was twenty-one, when he became private secretary to Mr. E. T. Cook<sup>1</sup>—the then editor of the *Daily News*, he was his father's right hand.

Soon after he became Mr. Cook's secretary he married, and for a few years my Father and he did not come into such close touch as before. But when the former's health broke down through the

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. T. Cook.



WILLIE.

*Elliot & Fry.*



strain of the *Daily Paper*, Willie took the position of editor and piloted the paper through its short life with splendid enthusiasm and indomitable courage. From that time onward till the day of his death, they were again in very close touch, and my Father depended upon Will's help in a great many ways.

"Last year," my Father wrote at the time of his death, "when I undertook the mission round Europe and America, before the Peace Congress, I made over to him full responsibility for the editing of the *Review of Reviews* in my absence. Nobly, as always, he responded to my appeal, although little as I knew it, the call made serious inroads both upon his business and his strength. He was always so cheerful, buoyant, so delighted to help, that I little knew at what a sacrifice I was being helped."

On the very Saturday on which Willie passed on, Father had come up to town from Hayling to meet him at night, when the temporary appointment of Acting Editor was to have been made permanent, and Will was to have been formally appointed, as his Father's successor, in the editorial chair.

My Father did not hear of his son's illness till a quarter past eleven in the morning. Down to a quarter to eleven at night he was absolutely incredulous that his life was in danger. At a quarter past eleven he saw him die.

It was a bitter blow, and for some time sorrow and grief filled his soul.

But it was not long before he realised that Will's passing was to bring to him the assurance of the

possibility of intercourse with those who have gone on before.

“No one could deceive me,” he said, “by fabricating spurious messages from my beloved son.” And nothing that can be written will carry more conviction than his own testimony.

Speaking at Halifax eighteen months later, he said :—

“Eighteen months ago my eldest son passed into the other world. I heard his first cry as a new-born infant. I caught his last sigh as he passed into the unseen. I had always said I would never make my final pronouncement on the truths of Spiritualism until someone near and dear in my own family passed into the great beyond. Then I should know whether Spiritualism stood the test of a great bereavement, bringing life and immortality to light. And I am here to tell you that the reality of my son’s continued existence, and of his tender care for me, have annulled the bitterness of death.

“You remember what Lowell said : ‘ Console me if you will, but all the consoling can never make death other than death.’ I can say Spiritualism has made death other than death for me. That boy had been for thirty-three years my joy and my pride. I had trained him in hope that he would succeed me and carry on my work. The very day he died I came up at 11.30 a.m. to appoint him as my assistant-editor. That night at 11.30 p.m. I saw him die. The blow was so sudden. I did not know he was

seriously ill. When I saw him breathe his last I knew our Father had other plans, and that the boy I had trained to work for me here was going to work for me on the other side. And that hope has been gloriously fulfilled. The telephone helps us to realise this kind of communication. When my boy was here, our offices were connected by telephone, and it is much the same now. He writes to me through several mediums, he shows himself to my friends. I myself have seen his materialised face. One friend has seen him at least three times fully materialised, as was our Lord after His resurrection. He is here to-night beside me. I am as sure of that as I am of the fact that I am speaking to you. When I realise the difference it makes to have this knowledge, and to be without it, I feel I must testify to you as to the reality of the unseen world around us."

In his message on December 15th, 1911, the day after the anniversary of his "passing on," his birthday, he called it, Will wrote the following message, and as it explains partially why it is impossible for those communicating from the other world to give more definite details of their life and surroundings, I give it here :

*"December 15th, 1911.*

W. Stead, jun. My 'dearest Father. My birthday message is ever the same. 'Tis better on before. When I think of the ideas that I had of the life I am now living, when I was in the world in which you are, I marvel at the

hopeless inadequacy of my dreams. The reality is so much, so very much greater than ever I imagined. You and I and all people that on earth do dwell, are too apt to imagine this life as only an extension of the old life. Everything is to be as it is, only more so. But everything is not as it was. It is a new life, the nature of which you cannot understand, although it is possible to explain something of it by analogy. Imagine yourself a caterpillar on a cabbage leaf. 'Things will be better on before you,' you say to the caterpillar. But what does 'better' mean to the caterpillar? More cabbages, ever more cabbages, and ever cabbages; more sunshine, less rain, and no hungry birds to eat you up. All caterpillary ideas limited by the sensations and aspirations of a cabbage world. After a time the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. But how can the butterfly explain to the caterpillars the conditions of his new life, the buoyancy of flight, the joy of love, the sweetness of the honey-flowers. These essentials of the new existence are incapable of being explained to the caterpillar mind, for the vocabulary of the cabbage would contain no words capable of conveying concepts entirely alien to the caterpillar's senses. So it is with me. I tell you it is better on before, always, and far better than I dreamed of. But when I come down to tell you wherein the betterness consists, I feel like the butterfly sitting by the caterpillar and endeavouring to explain what sight is, what light is, what flight is, wherein lies the joy of love."

## CHAPTER XXVI

### JULIA'S BUREAU

"I have been seeking, not to arrive at a given geographical point which everyone admitted must exist. I have had to search and ascertain in the first place whether the Other World has any actual existence at all. Its non-existence is stoutly affirmed by a few, accepted as unknowable by many. Even those who nominally profess to believe that it exists, hold their faith so timorously that they shrink from putting it to the simple test of observation and experiment. The Other World, for the immense majority of men, orthodox or unbelievers, has become a kind of lost Atlantis lurking unknown beneath the Saragossa Sea, cumbered with the debris of a thousand religious creeds. Yet if the almost universal tradition of the race has any foundation in fact; if the speculations of the greatest philosophers and the unwavering testimony of the founders of all religions be true; the existence of the Other World affects us, every man and woman of us, most nearly. For if beyond the valley of the shadow there lies another world into which all the children of men are destined in a few years to pass, it seems the height of irrationality to treat with indifference or contempt, the attempt to ascertain some authentic evidence as to the nature of the country to which we are all bound, and the extent to which our lot there is affected by our conduct here."—W. T. STEAD.

"*You* see the sorrowing people on your side.

"*I* see them on my side. Can we do nothing to help those who love so greatly to get into touch with each other?"—JULIA A. AMES.

In 1894 Julia wrote :

“I want to ask you if you can help me at all in a matter in which I am much interested. I have long wanted to establish a place where those who have passed over could communicate with the loved ones left behind. At present the world is full of spirits longing to speak to those from whom they have been parted, just as I longed to speak to you, but without finding a hand to enable them to write. It is a strange spectacle. On your side, souls full of anguish for bereavement ; on this side, souls full of sadness because they cannot communicate with those whom they love. What can be done to bring these sombre, sorrow-laden persons together ? To do so requires something which we cannot supply. You must help. But how ? It is not impossible. And when it is done, death will have lost its sting and the grave its victory. The Apostle thought this was done. But the grave has not been so easily defeated, and death keeps its sting. Who can console us for the loss of our beloved ? Only those who can show us that they are not lost, but are with us more than ever. Do you not think I have been much more with my friend since I put off my flesh than I used to be ? Why, I dwell with her in a way that before was quite impossible. I was never more with her than I have been since I came to this side. But she would not have known it, nor would you have heard from me at all, but for the accident of your meeting her !

“What is wanted is a bureau of communication between the two sides. Could you not establish some such sort of office with one or more trustworthy mediums? If only it were to enable the sorrowing on earth to know, if only for once, that their so-called dead live nearer them than ever before, it would help to dry many a tear and soothe many a sorrow. I think you could count upon the eager co-operation of all on this side.

“We on this side are full of joy at the hope of this coming to pass. Imagine how grieved we must be to see so many whom we love, sorrowing without hope, when those for whom they sorrow are trying in vain by every means to make them conscious of their presence. And many also are racked with agony, imagining that their loved ones are lost in hell, when in reality they have been found in the all-embracing arms of the love of God. It is the most important thing there is to do. For it brings with it the trump of the Archangel, when those that were in their graves shall awake and walk forth once more among men.

“I was at first astonished to learn how much importance the spirits attach to the communications which they are allowed to have with those on earth. I can, of course, easily understand, because I feel it myself—the craving there is to speak to those whom you loved, and whom you love; but it is much more than this. What they tell me on all sides, and especially my dear guides, is that the time is come when there is to be a

great spiritual awakening among the nations, and that the agency which is to bring this about is the sudden and conclusive demonstration, in every individual case which seeks for it, of the reality of the spirit, of the permanence of the soul, and the immanence of the Divine."

But fifteen years were to pass before the way was to open out, and Father was to feel that the call had truly come and the means were to be forthcoming, for him to carry out Julia's wish and found a Bureau of communication.

During the autumn of 1908 Julia wrote telling him that the time had now come to start the Bureau, and that the money necessary would be forthcoming.

On October 15th, 1908, she wrote :

"About the Bureau, that is all right. You will get the money you need for the establishment of the Bureau on a proper basis."

October 19th, 1908, she wrote :—

"I am told off for this work. I must do it. It is in the plan. We do not see all the plan any more than you. But we see our duty written in it and part of my duty is to help you to get the Bureau established. And you will be helped to do so soon ; very soon it seems to us."

A few days later she asked how much money would be necessary, and when told a thousand pounds, wrote, "You will get it. It will come

from America, and it will come in such a way that you will know it is the money for the Bureau."

In the beginning of December Father wrote an article entitled "How I know the Dead Return," in which he gave an account of his own experiences, and reasons for his belief. It was published in the *Fortnightly Review*, the *New York American*, in *La Revue*, in Australia and in India.

On December 20th, Julia wrote :

"The time has come and I think that before Xmas you will see your way clear."

As a result of his article in the *New York American*—Mr. Hearst telegraphed asking him to become Special Correspondent to that paper, and offering him £500 a year.

This offer came on Christmas Eve—he came home and told me about it, and said, "I wonder if this is the money Julia means, but we want a thousand and this is only £500—anyhow, let's go double or quits," and he wrote to Mr. Hearst's London Correspondent saying he would accept on condition he received £1,000 a year.

On Christmas day Julia wrote :—

"I congratulate you, and also myself, upon the fulfilment of what I promised you. You need have no fear about the results of the reference to New York. They will agree."

By the middle of January there was no answer, but Julia was triumphantly confident, and on the

19th January a cable arrived from America agreeing to pay the £1,000, and I have before me as I write the telegram I received from Father that day sent from Hayling, where he was staying at the time. It reads as follows :—

“ Hayling Island—10 o’c. Received here 10.40 a.m.

“ Estelle Stead,

5 Smith Square, Westminster.

Doxology Julia vindicated. American accepts.”

So he founded Julia’s Bureau—and founded it for one purpose, and one purpose only—to *enable those who had lost their dead, who were sorrowing over friends and relatives, to get into touch with them again ; to minister to the aching heart, not to satisfy the inquisitive brain.*

Referring to this, my Father wrote :—

“ The question whether it is possible to bridge the grave and open communications with those who have passed to the other side, is one which most people have answered in the negative. But in all ages there have been some who have answered not less positively in the affirmative, and as the latter class, although in a minority, include the founders of the religions and the writers of the Bibles of the world, it can hardly be regarded as unreasonable to endeavour to ascertain the truth by a series of carefully-conducted experiments, with carefully-selected subjects, on certain clear and well-defined lines.

“ Who are the persons with whom such experiments should be conducted? They should be

selected exclusively from those who with single-souled sincerity desire to communicate with those whom they love, from whom they have been divided by death. They should not be those who despair or who mourn as those who have no hope.

“When so many long to hear again a word of greeting from lips that have been closed in death, it is absurd to waste time upon those who have no such desire. But it is not enough that the desire should be there. Its existence should be demonstrated by action. Many people say they desire this or that, but if they refuse to raise their hands in order to grasp it or to make any enquiry as to how they can secure it, no one can regard them as serious. What test can be imposed to demonstrate the sincerity of the suggested subject ?

“Fortunately the answer is not far to seek. If any one earnestly desires to communicate with those whom he loves in the other world, he must be anxious to hear something of the testimony of those who claim to have succeeded in establishing such communications. In other words, one test of sincerity in this quest is a determination to read the best works that have been written by those who have made the question a subject of earnest study and patient investigation.

“Among such books may be mentioned :—

‘The Letters of Julia.’

‘The Writings of Stainton Moses.’

‘Mr. Myer’s “Human Personality.”’

‘The Writings of Lombroso, Flammarion, Wallace and Crookes.’

“It is not necessary to have read all these books to be accepted as a suitable subject. But to have read none of them is *primâ facie* evidence that the desire to communicate was not very keen—unless, of course, there had been no opportunity to obtain these books or any of them.

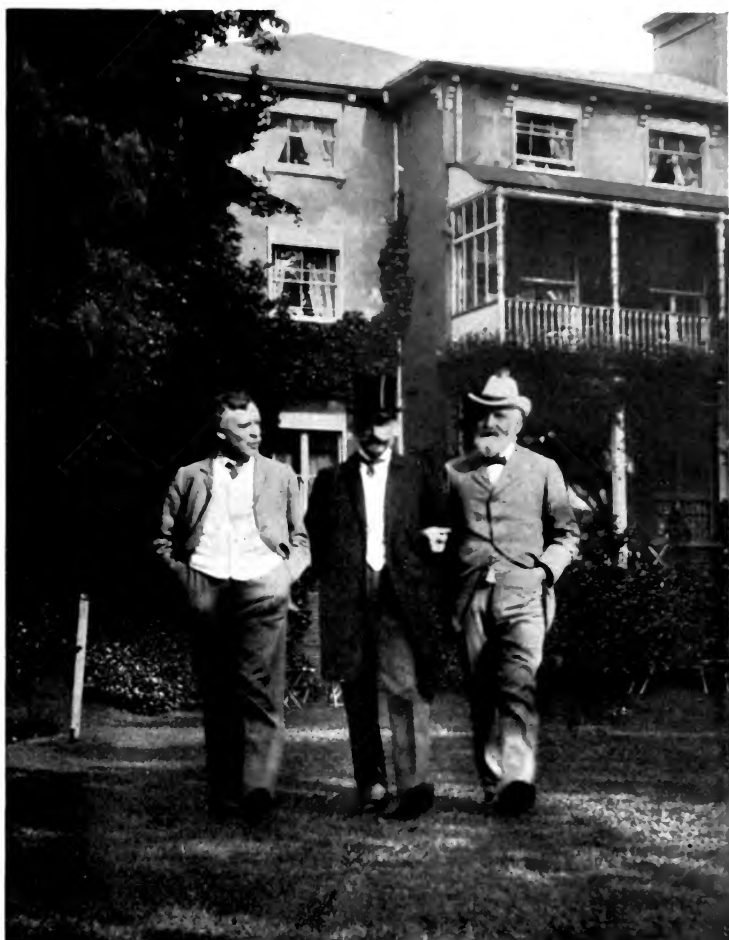
“To remove the latter objection, there has been established, at Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, London, a small library of books relating to the subjects, to which any person may become a subscriber by the payment of a guinea a year.”

The Bureau was formally opened on April 24th, 1909, with Mowbray House as its London Office, and Cambridge House, Wimbledon—a house surrounded by a beautiful garden—as its “Inner Sanctuary.” A gathering of many of the workers and sympathisers, chosen by Julia and my Father to undertake the great task that lay ahead, was held at Cambridge House, where a séance was held that they might commune with the workers on the Other Side. It was opened by an address by my Father, after which he read messages from Julia, Mr. Myers and others, including one from a “High Spirit” on the spirit in which the Bureau should be conducted, which is given here :—

“April 22nd, 1909.

“Message as to the spirit in which the Bureau should be conducted. An auto-message from a High Spirit.

“My dear disciples. What are you meeting to do?



IN THE GARDEN AT CAMBRIDGE HOUSE.



“To make manifest the invisible things of God to the senses of men. It is an undertaking which all men have desired from of old time. But their senses have been holden that they could not perceive. And their hearts have been hardened that they could not believe.

“Even now amongst you there are many who fear that you are attempting the impossible. But the only impossibility is your lack of faith, and your want of the atmosphere of love, which alone gives that peace and repose needed for the opening of the inner eye.

“You seek for visions which the saints have enjoyed. You can have them as they had, by living the life of the spirit, and cultivating the calm meditative mood.

“You begin by seeking to unite the hearts that have been torn asunder. But although you do well to begin there, it is but as the threshold to the Temple at whose portals you are groping. For the dead whom you seek are but as a few scattered units in the midst of the innumerable hosts of the spiritual beings. Angels and arch-angels and all the heavenly host with whom you may, and if you are faithful, you will, enter into communion. Yea, verily, there are no things hid which may not be revealed unto you. If so be you aspire with the aspiration of a God, and approach with the simple faith of a little child.”

After reading the messages, Father prayed for guidance, and this was followed by a few minutes of silent prayer.

Many were present through whom those across the Border could manifest—and many did; and for some time loving converse was held between the two worlds. Julia was the first to speak, and addressing Father, she said:—

“ My cup runneth over, my heart is so full of joy that again in an upper room disciples meet in His name, which is Love. Christ came with that message of old, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort those who mourn, and it is such service of joy, for in Him we live, move, and have our very being. It is such a thin veil that separates us from each other. At times it seems almost impossible that those who are in the body do not know that their loved ones have returned from over the Borderland, and when the knowledge came to me, that I could not make my bereaved friends hear and talk to me, a big desire was created that others should not pass through that same Gethsemane. . . .”

Many others gave loving messages of advice and encouragement. The afternoon meeting was followed by a dinner at night at the “ First Avenue Hotel,” followed by another “ Sitting” and more communion.

So the Bureau was formally opened, and when on the 25th of April the work began, all realised the responsibility which had been laid upon them—but they were strong in the knowledge that they would be guided and helped by the many unseen helpers on the Other Side,

Once more my Father knew without doubt, though often overwhelmed by his own unfitness for the task, that the "Sign" had been given, and it was for him to do his utmost to carry out the Senior Partner's bidding, and not to heed or fear the derision and scorn that were sure to follow the step he had taken.

Before the Bureau was established, Julia wrote the following message, which was published in her Letters, pointing out clearly the possibility of the abuses, and the uses which there would be in the working of such an institution.

"I am now going to give you what we think on this side is a word of advice which is much needed. You are very eager to make a Bridge, you say, between the two Worlds. And we are more so. But when you say this, do you realise what it implies? What the realisation would effect? I am more and more convinced that the establishment of the fact, and the certainty of communication between this world and yours, may be described without exaggeration as the most important thing in the whole range of the possible achievements of mortal man. There is nothing like it for the far-reaching influence which it will exercise over all things. For it will modify thought, and thought makes the world in which you live. No one can understand how true that is when he is still immersed in matter.

"My dearest friend, when you get the Bureau of Communication established, you will be overwhelmed with applications from both sides.

“ And you will find that there are multitudes who will ask for messages, but will receive none. You remember that I told you at the very beginning that I could either get you an answer, or tell you why no communication could be established. Now there are many on this side who have been trying to get into touch with those on your side, and they have failed. You have many on your side who will make the same attempt, and who will fail also. And so it will be. And so it ought to be. For there are many times when Death the Divider is the most necessary and the most useful agency that can be provided for the service of man. Nothing but evil would result if all the dead, as you call them, could haunt the living. The Other World, as you call it, would be too much for you.

“ *Then had we better not let it alone ?*

“ No ; I am quite sure that the Bureau could be a very great blessing. But it could also be a very great curse. When you have the dead hand—no, the phrase ‘ dead hand ’ is not right. But it would be wiser to say that there are multitudes of spirits whose removal from direct action upon the embodied living is much to be desired.

“ There are multitudes of souls to whom Death has been a great deliverance. I mean that it has taken away persons who have been harsh, cruel and despotic. Nay, it has sometimes been kinder in removing those who have been too kind, and whose care has dwarfed, whose love and tenderness have weakened, the growing life. These influences are to be deplored which

prevent the full development of the soul. The benefit of what you call death is that it leaves room for the remaining ones to develop. What you have to do is to grow strong and independent. What you have to avoid is being mere shadows or echoes, or, worse still, mere puppets of another will. Death has rescued many of the living from what would have ruined them. And if you open your Bureau, they will try to avoid being saved. Those who have learned to lean will lean on the disembodied spirit, whereas they ought to lean on themselves. Who will not trust his own soul has lost it. And who will not rely upon the voice of God in his own soul will seek for it in vain in the voices from beyond the Border.

“But there are many spirits but lately disembodied, whose communications, even though framed with care and inspired by love, would be mischievous and not helpful. Why, my dear friend, when you ask me for guidance, I often feel that I might be a great curse to you if I gave it you as you wish to have it. What I can do—all that I can do is to tell you how things seem to me, to remind you that while I often see more than you, you, who are living in conditions that do not prevail here, are in a better position to judge as to many things than I can be. Occasionally I am permitted to tell you things in advance for purposes of test and to give you assurance. But I should be nothing but a curse to you if I were to attempt to tell you what to do. It would be like a mother always carrying a child. It would never walk. Besides, I do

not know. You must not think me omniscient because I have not got my body—my old body.

“Oh, my friend, if you would but see and understand what is the purpose of life, you would understand how fatal it would be to allow any and every cry for direction and guidance and help to be answered. And there are many on this side who will, if the communication be opened, forget this and give advice and will attempt to direct those who consult them, and who will make sad trouble. For it is not for us to steer you. The object of life is to evoke, to develop the God within. And that is not to be evoked by allowing others to direct you. But you will find the purpose of the Father will not be allowed to be spoiled by the folly of His children, whether on this side or on that. Those spirits that attempt to interfere too much will be confounded. They will err, and be found out. Their authority will be destroyed. And so in the end things will come right again.

“A second class of persons to whom your Bureau will be mischievous is composed of those who are merely curious. Mere busybodies, with an inquisitive itch, will come to ask, from no deep longing for knowledge of the Other Side, from no real desire to communicate with the departed. They will throng your Bureau as they would go to a Dime Museum and put a penny in the slot to get some novelty. They will get no good. They are not serious. They merely come from motives of curiosity and a love of sensation. They will get no good. They may get harm.

“Thirdly, there are those, who are by no means so few in number, who will wish to perpetuate a sinful relationship. They will not admit this. But they will seek it earnestly, desperately, more often than you imagine. And it may be granted them. The alliance that had been severed by the grave may be resumed. Yes, this is possible and is done. There is a possibility of the resumption of relations which you believed had been severed for ever by death. There is danger here, and it is a danger against which you must be on your guard. Therefore, I say, do not think that the Bureau will be unmixed good! Much as I desire its establishment, I see that for many it will work almost unmixed evil.

“Men will find what they bring. And the majority of men will seek not good, but what they desire. Now, the desire of men is by no means always for that which is highest and best.

*“Then, do you think we had better drop the idea?”*

“My dear friend, what nonsense you talk! Do you propose to drop navigation because you hear of storms and rocks and quicksands? No! no! no! What is necessary is to recognise that the Borderland is (at least) as important to cross as the Atlantic, but that it is not any more safe. What you seem to forget is that the Bureau, with all its risks, will do what is the most important thing of all. It will practically abolish the conception of death which now prevails in the world. You have become mere materialists. We must break through the wall of matter

which is stifling your souls. And the Bureau will make a way for the light from beyond to shine through. That is enough to justify the facing of any risks such as I have described.

“Avoid as much as possible the three classes of whom I have written, and confine your attention and concentrate your efforts upon the verification of the continuity of existence, and the possibility of securing unmistakable communications from those who have passed the Borderland. Telephones, no doubt, may easily become a nuisance. And this Bureau of mine might be a nuisance. But just think what it implies. If you could secure the communication so as to prove that life continues, that love lasts, that the other world is in contact with this—is that not enough? If it were only that, and nothing more, it would be worth while. Only to restore the consciousness of the Invisible World and the reality of Eternal Love. Only!”

To minimise the risks and diminish the dangers attaching to this attempt to bridge the grave, Julia undertook the personal direction of the Bureau, and herself defined the rules and conditions which had to be observed by all those who wished to avail themselves of its advantages.

Every applicant to the Bureau had to sign the following form :—

#### APPLICATION FORM.

A.

No.....

I, ....., having done my best to study the subject of communications with the other world, hereby make application for the use of the Bureau in order to attempt

to enter into communication with ....., my....., late of....., who passed into the Spirit World on ..... This application is solely prompted by motives of affection, in the belief that, if it be permitted, the deceased would desire such an opening-up of communication as earnestly as does the applicant. I have read the pamphlet entitled "Julia's Bureau and Borderland Library," and also the first series of "Letters from Julia." With a full understanding of conditions, limitations, and dangers therein defined, I make this application, and I am willing to submit in all things to the decision of the Director of the Bureau conveyed to me by one or other of her amanuenses.

When this application was signed and sent in to the Bureau, it was submitted to the Director, who within two or three days, intimated whether in her judgment the case was one which was fit and proper to be taken in hand. If the Director rejected the application for any cause, or without specifying any cause, the applicant had to acquiesce in her decision

If at any subsequent stage it should have appeared that earthbound spirits or undesirable intelligences were endeavouring to obtrude themselves upon the applicant, the Director would at once arrest, in that case, the further prosecution of the attempt to establish communications with the Other Side. Submission, unquestioning and ungrudging submission, to the judgment of the Director was a *sine quâ non*.

Application Form A. was submitted (1) to a psychometrist, (2) to Julia's Secretary No. 1, and (3) to Julia's Secretary No. 2, all of whom acting independently, filled in separate forms which were then compared. If their contents agreed, which was almost always the case, the application was either

rejected or accepted. If, as very seldom happened, the automatists and the psychometrist differed as to how an application should be treated, appeal was made to Julia in Council, when her decision, received by a clairvoyant, was final.

When the decision of Julia was favourable, which it was in the majority of cases—although some were postponed—the applicant was informed of the fact.

He was then asked to fill in and sign the following Form H, which he then enclosed in a sealed envelope, and retained in his possession until the experiment was complete.

H.

No.....

To be enclosed in sealed envelope and retained by the applicant until he returns it with the annotated reports to the Bureau.

What would be Satisfactory Tests?

From.....

Address..... Register No.....

In submitting to the Bureau the case of ..... I would regard it as satisfactory evidence that I had been put in communication with my beloved one if the sensitives could give me any of the following particulars:—

1. Personal particulars.

(a) Name in full; (b) date of birth; (c) date of death; and (d) place of death.

2. Personal appearance of deceased. Specifying:—

(a) Approximate height; (b) apparent age; (c) general aspect; (d) colour of hair and eyes; (e) expression of features; (f) any peculiarity.

3. Description of death. Specifying:—

(a) Apparent cause of; (b) any scene at death; (c) any incidents or messages.

4. Reference to any of the following incidents in past life known to deceased and myself.

5. Giving (a) any pet name of deceased's or of my own, as for instance.....; (b) or the names of any

relatives or friends, *e.g.*, ..... ;  
 or (c) the names of any place, house, &c., known to us  
 both, *e.g.*, .....

6. Giving any message to me about affairs not known to the sensitive.
7. The use of any characteristic words, phrases, slang, nick-names, as for instance .....

If all or any of the above are obtained from the sensitives, I will be satisfied that, if telepathy be excluded, I have been put in communication with my dead.

If the sensitives were to give me a message containing information known to the deceased, but which was not in my possession, and which I subsequently verified as true, I should regard it as suggesting that in the other cases telepathy was not the explanation.

To further ascertain whether the telepathic hypothesis is to be relied upon, I undertake, as each sensitive is drawing to the close of the sitting, to try to impress as strongly as I can upon their mind the name of ..... who has no connection whatever with my beloved dead.

I sign this and will seal it before going to the sensitives, and undertake to forward the envelope with seal unbroken to the Bureau after annotating the reports of the sittings.

On receipt of Form D, signed by the applicant, the experiment began.

#### FORM D.

I hereby inform you that I have filled in Form H, and have enclosed it in a sealed envelope, affixing the seal on ....., 19.... When I have received and annotated the reports of the three sensitives, I will forward this envelope with seal unbroken to the Bureau, together with the annotated reports.

(Signed) .....

The documents being all in order, the action of the Bureau began.

Applicants living in or near London were asked to attend personally at the Bureau.

Applicants living abroad, or at a distance, were requested to send in some article that had been in personal contact with the friend or relative with whom they wished to come into communication—a scrap of handwriting, a lock of hair, an old glove—anything with which there had been contact. It was requested when possible to send three such small articles, so that each sensitive could deal with one not handled by the other.

The applicant in the first case met the psychic who was stationed at the office of the Bureau, with whom the first sitting took place. This psychic, being a member of the regular staff, was necessarily acquainted with the name of the applicant, and that of the person inquired after, and the date of the decease, as these particulars were entered in the Form A.

The applicant was then passed on to two other sensitives not sitting at the office, who were not informed either as to the name of the applicant or as to the person inquired after.

No payment whatever was allowed to be made to the medium or the stenographer by the sitter, and it was a strict rule that no complaint whatever was to be made if the medium failed altogether in obtaining any communication. No medium was employed who was not believed to be thoroughly honest. "Every sitter ought to be fully aware of the fact that the law governing communication between the two worlds is very complex and very delicate, and the medium is the last person who should be blamed should no communication be obtained."

At each sitting the applicant was accompanied

by a stenographer, who took down everything said at the three sittings. There was usually no substantial difference between the communications received by Sensitive No. 1 who knew the names in Form A., and those received by Sensitives No. 2 and No. 3 who knew absolutely nothing about the applicant.

In cases where the applicant could not attend in person, the article which had been in touch with the friend inquired after was taken to Sensitives 1, 2, and 3 in succession by a stenographer, who carefully recorded results.

Reports of each of the three sittings were then sent to the applicant with a request that the applicant would "(1) go through the three Reports carefully, line by line, stating exactly what is correct and what is not; (2) append to the report in each case his own impression as to how far the communications made by the medium could be explained by telepathy from the conscious mind or from the unconscious mind, or whether he suspects that the accurate information could have been conveyed to the mind of the medium by any other means; and (3) give his final impression as to whether or not he thinks he has been brought into communication with his loved one."

These Reports, the revised and the final impression, together with sealed envelope containing Form H, were then sent in to the Bureau, where the envelope would be opened and its contents compared with the results obtained from the three mediums.

These annotated reports were carefully filed in the archives. The Bureau reserved to itself the

right to publish these reports either in full or in extract, so long as the names and addresses of the persons concerned were omitted, unless special permission was given by the applicant for the publication of all particulars.

Unfortunately it was here that some of the applicants did not carry out their part of the arrangement. Although professing themselves to be absolutely certain that beyond a doubt they had been brought into communication with friends and loved ones on the Other Side, many did not consider it necessary to go through the three Reports carefully and give the final impression as requested. So, although a certain number did do so, the archives do not contain as many annotated reports as they ought to do, had those who had benefited carried out their part of the arrangement.

All applicants to the Bureau were requested to read the following at least twice—once on first reading the instructions, and again after their application had been approved and they were ready for sittings.

“No cause frustrates the purpose of the Bureau so much as an unsympathetic, querulous or carping attitude, on the part of the sitter, towards the sensitive during the sitting. If the bereaved are not willing to treat the sensitive with courtesy, consideration and respect, they had much better make no application to Julia’s Bureau.

“Consider for a moment what it is that constitutes a medium. It is the fact that he or she is more sensitive than ordinary mortals. They are higher in the scale of evolution than the

rest of their fellows. They have developed a sixth sense. Just as an open eye is liable to suffer agony and injury from a speck of dust, while an eye that is closed never feels a sand-storm that falls upon its lids, so that rare creature, a fully-developed psychic, winces under an unsympathetic word, look, or even thought. Some sitters will never get good results because their acrid, censorious, exacting spirit destroys the conditions which render it possible for the medium to see, to hear, or to be controlled. You might as well expect to get a good photograph with a long exposure, when the sitter was fidgeting and talking, as to get good results from a sitting when you are not passive, receptive and sympathetic. Mediums are not merely allowed by the rules of the Bureau, but are under the positive orders of Julia, to terminate any sitting at any moment without assigning any reason if to their finer perception the sitter gives way to a harsh, supercilious, carping, censorious spirit. This is not meant to depreciate the freest possible criticism or analysis of the results obtained *after they are secured*, but you might as well expect an astronomer to make a difficult observation of a distant star when you are shaking his telescope, as to expect good results unless you supply the medium with the necessary conditions of quiet restfulness, sympathy and passivity. Answer any questions asked simply and directly. Do not volunteer any information, but give it when asked for—the fact that it was asked for will be noted by the stenographer.

“In a word, treat the medium as if you and

he were gentlemen or ladies, as the case may be, who have met for the purpose of helping each other to achieve one of the greatest of all aims—the bridging of the River of Death.

“When the Bureau is further developed, it is Julia’s desire that a small chapel in the office should be set apart in which every applicant should spend ten minutes in solitary premeditation and prayer before taking a sitting. This practice of the presence of the departed may be pursued with advantage without the chapel, by spending the time in quiet thought.

“Remember that in most cases the failure to communicate is due more to the faults of the sitter than the incapacity of the medium.

“There is another class of sitters who hinder the success they desire, not so much by influencing the medium, as by placing obstacles in the way of the return of their loved ones. Excessive grief, especially when accompanied by feelings of resentment or despair, seems to build up between the bereaved and their beloved an impervious curtain of cold grey mist, through which it is in vain to try to open communications.”

In the first four months there were 150 cases undertaken by the Bureau, and there was only one single case in which Julia’s decisions, taken automatically, were not in entire accord. In the solitary exception Julia’s explanation was clear and satisfactory. One of the Secretaries had tried to take her decision when pressed for time, in circumstances not conducive to passivity and

detachment. When the decision was asked for a second time under the conditions laid down by Julia the apparent difference disappeared.

After the Bureau had been established three months Father wrote :—

“The result of three months' experience has been to confirm my conviction that it is perfectly possible to establish communications with those who sincerely love, even although they are divided by the grave, excepting under certain circumstances, in which it was inadvisable that such communication should be effected.”

In all, over 600 persons received help and consolation during the three years of the Bureau's activity, and were confident that they had been brought into communication with their loved ones who had passed on before. Many cases of despair and sorrow are recorded as having, by means of the Bureau, found comfort and joy, in the realisation that those they mourned were in very deed not dead but living, and longing to communicate with those they had left behind. The telepathic test invariably failed; not one of the cases succeeded in impressing the test word on the sensitive.

The cost of maintaining the Bureau fell entirely upon my Father, and although he dedicated the £1,000 earned by his “Special Correspondence” to the work, the cost was considerably over £1,000 for the first year. As every case entailed an out-of-pocket expenditure of £2 2s. 0d. over and above the outlay on offices, it was nearer £2,000.

The subscriptions to the Borderland Library,

which some appear to have confused with payment for the use of the Bureau, were more than absorbed by rent of room, payment of attendant, and purchase of books, periodicals, and stationery.

It might seem, therefore, that an obvious method of meeting the expenditure would have been the simple expedient of asking each applicant to pay the two guineas which had to be paid out of pocket by the Bureau if his application was entertained.

But Julia absolutely forbade this. She said that the need for consolation afforded by the Bureau was not confined to those who could afford to pay for it, and that every application must be dealt with on its merits without any reference to the question whether or not the applicant could afford to pay.

How, then, was such a Bureau to be financed? A minimum of three cases a day would involve an outlay of nearly £2,000 a year, and there were sometimes more than three cases a day. To this Julia's answer was that we must walk by faith, nothing doubting; that "we must not charge applicants any fee for the services of the Bureau, but that after their application had been dealt with those who had benefited by the Bureau were allowed, if they so please, of their own free will, to contribute either two guineas to defray the cost of another case or any multiple of two guineas as a thank-offering to her Bureau."

Four months after the Bureau started Father wrote :—

"I confess that this reliance for the financing of the Bureau upon gratitude for services ren-

dered seems to most persons on the earth plane somewhat unbusinesslike. So far the results have hardly justified the splendid confidence of Julia. But I am going on relying upon her assurance that the necessary funds will not fail to be provided when they are needed."

However, extra funds were not forthcoming, and after the first year Mowbray House had to be given up, and the whole of the work was carried on from Cambridge House.

Later on it was found impossible to give more than one sitting to each applicant, though, if this one sitting failed of results, a second was arranged with another medium.

An attempt was made to expose Julia's Bureau, shortly after its foundation, by a well-known weekly. It was a dismal failure. The representatives of the paper—although they came in the guise of authentic applicants wishing to be put into communion with their "loved ones"—never got beyond the threshold of the Bureau, so vigilant were the workers on both sides. They were refused a sitting, but given at their request a list of mediums—to two of whom they went, the Bureau having nothing whatever to do with the visits. They based the alleged "Exposure" on the results obtained with these mediums—and even then had to admit that some of the evidence they had received was difficult to explain, and considering the "conditions" these gentlemen must have gathered round them, it was to be wondered at that they received anything at all.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE MORNING CIRCLE

“O God who art the Father of all the spirits who inhabit Thy Universe of Love, we come to Thee this morning as obedient children, to be taught our duty and receive strength faithborn to do it. Almighty, Whose name and nature is Love, enable us each to be living temples of Love—Love to Thee, Love to each other, and Love to all the spirits that live in Thy whole Universe. Allow us the liberty of children with a Father and enable us to have wisdom and power to make manifest to the children of men the reality and the glory of the love which has triumphed over Death, and enabled us to bridge the grave for all who love. These things we ask in the name and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, our risen Saviour. Amen.”

Prayer written by Julia for use at the morning circle.

ONE of the most interesting features of the Bureau was undoubtedly the Morning Circle, when the staff met for communion with the helpers across the Border, and to ask for guidance and help during the day. A chair was always placed for Julia at the head of the table. Each member in turn had to take the service—choose the reading and prayer, Julia generally selecting the hymn. It was in reply to a query as to the opening prayer, that Julia

wrote the prayer quoted above, through Father's hand with the following preface :—

“I have no more authority to prescribe your prayers than anyone else. I only supply a framework that may be used either with, or alternately with, the Lord's Prayer, by anyone who feels a difficulty in addressing our Father in his or her own terms. Alter or vary as you please. I only put down the heads of what we on this side regard as objects to be sought for.

“JULIA A. AMES.”

The Morning Circle gradually grew to be a great meeting-ground for many who had thrown off the physical body and passed onward, to come and communicate with those still on the earth plane. Many were the religious discussions with, and communications from, those who had filled high places in the Churches of the world, as well as exciting political discussions with those who had held prominent office in Parliament and State. People of all nationalities—stretching far back into the ages—came to that upper chamber, and all testified to the continuance of life and work after passing through the veil, and gave impressions—coming back to physical conditions, it appears to be impossible to do more—of what that life and work really is. The accounts of these communications and discussions, suggest such a sense of reality and sincerity that it is hard to put the communicators aside as impersonators, gulling the credibility of those to whom they came. Still, when one pauses to think

what it is one is really reading, it seems incredible, and we can but say—"Time will prove."

Still, again, if it be true that communication is possible and an established fact, surely it is those who possessed the greatest minds, and who were ever in the van here, who would be the first, if they realised communication to be possible, to use such a means as that afforded in the quiet room at Julia's Bureau.

When Mowbray House was given up it was impossible to hold the Morning Circle as before, and it gave place to the Wednesday Circle—Julia's Circle it was always called—held every Wednesday evening at Cambridge House, and conducted in exactly the same manner as the Morning Circle.

This circle continued to meet till my Father's death, and was kept together, and met intermittently, during the summer following—places always being reserved for Julia and the "Chief," who had joined her now in the work beyond the veil.

Some of the messages received at the Morning Circle seemed to Father so convincing that he was tempted to publish them, giving the sources from whence they came, and the name of the spirit supposed to be communicating. It was like setting a match to gunpowder—scorn and laughter and derision met him at every turn—the papers declared that there was no proof in the alleged messages—they were not in the style of the person supposed to be communicating, or if they were in

the style, then the medium through which the message had been communicated had been priming himself, or herself, beforehand, etc., etc. ; anything rather than allow that there might be even an infinitesimal amount of truth in the possibility of communion with the *dead*.

“ Whatever can be known of earth we know,”  
Sneered Europe’s wise men in their snail-shells curled.  
“ No ! ” said one man in Genoa, and that “ No ”  
Out of the dark created this new world.—LOWELL.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE SULTAN. PROPOSED ARBITRATION CAMPAIGN

“I am unspeakably grateful to God for having employed me in this work.”—W. T. STEAD. (Extract from a private letter.)

It was Father's agitation *against* Turkey during the Bulgarian Atrocities, which *made him*, as he expressed it, in 1876. In 1911, as the end drew near, it was again Turkey—but it was *for* Turkey, not *against* her, he agitated in what proved to be his last campaign.

Three years after the Young Turks came into power; when they had falsified almost every hope which the promulgation of their Constitution had awakened, there came the prospect of the Conference of Salonica. My Father realising the opportunity which the Conference would give the Young Turks to justify those hopes, knew, as he had known many times before, when special work lay ahead, that it was his duty to go to the Near East. His first project was to visit the Balkans, so as to study the problem from all points of view, but finding it was impossible for him to be away for long, he reluctantly limited his visit to Turkey, and in July, 1911, he left England for Constantinople.

During his visit he met and consulted with



IN CONSTANTINOPLE, 1911.



Turks, Armenians, Bulgarians, and Greeks, seeking to gather information that he might know how matters stood.

Everywhere he preached the gospel of "Union." He wrote:—

"If only people would help each other to achieve the objects on which they are agreed, instead of squabbling over the fractional points of difference, the millennium would be near at hand. The principles of the Civic Church, the union of all who love in the service of all who suffer, the co-operation of all for the realisation of common ideals—these I have been preaching here in these last few days, in quarters where I was certainly not preaching to the converted. The Christians of Turkey almost equal the Turks in number—there are eight millions of each. In education they are vastly superior. But the Turks are a unit, whereas the Christians are split into four sections—Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian, and Catholic. The Turks, moreover, have behind them another eight millions of Arabs, Albanians, and Koordish Moslems. The Christians, therefore, are only one-third of the population. But instead of having one-third of the members of Parliament they have hardly one-seventh. Nor is that all. Owing to their intestine strife the Turks have always been able to play off one section against the other, favouring one in order to be more free to oppress the other. The present Turkish Government has—fortunately or unfortunately, according to your standpoint—adopted so comprehensive and uniform a policy of attack on the privileges of all

the Christians as to drive them, almost for the first time in recent years, into an attempt at what may be described as co-operative self-defence. A joint committee, representing Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, and Catholics, has been appointed by the Greek Patriarch, the Exarch of the Bulgarians, and the Acting Patriarch of the Armenians, for the purpose of stating their grievances, and for promoting the interests of the Christians of the East. I had the pleasure of assisting at a meeting of this Committee when a general plan of electoral operations was agreed upon. If only Christendom, as represented by the Concert, and by the Churches, would pull together, the Turks would find it much more easy to do right than they do to-day."

He had an interview with the Sultan and talked with him for a full half-hour. He felt he had a message to deliver, and he spoke to him, as he wrote in a letter at the time, "as if I were a prophet or disciple. I had an open door, thank God! and I made use of it to the uttermost of the power that was given me."

The following is taken from his own account of the interview which he wrote for the *Review* at the time:—

The Sultan being unable to speak any language but Turkish, the Court Chamberlain, Sir Loufti, Bay offered to act as interpreter. Father gladly accepted his offer.

"An officer in khaki uniform conducted me to the door of the Sultan, to whom I was at

once presented by Sir Loufti. His Majesty advanced a step or two to meet me, shook hands, and motioned me to a chair. As he resumed his own, I scrutinised him with interest and curiosity. The Sultan is a man somewhat below the middle height, somewhat past the prime of life, slightly stout in body, and somewhat slow in his movements and in his speech. He was older than any Sovereign I had previously met, and with a less mobile countenance. He wore the inevitable red fez—an institution with which not even the Parliament dares to intermeddle—and beneath his grey eyebrows his eyes blinked with a somewhat vacuous expression. He wore a moustache, and his beard was trimmed short. He did not strike me as being a nervous man, neither did he give me the impression either of an alert mind or of resolute will. A somewhat dull, colourless face, with a curious suggestion in it of the old Land Leaguer, Matt Harris of Ballinasloe. It seemed to me that he had the somewhat shy reserve of a prisoner not yet fully accustomed to liberty ; a man, I should say, naturally of a kindly disposition, but of somewhat confused mind, who has not yet got his bearings, or felt his footing firm enough to show his own leanings. But I did not feel quite sure that there was not in him something more than appears on the surface, and that if his life be spared his Ministers may not find that he has a will of his own. There is a good deal of dogged obstinacy behind that apparent timidity. It is not the timidity of

temperament. It is only the timidity of a landman who has not got his sea legs.

“As I looked at him I could not help feeling a certain sense of responsibility and even of awe. For whatever might be the value or the valuelessness of the human integer, I could not forget that the man before me represented one of the few factors that count in the ordering of the future of the Near East. After deducting 90 per cent. from the nonsense that is talked about the Caliphate, there still remains sufficient residuum to make him far more than an ordinary Sovereign. Before I left England I felt that the Constitutional Party had made a great mistake in belittling the importance of the Sultan. In his name alone can they rule, and it is the worst of bad policies to discredit the position of the Sovereign. It is so in Great Britain. It is doubly so in the East, where the personality of the Padishah counts for much more than in the West.

“It was clear to me from the outset that the Sultan had nothing particular to say to me. He had received me as a matter of courtesy at the request of the Grand Vizier, and if he had any thought at all about the audience, it was probably one of mild curiosity as to what kind of creature I might be, and why in the world I should come to see him. But this, although it did not promise well for an interview such as is common when a Sovereign or his Ministers seek to obtain expression of their views through the columns of a newspaper, left

me all the freer field in which to deliver my message. For I have never sought an audience with any ruler of mankind from any motive of idle curiosity or of professional ambition. I have never undertaken to spare time which I did not intend to use to the best of my ability in saying what I thought it would be useful for them to hear.

“In the present case it seemed to me before I left London that if I got a chance, I ought to use it to impress upon the Sultan two ideas—first, the splendour and glory of the position of a Constitutional monarch if he relies upon influence rather than on authority; and, secondly, the absolute impossibility of keeping an Empire together excepting by a system of decentralisation, of which Great Britain affords the most advanced type. The universal enthusiasm with which the Coronation had been celebrated in my own country, and the remarkable evolution of decentralised Imperialism recorded at the recent Imperial Conference, seemed to afford me apt texts on which to discourse during my sojourn in Turkey.

“It might seem a little mad to dream of delivering such a message to such a man, but it was none the worse on that account. The Turks do not despise madmen, but say that they are men to whom Allah has spoken. Anyhow, I had no doubt whatever as to my duty, if I got a chance, or how I should use it.

“‘Son of man,’ so came the word of the Lord

to the Hebrew seer, 'I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word of My mouth and give them warning from Me'—a command that was coupled with the emphatic declaration that if the message were not delivered, 'their blood will I require at thine hand.' If the warning were unheeded the doom might fall, but 'thou hast delivered thy soul.'

"It may sound presumptuous to those not brought up as I was, on the words of the Old Book, to appropriate to myself the mandate given two thousand years ago to the Prophet of Israel. But after all, truth is truth, and if you are dead certain that you are right, and see dangers to which your fellow-man is blind, it is surely your duty, under penalty of being responsible for your silence, to warn him of his peril.

"Anyhow, I felt if I were allowed a chance I should regard it as a 'Thus saith the Lord,' and that I would spare no effort to deliver my message as faithfully as I could. Whether it was heeded or whether it was disregarded did not lie in my hands. I would at least deliver my own soul.

"My interview with the Sultan was much more the delivery of a message to His Majesty than any catechising of the Sovereign for information or as to opinion.

"The conversation began with a few pleasant words of compliment from the Sultan, in which it was not difficult to detect the skilful hand of Sir Loufti, who had long been a reader of the *Review of Reviews*.

“ I replied by expressing my sense of the high honour conferred upon me by being admitted to the presence of His Majesty. He bowed slightly. I went on, ‘ May I take the liberty of expressing to your Majesty my profound sympathy with the unfortunate victims of the terrible conflagration which has devastated Stamboul ? ’

“ ‘ I thank you,’ he replied.

“ ‘ I have telegraphed to America an account of the sufferings of thousands who have been rendered homeless, and have urged the American people to raise subscriptions for the poor sufferers.’

“ ‘ The Sultan’s eyes gleamed for a little. Then he spoke slowly, ‘ I thank you for your expression of sympathy. Such sentiments not only do you honour, but they show that despite all differences, humanity is one.’

“ ‘ He paused. I asked Sir Loufti, ‘ May I speak freely ? ’

“ ‘ ‘ Certainly,’ said the Chamberlain. ‘ His Majesty desires it.’

“ ‘ Here, then, was the open door and the wished-for opportunity. ‘ I wish to congratulate His Majesty upon being the first of the line of Constitutional sovereigns in Turkey ; to be followed, I hope, by a long line of monarchs who will excel in glory the greatest of their predecessors.’

“ ‘ Again a pause. The Sultan brought his fingers together across his breast, and answered, ‘ I thank you for your good wishes. I have always desired the establishment of the Con-

stitution in Turkey, and now that it is established I shall maintain the Constitution.'

"It was evident that those who told me the Sultan would not talk were misinformed. He was not eager to speak. He always paused a little before he framed his sentences. But he answered in a way that showed he was listening attentively, and was sometimes reflecting shrewdly.

"From this point the conversation went on freely. The opportunity given me of speaking freely was one which I took advantage of to the uttermost. I confess I was more than once in doubt as to whether I had not ventured too far, and begged Sir Loufti to abstain from translating anything if he thought that it might give offence. Sir Loufti invariably replied that there need be no cause for apprehension. The Sultan wished to hear, and I could say what I liked. And I did.

"It would not be right to publish a faithful transcript of a conversation so intimate, which, among other subjects touched upon, dealt with the functions of Constitutional Sovereigns in the modern State, the advantages of their position as compared with that of autocrats, the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility, and the danger of confounding the person of the monarch with the policy of his advisers.

"It was to me an interesting, and to the Sultan an unprecedented, experience to hear the most advanced doctrines of proper Imperialism discussed in the Dolma Bagtche

Palace. That true loyalty to His Majesty might sometimes be best shown by offering a resolute opposition to evil advisers who might at times surround his throne was obviously to him something of a paradox.

“Not less interesting was the discussion as to the best way of treating disaffection. The South African Union on one side and the Albanian rising on the other came in as apt illustrations. The Sultan deplored the censures pronounced upon his troops and his generals in the English Press. I said that in future we should have a double reason for censuring atrocities, for not only were they bad in themselves, but I now knew from His Majesty’s own lips that they were direct acts of disobedience to his commands. I assured him that I should deal as faithfully with all Turkish generals as I had done with British commanders, no more and no less.

“Then we discussed Turkey’s relations with England, Germany, and Russia. Here we were on safer ground than in discussing atrocity campaigns. The Sultan exclaimed with some vehemence, after hearing what I said about Germany, ‘Now I see that you are a man of a good conscience.’ The doctrine of alliances brought up the analogy of polygamy, and the wittiest thing the Sultan said was, that it was usual in a harem to have a favourite wife, but in international affairs he tried to treat all Powers with equality.

“The conversation, which lasted more than an hour, did not come to a close before I had a full

opportunity of bearing strong testimony to the fatal and suicidal policy of attempting to govern Turkey on principles of centralisation and Ottomanisation, which, if applied to the British or German Empires, would split them to pieces in six weeks. The Sultan repudiated emphatically any desire to pursue such a policy, which, as I said on leaving, showed once more how much wiser he was than some of his Ministers. We shook hands and parted. It was a somewhat pathetic figure of a man which I looked upon as I backed out of the Imperial presence. He was, I think, somewhat bewildered, but certainly interested. I had not bored him, which is always the first thing to be dreaded when saying things. I had occasionally amused him, and possibly I had succeeded in conveying to a mind, not quickly receptive, some dim inkling of what I was driving at. 'I thank you,' he said as we parted. 'I thank you very much for all you have said to me. I hope that I shall profit by your words.'

"Sir Loufti took me back to his room, where we had a lively discussion about the Sultan and the interview. 'He is such an intelligent man,' said the Chamberlain, 'he is so much interested in all the things you said.' I expressed satisfaction, not unmixed with surprise, for I had certainly 'said things.' 'The Sultan has never had such a conversation before with anyone in his life,' said Sir Loufti.

"He told me many things about the Sultan's kind heart, of his ready sympathy with distress.

He was much upset by the fire in Stamboul; he had ordered that there should be no music in the palace for three days, and had subscribed £2,500 to the relief fund. During his tour in the provinces he delighted to gather the children of various nationalities around him and stand in their midst like a father. 'Indeed,' said the enthusiastic Chamberlain, 'His Majesty is the real father of his people.'

" 'I am delighted to hear it,' I replied, 'and most happy to believe it. But then, you know, we so often heard just the same thing about Abdul Hamid.'

" 'Oh, but that is quite a different man!' exclaimed Sir Loufti. Which is true."

On his return from Constantinople Father published a pamphlet entitled "The Sultan and His Policy," in which he set forth his reasons for the hopes that animated him and the facts on which they were based. This pamphlet was translated into French, and appeared in the Turkish, Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian, and other journals, thus covering almost every language spoken in the Balkan States.

"I went to Constantinople," he wrote, "in a somewhat despondent mood. I returned with a hope, not exultant, but firmly based, that the Ottoman Empire may not only pull through the present crisis, but even enjoy a new lease of life, not to the detriment but to the immense benefit of its neighbours . . . . I adhere to my deliberate conviction that at the present moment

the Sultan is the man of the situation, and that the hope of the immediate future lies in the opportunity, which skilful and courageous Ministers may afford him, of carrying out the policy which he believes to be the best for the maintenance and the preservation of the Ottoman Empire . . . . It is to be hoped that the Salonica Congress will adopt the enlightened policy of the present Sultan, and resolutely refuse to be tempted to resort to Hamidian methods to secure an unattainable ideal of uniformity."

Scarcely had he returned to England before Italy issued her ultimatum and the Turks were plunged into war in Tripoli. He at once proceeded to do all he could to start an agitation all over Britain to force the conflicting parties to appeal to arbitration.

A private meeting was held at 4, Prince of Wales' Terrace, at the invitation of Mr. J. E. Milholland, at which the following resolution was passed :—

"That this meeting composed of members of the leading peace and arbitration societies, representatives of organised labour and women's societies, decides to send delegates to Rome and Constantinople to represent to the Governments of the warring Powers their obligations and opportunities under The Hague Convention, and to make a final appeal to each of them to refer the merits of their dispute to arbitration ; and, further, that this meeting nominates one of its number to proceed to Rome and

Mr. W. T. Stead to proceed to Constantinople to fulfil this mission."

A few days after this, Father started for Constantinople, and on his arrival found himself everywhere a *personâ grata*, looked to on all sides for help and counsel. "Everything," he wrote, "goes like clockwork."

He preached the policy of arbitration as opposed to that of mediation. Referring to the question as to whether or no the Turks would appeal to arbitration, he wrote: "If they refuse I come home at once, but I don't think they will refuse, I was not sent here for nothing."

When mediation failed and Italy refused to arbitrate, he organised a great Arbitration Campaign. He wrote:

"CONSTANTINOPLE, Oct. 27th, 1911.

"I have succeeded beyond my utmost hopes. A fortnight ago arbitration was never mentioned; to-day it is universally demanded. The Grand Vizier, speaking for the Sultan and the Cabinet, gives his public endorsement to the arbitration campaign that is now about to be undertaken throughout Europe. The Turks are not satisfied with merely appealing to The Hague Tribunal, which is rendered powerless by Italy's refusal to arbitrate; they demand the creation of a permanent High Court with obligatory arbitration. They offer to submit the whole dispute to such a High Court, and this week the most influential deputation ever dispatched abroad by Turkey will begin its pilgrimage of propaganda and appeal for obligatory arbitration through Europe.

“The initiative has been left to the Turkish Inter-Parliamentary group because the Government is hampered by the negotiations for mediation, but the Government warmly support the action that has been taken. The deputation, selected by the Parliamentary Group, consists of six Senators and Deputies, representing the Turks, Arabs, Syrians, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews of the Empire. Its president is Prince Ferid Pasha, the Sultan’s brother-in-law; the deputation contains members of all the parties. Boustani Effendi, Deputy for Beyrout, Talaat Bey (former Minister of the Interior) or Djahid Bey (editor of the *Tanin*), Mavrocordato Effendi (former Minister of Agriculture), and Nouradoughian Effendi (formerly Minister of Public Works), and the other members will probably start on Saturday for Bucharest, where they will add to their number a Roumanian Deputy. Thence they proceed to Budapesth, and there will add Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Servian Deputies; thence to Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Christiania, Copenhagen, The Hague, Brussels, Berne, Paris, and London. The deputation will then number twenty, representing fifteen States in all, and making a demonstration all along the route in favour of obligatory arbitration.

“The scheme has already been assured of the approval of Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, and has been promised by the Ambassadors a warm welcome in Germany, Russia, and England. The journey will last over thirty days. The effect will be cumulative; every-

where an appeal will be made to the peoples.

“The draft manifesto of the Turkish deputation is still under discussion. It begins:—

“Like a brigand from the mountains, the Italian Government, in time of profound peace, has suddenly swooped down upon our country and is trying to make Tripoli her captive. It is our turn to-day; it may be yours to-morrow. We do not ask you to support our cause against the cause of Italy; still less do we ask to act as judges in our own cause. We ask for peace, for a cessation of hostilities; and, above all, we ask that the whole dispute may be at once referred to impartial arbitration.”

My Father wrote in a private letter at the time, “Even if the Turks fail to carry out the great scheme, I am unspeakably grateful to God for having employed me in this work.”

The Sheikh-ul-Islam agreed to his preaching in the great Mosque of St. Sophia—where never Christian has been permitted to speak since the conquest of Constantinople—a holy war against all who make war, without first offering arbitration, but the idea had to be abandoned as too dangerous.

He had a second interview with the Sultan, which he said was one of the most remarkable interviews of his life. He made the Sultan laugh heartily for the first time since the outbreak of the war. The Sultan promised £1,000 towards the £20,000 necessary for the Campaign, and wished Father to accept a present, which, however, Father refused to do.

The Sultan later presented him with a gold cigarette case with his (the Sultan's) name picked out in diamonds and rubies. This my Father only accepted on condition that he might be allowed to present his Majesty with a present in return. This present took the form of a fountain pen with which he requested the Sultan to sign the Arbitration Treaties; treaties which faithlessness to peace principles prevented ever being drafted.

The same day on which he saw the Sultan he was entertained at a banquet by Damad Ferid Pasha, the Sultan's brother-in-law, to which the Committee of the Interparliamentary Union were invited to meet him.

The £20,000 was promised and everything seemed to indicate that without doubt the pilgrimage would be undertaken. When he himself, owing to lack of private funds, had reluctantly to return to England; for he always made it a firm rule never to accept money in return for his peace work. Hence he could not accept the money so kindly offered to him by the Turks.

Without his presence amongst them to inspire and urge them onward, first one excuse and then another was brought forward to postpone the date of starting, till finally the pilgrimage was given up altogether.

Thus ended what would have been one of the greatest demonstrations in favour of Arbitration ever known, and in his last effort on behalf of one of his greatest ideals my Father was doomed to disappointment.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### HIS COMING TRANSITION

"I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."—  
St. John. chap. 17.

DID he, as April, 1912, drew near have any intimation or warning of his coming transition? Many have asked that question. The answer comes without a moment's hesitation, "Yes"—but also without hesitation we may truly say he himself did not realise what was the import of these messages and signs. He realised that there was a great *spiritual awakening* before him, and that the troubles and anxieties, and the strain of overwork, at times almost overwhelming to him, were to be removed, and he was to go forward refreshed and invigorated to the great work ahead.

He never had any direct *signpost* as to what that work was to be. He felt at times it was to be a great campaign right through America—lecturing and writing for peace and spiritualism—but this was only conjecture, as, he said, he had "nothing to go on." He felt he would live to be

very old, for he knew so much work lay ahead—the work did lie ahead, but the Senior Partner had other plans and places; the knowledge of where and how was not vouchsafed to His disciple's conscious mind.

I say "conscious mind," because subconsciously he undoubtedly knew.

During the winter months he was constantly receiving messages bidding him "put his house in order." Now was the time; for the work that lay ahead would take him far afield. So he put his house in order—arranged things in office and home, often speaking of how he wished things carried on, if he should be away any length of time. He went through many of his papers, sorting, tidying, arranging and labelling, and in many ways seemed to be settling matters for what might be an absence of some months.

Some psychics have since claimed, one in particular, that he gave him definite warning of coming death. This psychic may have seen it in his hand and may have told his own friends—about that I am not in a position to speak. But that he did not give my Father any definite warning I do know, indeed, prophesied things to happen in three years' time. Father went to see him twice. Once I was with him and took notes, the other time a friend took notes. Both sittings were very indefinite, and the conditions appeared to be so mixed that nothing tangible was given—he did get gloom and disaster. So much so that when I told Father I had written out the notes carefully,

he said, "Why did you trouble to do that? It was all such a jumble and so intangible and gloomy that it seems to me you have wasted your time. Mr. — is, I believe, a good psychic, but as yet very undeveloped." That in speaking at a trumpet séance<sup>1</sup> after his passing, Father thanked this psychic for his warnings I think is easily explicable; (1) to get his message through he had to make part use of the psychic's brains, and *he* had convinced himself he had warned my Father. (2) Very possibly, behind all the jumble of intangible phrases there was some warning, the key to which

<sup>1</sup> For those who do not understand the meaning of "Trumpet Séance" or "Trumpet Medium," it may be well to explain that at these séances an aluminium conical tube about 2 ft. 6 in. in length, open at both ends, the aperture at the smaller end is about 1 in. in diameter and at the larger 4 to 6 inches in diameter, is placed on the floor near the sitters. This tube appears to concentrate force and to enable those on the other side to speak with the direct voice. It has something the same effect as speaking on the long distance telephone. The medium possessing the subtle power necessary to carry out this means of communication, was, in this case, Mrs. Wreidt of America, the well-known Trumpet Medium. She visited Julia's Bureau during Father's lifetime and was to have returned with him from America to pay her second visit. Alas, she had to come alone, and it is to her I am indebted for many talks with my Father since his passing, and it was through her presence in the room, that he was able to speak the words with which I end this book.

During the séances Mrs. Wreidt appears as normal as any of the sitters—there is no state of trance. Often she will be talking with the sitters whilst spirit voices are speaking through the trumpet. These séances are usually held in the dark. Good results have been obtained in the light also, but the voices are never so strong, and it is necessary, when sitting in the light, for the sitter to hold the trumpet to his ear.

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may have been made plain to my Father—as many of the messages have been made plain to us—since his passing.

That he felt there was to be a severance and a parting, that this part of his life work was finished, and he was to take up other work, is certain. How much he realised this consciously is difficult to say, but he did many things which showed that a change was coming. At the last Julia Circle, before he left on April 3rd—very few of the members were present—but a few gathered and places were left for the absent who were with them in thought. A sense of sadness and parting was over the Circle as it met with the “Chief” for the last time before he sailed to the other world across the Atlantic. Also a sense of exultation at the thought of the work that lay ahead, and a feeling of comfort that he was to get a few days’ well earned rest and benefit amongst the sea breezes.

The “Chief” (as my Father was always called by the members of Julia’s Circle) took the service and chose for the Bible Reading the seventeenth chapter of St. John, in which Christ, feeling the hour draw nigh when He must leave the World, prays God to glorify Him, to preserve His apostles, and to glorify them, and all other believers with Him in Heaven.

The hymn, too, told of parting and farewell, for Julia expressed the wish it should be Harriet Auber’s “Our Blest Redeemer,” and wrote the following message :—

<sup>1</sup> “April 3rd, 1912. It is a solemn thought that after to-night my beloved circle may not meet in its entirety for some time. But hold the meeting weekly, in all faith and confidence, and in good time the joy of re-union will more than atone for the pain of separation. Much that is of great importance will take place before then. I particularly wish dear William to preside at the service to-night. Sing ‘Our Blest Redeemer. God’s blessing on you all, and a good journey to my beloved comrade.

“JULIA A. AMES.”

On the following Sunday—Easter Sunday—Julia wrote as follows :—

“My dear William will find that the ostensible object of his journey is but the pivot on which the real and greater issue turns.

“JULIA A. AMES.”

On the same day he received the following message from a high spirit called “Hilarion,” from whom he had received many messages during the past :—

“Let me say to my dear friend and helper, who goes forth so soon across the sea, that what has been conveyed to him as to the greatness of his coming mission is but the merest faint foreshadowing of the distant truth. In each age, new aspects of truth are revealed to mankind. But only the chosen few can discern, and through

<sup>1</sup> Given through Miss Harper’s hand

their vision the rest of humanity must gaze until its sight has grown capable of seeing also.

“Let my dear friend rest assured that he will be left in no uncertainty when the summons comes. Clear and unmistakable will be the clarion call.

“HILARION.”

## CHAPTER XXX

### HIS PASSING AND RETURN

"Listen, do you not hear the spirit people singing? They are singing all around you, the most beautiful music. Can no one hear them? They are singing very softly. A voice says: 'I will guide thee with my counsel, and afterwards receive thee into glory.' That comes for the gentleman who is away, Mr. Stead."—Given through MRS. WESLEY ADAMS, in the Upper Room, *April 10th, 1912.*

"He stood alone, at the edge of the deck near the stern, in silence, and, what seemed to me, a prayerful attitude, or one of profound meditation."—Extract from a letter from MRS. SHELLEY, one of the survivors.

HE spent his last Sunday before leaving at Hayling Island, and gloried in the beautiful weather, the blue sea, and the sunshine.

On Tuesday he bade farewell to his friends and left Waterloo by the 9.45 train on Wednesday morning. My mother accompanied him to Southampton and together they went over the huge liner which was to take him on his journey to the other side. He was full of enthusiasm and delight at the size and magnificence of the ship about to take her maiden voyage, and his cabin—as he wrote me after leaving—was "a love of a cabin, and is like a room with a window about 4 ft.

by 2 ft. looking out over the sunlit sea . . . the ship is a splendid monstrous floating Babylon."

He stood watching and waving to my mother till the ship was lost to view. So he started on his journey.

He wrote to many friends and posted letters from Cherbourg and Queenstown. In the letter which I received from Queenstown on the morning of the 18th April—when he had already "passed on"—he wrote:—

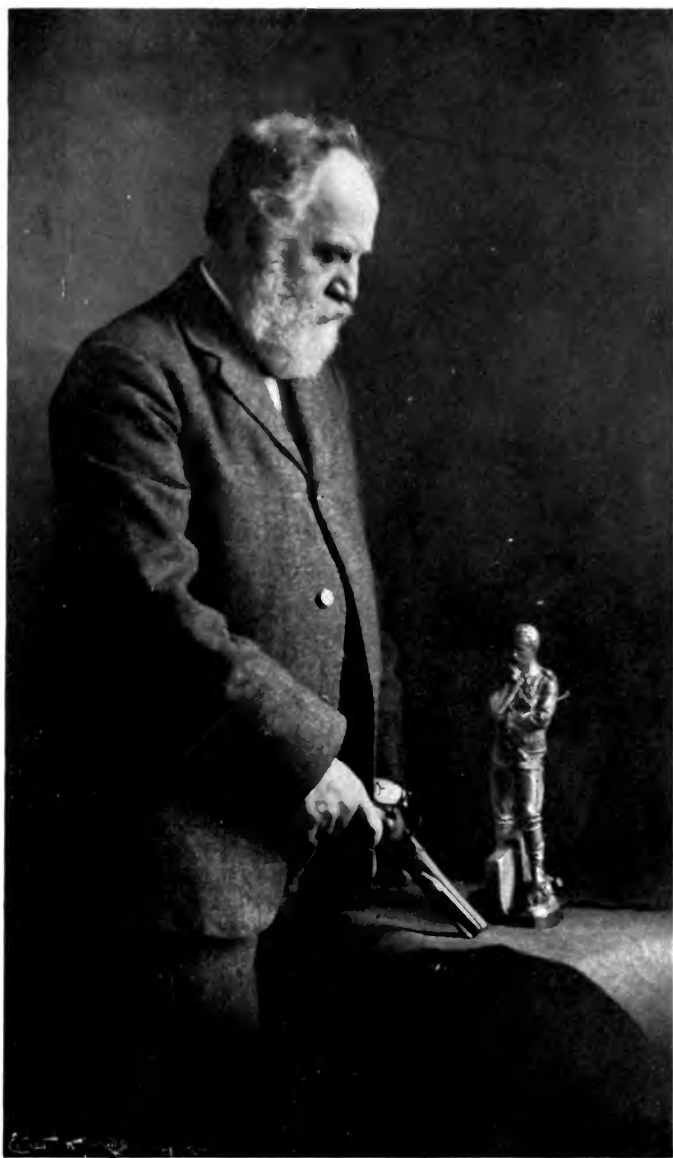
"By the time you get this I shall be half-way across the Atlantic. At present the sky is beautifully blue and the sea as smooth as a mill pond.

"I am somewhat curious as to the work in front of me. I know my speech will be an important speech.<sup>1</sup> But that is only one, and possibly not the most important work before me."

In another letter he wrote:—

"I am going to America to deliver one speech. But I feel as if that were but the Asses which Saul went forth to seek when he was crowned King of Israel. What else I am to do I do not know. Something is awaiting me, some important work the nature of which will be disclosed to me in good time. But what it is, whether journalistic, spiritual, social, or political,

<sup>1</sup> He was on his way to New York in response to an invitation to make a speech on "Universal Peace" at the Men and Religion Forward Movement Congress in Carnegie Hall.



*E. H. Mills.*

FATHER, WITH OLIVER CROMWELL'S PISTOL, A STATUE OF  
GENERAL GORDON AND THE COPY OF "THE IMITATION"  
OF THOMAS À KEMPIS GIVEN HIM BY GORDON.



I know not. I await my marching orders, being assured that He who has called me will make clear His good will and pleasure in due season."

He received his "marching orders" on that dark night in mid-ocean.

We can imagine how he would receive them. From the survivors we learn a little about the last moments. His steward tells us—

"From the time Mr. Stead changed from Crawford's room he was writing all the time and spoke very seldom to anyone. On the day of the accident he did not feel well and had his supper in his room. I did not see him again until after the accident. Then I went to see all my passengers. He had gone on deck but soon came back. I said 'Mr. Stead, you will have to put on a life-belt.' He said 'Cunningham, what is that for?' I said, 'You may need it.' I put the belt over his head. We bade each other good-bye, and that was the last I saw of him."

Mr. Frederick Seward, the New York Lawyer—who sat next him at table and had had many talks with him during the previous days, says:—

"He was one of the very few who were actually on deck when the iceberg was struck. I saw him soon after and was thoroughly scared, but he preserved the most beautiful composure.

"Whether he stayed on board or sought safety by leaping into the sea, I cannot tell, but I do know he faced death with philosophic calm." We have even later news from Mrs. William

Shelley, who, with her mother, left in the last life-boat when "the passing" was very near. The following is an extract from her letter to Miss Harper—written after she had partly recovered from the shock of that terrible night :—

"I was only on deck a short time, until mother and I took to the lifeboat.

"Your beloved Chief, together with Mr. and Mrs. Strauss, attracted attention even in that awful hour, on account of their superhuman composure, and divine work.

"When we, the last life-boat left, and they could do no more, he stood alone at the edge of the deck, in silence, and, what seemed to me, a prayerful attitude or one of profound meditation.

"You ask if he wore a life-belt. Alas! no, they were too scarce.

"My last glimpse of the *Titanic* showed him standing in the same attitude and place."

Three weeks after his passing he came to the Upper Room in the Inner Sanctuary of Julia's Bureau. In that room where he had himself so often spoken of the life to come and conversed with those who had already passed onward, he—the beloved Chief—came and spoke to those who prayed and waited, knowing he would come. Clearly he showed his face that all might see, and as it faded into darkness—his voice rang through the room and he spake saying :—" *All I told you is true. . . .*"

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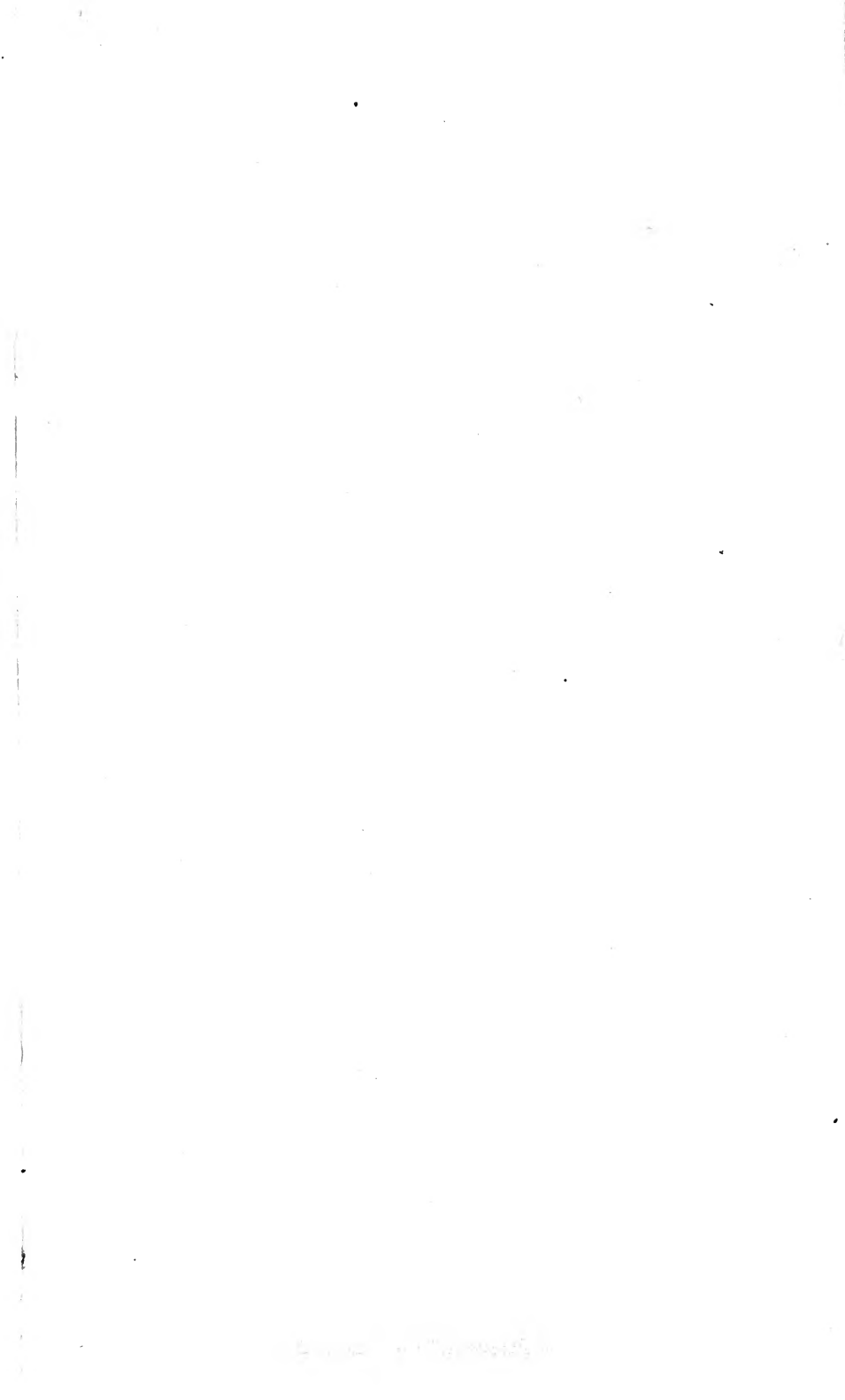
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My father

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