

mind), "a most mischievous epidemic delusion, comparable to the witchcraft delusion of the 17th century." Truth seekers forsooth! How can such people reasonably affirm we cannot know whether there is a future state when they dogmatically ignore opposing evidence thus. They should have honestly investigated the alleged facts before pronouncing judgment, and if found true, or fraud, or delusion, to have said so though the heavens fall. The fact is their pet theories explode if the phenomena is true, and religion, that beautiful flower of the human soul, is placed upon a scientific basis. I assert, without fear of contradiction, that whenever the scientific men of any age have denied the facts of investigation on "*a priori*" grounds, they have always been wrong. So, on this subject, time will record that it is not always the church who oppose the truth. All who investigate the phenomena patiently, perseveringly, and without bias, end by owning its genuineness, notwithstanding rebuffs of every kind, and that similar phenomena silver-line the ages, all corroborating that in the Bible, Christ being its chief exemplar. The information and intelligence accompanying the phenomena is sometimes independent of and at the time unknown to those investigating. I have witnessed this in my family, and often during seventeen years' experience. Professionals undoubtedly manufacture fraudulent phenomena, but this does not explain that experienced by those when no public medium was present. Fraud exists in almost everything, and will so long as man is imperfect, but everything therefore is not fraud. Behind the counterfeit lies the real. So with spirit phenomena. Beware though of those who offer promiscuous investigators so much phenomena for so much pay. As real genuine psychics dare not do this, they cannot command phenomena at will; it depends upon the subtlest conditions. I think much of that called fraud due to bad conditions, supplied by fraud-hunting investigators. Mesmerists can make some sensitive do what they silently will them to, whether good, bad, or indifferent. So by a similar law a number of positive-minded investigators, prepossessed strongly with an idea that the sensitive or medium is a fraud, can sometimes make him or her enact their very thoughts, thus overruling spirit control for the time and making another so-called exposure. Such simply expose their unfitness as investigators. The medium is no more responsible under such conditions than the sensitive is who does the most ridiculous things in compliance with the mesmerist's will. We little know the power of mind over mind, or mind over matter. To study the subject satisfactorily we must be entirely free from prejudice, like a judge is supposed to be when trying a court case. This is the true scientific spirit; how few, alas! possess it.

I now ask what does clairvoyance—that is perception of objects independent of the physical eyes—teach? If print can be read and things seen at a distance, independent of the physical organs of sight—and there is no fact in science better established—then something else sees. Sight without bodily eyes! But as the eye, like a telescope, is absolutely necessary for the presentation of objects in a defined shape to this something within, or conscious self, and as clairvoyants characterise and individualise objects independent of the physical eyes, it follows there are higher organs of sight through which impressions are transmitted, and by parity of reasoning a higher organised body to correspond, composed of refined matter, interpenetrating the physical body and related to the invisible but real world which surrounds us. This is not unscientific. We know that refined, and it may be fluent forces, interpenetrate solids. We see this in the magnet's action upon steel filings through wood or marble, yet no microscope nor physical perception can detect the composition of this influence, no more than experts can detect the connecting link between the delicate mechanism of the eye and that something within which sees and decides everything. If such a transcendent power over the body as seeing without the optic nerve exists now why not its continuance when death destroys the eye. And as physical eyes require a physical body so clairvoyant or spirit sight requires a spirit body which would survive the physical body, like the butterfly survives the grub. The butterfly's

organism exists unseen in the grub, why not man's future organism in his physical body, earth taking the physical and immortal man the spiritual body. St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15, 44) said "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body?" Transcendent philosophy! Nature and scripture in harmony! This chapter speaks too of "Spiritual Gifts," thus: "To one is given wisdom, to another knowledge, to another working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another *discerning of spirits*, to another *divers kinds of tongues*, to another interpretation of tongues, to another the *gift of healing*." These gifts—and the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th, chapters, 1st Corinthians—are substantially confirmed by modern spiritistic phenomena. Was their practice prohibited? No. Christ (Mark 16th and 17th) said "these signs shall follow them that believe," and "greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto my Father," (John 14th and 12th). John too in his First Epistle (4) says: "Try the spirits whether they are of God." It is also evident that these "signs" or "gifts" were for all future ages, for in Acts 2, 39 Peter says "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off." In fact they were practised and taught for about three centuries after the Apostles' death, but have been lost sight of since, except now and then by the Catholic church. Stripped of orientalism and read in the light of modern phenomena it would seem Joel's words (2, 28) are being fulfilled: "And it shall come to pass I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." This by the way. Clairvoyance then without submitting other evidence bearing more directly on the point, presupposes man's existence hereafter with a body fitted to enable him to fulfil aspirations incapable of fruition here. It is therefore unfair to say we cannot know if man is immortal. Others say "suppose the phenomena you speak of true, what's the use of it?" What's the use of a new-born baby? Upon the phenomena, continuity of existence is built; is this not something? And if mortality is true, to teach it is not a dogma, it must have its relative value like other facts in nature. Right ideas and right thoughts lead to right actions. To ignore this is to dogmatise, to progress backwards. With General Gordon "I think this life is only one of the series of lives which our incarnated part has lived. I have little doubt of our having pre-existed; and that, also, in the time of our pre-existence we were actively employed. So, therefore, I believe in our active employment in a future life, and like the thought. We shall, I think, be far more perfect in a future life, and indeed, go on towards perfection, but never attain it." Absolute perfection there may be. Each though has a conception equivalent to his development. Progress consists in actualising it. When reached a higher ideal takes its place. Thus perfection, like God, is always pursued but never completely found.

Evolution favours all this, Spiritism and New Testament Christianity teach it. Christ said "In my father's house are," not two or at most three but, "many mansions," or progressive states of existence. He also "preached to the spirits in prison," what for, if not to elevate them. At another time I may try to show why and for what purpose we do not remember our past existence while here. For an exposition of this read Allen Kardec's "Book of Spirits," one of the ablest books, to my mind, ever produced. I believe that spiritism—the Science of the Soul—will when shorn of the imperfections of many of its votaries, permeate the church and make it what its glorious founder intended. It is fast doing this in America. In Britain too and on the Continent of Europe the church's leading lights knowing its value in dethroning Materialism are welcoming it. Some think spiritism destroys Christianity. Not so. Both endorse the craving of the race for a future life, the basis of all religions, without which existence and right action here are meaningless. The good and true too in both are so alike, so calculated to spur mankind to loftier endeavours in a way no other system can, that to reconcile instead of antagonising them becomes a duty.

JOSEPH BRAITHWAITE.