

## **PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES**



PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES  
OF  
QUAKER MINISTERS

*collected by*

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FOR

*A Presidential Address to the  
Friends Historical Society*

*Introduction*

*by*

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# Introduction

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JOHN WILLIAM GRAHAM had been a member of the Friends' Historical Society since its foundation in 1903. He was made President for the year 1932-3, but did not live to complete his term of office, nor to deliver his address at the Annual Meeting. Nevertheless this address had been largely prepared and is here presented with the necessary minimum of editing. What additions our friend would have made in the way particularly of conclusions, comments or summary, it is unfortunately impossible to say. But to have brought together this collection of significant incidents—as well authenticated as is now practicable—is in itself a valuable piece of work, deserving surely of publication; and the opening pages indicate the line of his thought thereon and his sense that the survey was worth while not only from the point of view of scientific and historical research, but in practical relation to the needs of the Society of Friends to-day.

The choice of subject for the address would seem a natural resultant of the President's longstanding interest in the work and thought of the Society for Psychical Research, his studies in the history of Quakerism, and his profound concern for the quality of the Quaker Ministry. All these lines on which his mind had worked so vigorously and devotedly are evident in his two most notable books, *The Faith of a Quaker* and *The Divinity in Man*. These may serve indeed as a background for the full appreciation of this lecture.

I shall not attempt in this brief introduction to supply any inferences which the author himself might have added, nor is this the place for criticism either of the evidential character of the material presented or of the psychological or religious position adopted in the handling of it. But a few points may be tentatively noted—queries that suggest themselves or problems that call for consideration—in order to emphasize the obvious fact, which the writer would himself have been the first to urge, that this paper is the beginning or an early stage of an inquiry rather than its completion.

Are the cases under discussion all of the same type, or do they demand further classification? The fact that they all involve the reception of knowledge by unusual and mysterious channels does not necessarily stamp them as of the same essential nature. To be aware of distant events or to foresee the future, to have a scenic view of Heaven, or to see (like Saul of Tarsus) a great light, to feel an inexplicable summons or read another's spiritual perplexity—these are very various phenomena and certainly have not all the same religious import. This of course is recognized by J. W. Graham and the Society for Psychical Research, as by all students of religious psychology and the records of mysticism. But the tendency to group the abnormal together, as though that was a quality of the event instead of a sign of our ignorance, is always with us, and we need to be on our guard against it.

I am assuming that we desire not only to have our feeling for the marvellous tickled by the tale of these happenings, but to find an explanation of them, to the same extent at any rate that science can be said to explain the physical facts of nature. It may be that this is impossible and that we can only fall back at last upon an ultimate religious postulate. But the moral that J. W. Graham draws, and which is perhaps his chief concern, remains, whatever explanation or absence of explanation is established; and it is that we should seriously ask ourselves whether our later generations have lost some of that inward sensitiveness which their forefathers had, and if so, why?

Why the phenomena in question should fade away after 1850 is what is called an intriguing problem. To begin with, I suspect, because of a more mechanical formulation of essential religious belief; later arises that intellectual movement of which the lecturer speaks. The old theological imagery has ceased to appeal, and without imagery how can you have visions? Are we, whether from a lack of certainty or whatever cause, more reticent of our spiritual needs or experiences than were our predecessors? Or is it only that we keep fewer journals than they did? Perhaps this indeed is a form of reticence, or it may imply something more serious—that these matters no longer appeal to us as the most vital facts of life. It may be on the other hand that there is as much speaking to the condition of a meeting or of some one in it as there ever was, but it takes a different form and is not mentioned or recorded as of old.

Nevertheless the possibility is not to be lightly put aside that we are neglecting a gift, a means of insight. The unreserved exposure as it were of the receptive surfaces of the soul—or should we say the depths?—to whatever hint of light may come the utter willingness to follow the beckoning hand of guidance, the whole-hearted dedication of the spirit—these were features of a by-gone faith at its best, which were the enabling condition of its service and are of profound importance now as ever. No new valuation of the intellect is hostile to such spiritual preparedness; its duty of judgment, whether in choosing the immediate path to tread or in handling the data of past experiences, must be preceded by a readiness to see and feel the facts.

F. E. POLLARD.

### Editorial Note

THE manuscript, which is clearly uncompleted, has been printed with only a few verbal alterations to the text. The author's division into sections and use of headings has been followed, though some of these must have been merely tentative. The case of Eli Yarnall has been transferred to an Appendix. References to sources have been amplified or added and a number of explanatory notes inserted. The manuscripts referred to are in the Library at Friends House.

# Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers

## I

THE following enquiry is concerned with the unusual psychical experience of Quaker ministers, and it attempts to correlate them with their inward life as ministers; that so perhaps light may be thrown from both sides on our unseen spiritual environment. I have already written an account of George Fox's remarkable experiences, in Chapter XII of my *Divinity in Man*, so that he is excluded from this essay.

It is not my doing that nearly all the material in this paper comes from a particular time and place. I have gathered evidence wherever I could find it. But it all comes from a period before 1850, and mostly from the eighteenth century—and it nearly all comes from America; from the Eastern seaboard States, which was the Quaker America of those days.

The final date roughly coincides with the change in ministry from the quietist type, where the instrument handed himself over to an unseen inspirer, and shunned the use of his own powers or his own initiative, to the easier standards, the more conversational and more mentally prepared ministry of to-day. This drives me to the thought that though we have gained something intellectually, in consecutive treatment, and width of interest, in genuine grappling with our needs, and in simple helpfulness, we have also lost something in penetrating power, in Divine endowment, in the strength that comes from forgetting ourselves. We have the task of balancing and combining the inward and the outward endowment, more delicate and complicated than that of our forefathers and than that of the contemporary pulpit.

The limitation to America is more puzzling. One may wonder whether the sense of evidence was stronger in

England, or the readiness to value and collect the evidence less, or the researches may have been badly guided. I do not think the solution lies in these possibilities. I think the events were commoner in America. Was the pioneer life of the settler favourable? But a great many of the experiences happened in cultured and comfortable Philadelphia, habitation of the blest. Is there something in the air of America, in the ozone which gives English visitors such a stimulus? The fact is, till we know more of what produces these things at all, it is not likely that we can answer the question. But it is a fact to be stored up.

The spiritual power was present abundantly in the lovely saints who fill our records in England. They spoke to states, they were able to diagnose companies of Friends. They were the humble and faithful messengers of an Indwelling Power. They heard definite directions many a time.

*The Life of Thomas Shillitoe* is one long list of Divine Guidances to his obedient and humiliated soul. Under it he was able to do extraordinary things. But his experiences did not work out as demonstrably telepathic or clairvoyant by an outward test, as some in America did.

In our modern days too, a unity of thought, a sequence of kindred expression, makes a meeting one, many a time.

These telepathic phenomena, to say nothing of the second sighted clairvoyants, or the premonitions, are in no wise accounted for by these scientific terms—they are merely classified in a non-committal way. The secret is not in these. They are plainly connected with the rest of the ministerial endowment of the seers, and that endowment is a function of a keen and pervasive spiritual life, peculiar among men, and carried out as part of the service of that remarkable institution, the travelling ministry of the Society of Friends.

The Society was founded by travelling Ministers, beginning in the Mission of the Sixty from Cumberland and Westmorland in 1654. But inevitably it altered its outward forms in the years of settled peace. During the seventeenth century the preachers were revivalists. During the eighteenth century, as the Society grew smaller year by year, and meetings with little or no ministry became hard to hold together, stiff and dull, the Itinerant Ministry came



to the rescue. In the days before railways the travellers brought news of one another to isolated meetings, and often treated difficult issues and business affairs in the function of overseers. Very often they encouraged the beginnings of ministry or the possibility of it in likely young people. Their journeys were very frequent. A large or considerable meeting had a visitor about every three weeks during the heyday of the method, say 1770 to 1830. Half a dozen ministers from America would be in England at the same time, and conversely. They stayed away from home four or, like George Dilwyn (1738-1820), eight years, and at times left young families behind as Anna Braithwaite (1788-1859) did, with some intervals, for five years.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Scattergood (1748-1814) was six years in England.<sup>2</sup>

But the inward baptisms they went through are what concern us. The minister had gone through a sort of new birth, quite apart from that connected with conversion. To be the Divine spokesman was indeed an appalling responsibility. But ministry was nothing less than this. It was given; it came from the secret place of the Most High. One did not concoct it oneself. It began, before each opportunity, with gestation and struggles. It was followed by peace and gladness when it went right and was not obstructed by internal unfaithfulness or external cold or storm, that is by indifferent or hostile audience. Twice Joseph Hoag got up and asked Friends if they expected him to speak to them when half of them were asleep, after, it must be admitted, about an hour's silence.

I propose to take this experience at its face value and to postulate an inner realm of the personality great enough to account for the phenomenon of the anointed ministry. It ought not to be minimized or doubted or ignored as a fact of human science, imperfect as our science concerning it is, little more than a series of notes of interrogation.

Psychical Research has already given us the fruitful conception of the Inner Man, the Man generally below the threshold of consciousness, the Subliminal man (in Latin form). He is necessary to account for three kinds of occasional faculty.

<sup>1</sup> Braithwaite: *Memoirs of A. B.* 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Evans: *Memoirs of T. S.* 1845.

1. New physical perceptions, telepathy, automatic writing and speaking, hypnotism, sleep walking, second sight, and many truth-telling dreams.

2. Abnormal extensions of ordinary faculties, by mathematical and musical prodigies, internal consciousness of the passing of time, and hyperaesthesia.

3. The productions of genius which come of themselves, visions of Joan of Arc and others, the Daimon of Socrates, the poems written off at a flash by Tennyson, the plots that came to Robert Louis Stevenson in his sleep, voices of Mrs. Gamp heard by Dickens, and many other gifts that come to the most gifted, and some that alas! come to those who cannot express them worthily.

Here we have the framework into which our Quaker Ministry fits. And if we find the underlying faculty, telepathic, clairvoyant or premonitory, we have all the more reason to find it consistent with Divine Inspiration.

There must be a link like this between our spirits and the Infinite Spirit, and we have found it. Our inward man is open to God beyond; we have found the gate of prayer, the way travelled by the wheels of inspiration.

What may be beyond the Gate we do not know. We have not the faculty to follow further. To the minister his Master gave him his words and his periods of silence. He was essentially right even though there may be many ministers on the other side, as here—angels of dealing and guardianship. Prayer finds its fulfilment, though we do not know exactly where that may be, in the heavenly hierarchy.

Dogmatic statements about the nature and being of God, as though one had had a personal interview, beyond the range of our ordinary Prayer and Communion, are the supreme form of impertinence: but a besetment of too confident theologians.

If there is any value in this treatment of the subject as a branch of religious enquiry, it is in making a continuous sequence of religious experience, beginning with the simple consciousness of fellowship among worshippers, and communion with the unseen President of the assembly, going on to an actual fellowship in definite exercises and in ministry,

to the faculty on the human side of "speaking to states", in family visiting or in meeting; on the Divine side to the ministry which is waited for in poverty and given with an incomprehensible rush of power—then to comprehension of distant states of spirit, particularly of dangerous and needy situations and, on the Divine side, on to the visions of ineffable glory out of the body. This sequence is one of increasing freedom in the world of spirit, leaping the limitations of the body, and entering upon what Paul called "a citizenship in heaven". It means a transcending, in the end, Space and Time, and becoming able to see things at a distance, and before they occur. I am trying to estimate the religious value of telepathy and ecstasy, of clairvoyance and premonition.

These often occur without any religious preparation, to quite ordinary people and to children.<sup>1</sup> Conscious drawing to God in the Unseen, is not a necessary preparation for them. All I claim is that it is one preparation, and that the visions of the saints are in the sequence of their other spiritual attainments.

Many of the stories I shall give would not satisfy the strict tests of evidence demanded by the Society for Psychical Research. That is to say, they would not be confirmable by signed testimony of witnesses, and impressions would not generally be written down before fulfilment. They are generally taken from the journals of the Friend to whom they occurred, and I choose to believe them, being already convinced of the existence of the type to which they belong, and of the care and honesty of the narrators, with whom meticulous caution in assertion was a kind of passion.

## II

We may suitably begin our historical material with the case of JOSEPH HOAG, a farmer in Vermont, New England (1760-1846). His experiences began at 10 years old. It is remarkable that wherever you turn, in the biographies of Early Friends or of remarkably gifted Friends, you always find a religious susceptibility in childhood. I have yet to meet an exception.

<sup>1</sup> See case of Eli Yarnall; p. 42. *post.*

At that age, living at Nine Partners, New York State, Joseph dreamt that three or four quick riders, whose faces he did not then know as Friends,<sup>1</sup> came to Meeting. One got up and contradicted his father's ministry in Meeting, and was supported by a second. His father had not at that time begun to speak in Meeting. After Meeting his father went home to the right, his opponents to the left.

In a second dream they came again; claimed to sit in the gallery, actually sat in the confused way of dreams in a seat above the little boy's head. All three abusively contradicted his father.

In a third dream the same was repeated. This time they gained the attention of his father's brother and brother-in-law; and broke up Meeting prematurely. This time, as the dreaming boy came out of the Meeting, he saw a beautiful oval cloud and a comely man standing on it. He said he was an angel of the Lord and the interrupters were schemers and ranters and would come to nothing. But the dark complexioned man was honest and would be saved. The others would come to nothing.

Soon afterwards his father began to speak in Meeting, and a few months later the three men came and behaved as foretold, except there was no fixing a new gallery.

At a Monthly Meeting at Nine Partners they ordered my father out of the gallery, upbraided him, and everything happened as prophesied within two years of the dream.

His two uncles turned against his father with bitter censure, which lasted through life. And for fifteen years the attacks against Elijah Hoag his father lasted. The two uncles took to hard drinking and were disowned, and most of their families. They ran through their estates.

"The two pursuers of my father controlled the Monthly Meeting for many years, pressed disownments—then fell out, charged each other with lying, and were both disowned. One became insolvent. One returned ultimately to a humble place in the Society. The dark complexioned man had small abilities, but kept quiet and did no harm." Elijah had an honoured life and old age and travelled in the ministry.

<sup>1</sup> His *Journal*, ed. 1909, 17ff.

I need not insist on the elaborate premonitions in these dreams. He had something of natural gift, utilized as we shall see.

Between nine and fifteen Joseph had an elaborate vision of Hell with smoke prominent. But through having it he turned two sinners round to righteousness (p. 29).

He also had a vision of the Book of Sins written in Heaven. None of these visions ever reveal anything new to the seer.

At fifteen and three-quarters he had an order to speak in Meeting. He put it aside with much misery to follow. This happened to practically all ministers at that stage.

When nearly eighteen Abel Thomas, a visiting minister, spoke to his state, with great and accurate detail (p. 36). Great troubles followed and Abel Thomas came again, out of his way, and spoke much needed comfort to the one he had addressed before (p. 37), adding that he would become a travelling minister, and Joseph said to himself "It is enough. I now believe. Abel Thomas stopped as though he had heard me speak and turned to another subject."

After many events and troubles David Sands spoke remarkably to his state (p. 47). He began ministry amid a cloud of family and popular disapproval. He married at twenty and a half, Huldah Case, who had believed in him under unjust charges.

At twenty-two he failed to carry out an instruction he received to prophesy death in a strange house twelve miles from home by saying "Set thy house in order for thou shalt surely die and not live". He dare not venture to say it. He refused twice, and suffered for months in consequence. He feared being deceived (p. 54).

A year later found that the mother and seven children had died of a fever. They were not religious people, and he feared he had not helped them.

He once left New York City after trying to buy a farm and attending Meeting happily. But before he got off Manhattan Island he felt he must go back, attend the next Meeting and warn the people of a sore mortality that was coming, and proclaim repentance. He sat by the wayside a long time. Then he was told that the sickness was not immediate. He thought he could keep an appointment with his father and return. His father opposed his return

and finally succeeded in stopping the mission altogether. "Another stept in and took the crown. They were warned and death came." A terrible repentance followed and it led to a grave illness (p. 58).

Soon after he settled in his lifelong home in Vermont, he began his travelling in the ministry by attending Easton Monthly Meeting near the Hudson in New York Yearly Meeting. He made a very definite attack on those who sit in front of the Meeting (p. 64). Two instances of public quarrelling about property, and much jangling in doing business were officially troubling the Meeting. This was a type of his lifelong ministry. He felt easy and relieved afterwards. But he had close and arduous work in plain speaking. I have made a list of thirty-eight places, with their pages, where the remarkable gift was exercised.

References are to *Journal of Joseph Hoag* : Phila. 1909.

1. East Hoosick. 67.
2. Coeymans Patent. The man who neglected his wife and had become a Shaker. 70.
3. Cokeat. A quarrel, not settled. 72.
4. Jericho, general insight. 75.
5. Select Meeting for Province of Maine. 82.
6. Dover District. 85-86.
7. New Bedford. 87.
8. Accushnet. 89. Verified. 95.
9. In five families out of thirty on Nantucket he foretold the approach of death. All verified. 90.
10. Beaver Harbour, Nova Scotia. Premonition of death. 96.
11. Parner's Corner, Prince Edward I. Sense of the state of a meeting. 102.
12. Drunkard at Digby. Premonition of death. 110-111.
13. Frederickton. Speaking settles a dispute. 112-113.
14. ——— Island. Sense of the state of a meeting. 116-117.
15. Portland. After silent meetings, a sense of their state. 129.
16. Falmouth. Silent Preparative Meeting. 129.
17. Sandwich. Looking to him not the Lord. 130.
18. The highly placed minister, who oppressed the poor and finally went to the bad. 135.
19. Arbitration between rich and poor Friends at Westlake. Went into woods alone. 155.
20. Whitchurch. Quarrels. 157.
21. Ballston. Death in the Pot. 162-163.
22. Select Q.M. at Black Water. Defrauder named. 180.
23. Goose Creek. Unfaithful wife. 180-181.
24. Springfield M.M. Women's Meeting. Innocence seen against accusation. 186.

25. North Carolina Y.M. Against support of Slavery candidates. 199-201.
26. Deer Creek. Message for a Vegetarian tyrant. 204.
27. Redstone M.M. District. State of a meeting. 206.
28. Abington M.M. 209.
29. Darby. Disunity. 211-212.
30. Little Esopus M.M., near Cornwall. Sense of a dispute. 225.
31. Rosendale M.M., near Cornwall. 225.
32. Oswego. Ranters. "All Mouth and No Ears." 227.
33. The Perception of the Horse which would go down a road away from its home. Allowed to go the second time and to guide itself. Brought Jos. Hoag to the house of a drunken friend. Otego, N.Y. 231.
34. Norwich, Ontario. Quarrels sensed. 238-239.
35. Deerfield. Two estranged assemblies in one house. 241-242.
36. Stillwater, Ohio. Oppressive speculations. 244.
37. At Concord, O. Made way for a Woman Friend who failed to speak. 245.
38. Indiana. Sense of division in a number of meetings. 261.

It is noticeable from a careful reading of the *Journal* that these telepathic intimations and confirmations cease as soon as the book begins to be occupied with the Hicksite controversy. Joseph Hoag devoted himself to testifying against the Hicksites; and it would seem to have been fatal to his strange faculty as a seer. He lived as an active Friend and Minister till 1846, but the peace which seems to be a condition of his illumination was denied him for about the last twenty-five years of his life. His *Journal* contains 358 pages. But the last note I have made is on page 261. The rest of the book is of extraordinary and painful historical interest; but it is not our subject here. It touches on the Wilbur-Gurney trouble at the end. The author was a Wilburite.

Several of the narratives are premonitions of deaths, with the idea of rousing those soon to die to a serious state of mind. Five families out of thirty on Nantucket had messages of this character. One was a prophecy of an epidemic in the City of New York, and there are at least two others. This leads one to think that perhaps death is not a momentary affair, occurring when the heart stops beating, but is a spiritual event, with preparation and completion. If so, it confirms our belief that death is a transference

of a spirit from one sphere to another, as well as a physical extinction.

Premonition is still a complete mystery. Psychical Research has no explanation of it. The idea that events past, present and future, are always there, and we who experience them are travelling past them one by one, cannot be reduced to practical terms and is only a phantasy.

We are in Time, but there does seem to be a sphere where time is not ; and the religious life seems to be favourable to our dipping occasionally into it—shall we say, into Eternity ?

The fact of Premonition is to my mind proved, by the facts collected by the Society for Psychical Research, in papers by Mrs. Hy. Sidgwick and F. W. H. Myers. The cases collected occupy two large pages in the Index to the Proceedings and *Journal*.

The experience of Joseph Hoag is central and typical. It had nothing to do with education. On visiting the Moses Brown School, or Friends' Seminary at Providence, he remarks that " if it was not for the high exalted feeling and aim of the planters of that institution and something of the same disposition in the managers, it might be a blessing to our Society ". He calls himself a backwoodsman compared to the central people on Long Island, and he was afraid at first to labour among the great ones of Philadelphia. His fierce and desperate controversies with the Hicksites and with Elias Hicks himself, turned on interpretations of the Garden of Eden story, in which a tragic ignorance of the Bible darkened both of their minds. The historical existence of Adam and Eve and the personality of the Devil were central truths with the orthodox party.

I connect the gift with the never ceasing exercise of his soul towards God, which made up the central life and ceaseless preoccupation of these ministers. It may be that they were too Quietist, that is, that they avoided or suspected any intellectual effort of their own. To prepare a sermon on their own initiative would have been a central act of unfaithfulness, a presumption which degraded the preacher and ruined the meeting. We have realized that some intellectual quality, some carefully accurate words, and some ascertained facts, make ministry more valuable and more responsive to our need. But I solemnly believe that we have



lost a good deal also. Perhaps we cannot help it, and it is nobody's fault. We ought not to demand only one kind of ministry. Nevertheless I feel that one greatest need at present is more depth, more spiritual wrestling, more strain and athletic effort and suffering of the soul. This cannot be had artificially ; but if we are much in prayer we may come into such Divine contacts as we are capable of.

The famous vision of Joseph Hoag will be better appreciated now that we know something of the seer. He did not write it out for many years, and the MS. he wrote was lost, though it had been copied. Then before his death he dictated it again to his granddaughter Narcissa Battey Coffin. There are thus two versions. One, apparently from the original MS., was published in Frederick Douglass's anti-slavery paper, *The North Star*, at Rochester, N.Y., in 1854, and the other, the dictated one, as an appendix to the *Journal* of Joseph Hoag, first published in 1861. The narrative has been edited in a scholarly manner by Albert J. Edmunds of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and I have used his researches.<sup>1</sup> I will quote the Negro version from Frederick Douglass's paper.

In the year 1803, in the eighth or ninth month, I was one day alone in the field, and observed the sun shone clear but a mist eclipsed its brightness.

As I reflected upon the singularity of the event, my mind was struck into a silence, the most solemn I ever remember to have witnessed ; for all my faculties were low, and unusually brought into deep silence. I said to myself, " What can all this mean ? " I do not recollect ever before to have been sensible of such feelings. And I heard a voice from Heaven say : " This which thou seest which dims the brightness of the sun is a sign of present and coming times. I took the forefathers of this country from a land of oppression. I planted them here among the people of the forest. I sustained them, and while they were humble, I blessed them and fed them, and they became a numerous people ; but now they have become proud and lifted up, and have forgotten me who nourished them and protected them in the wilderness, and are running into every abomination and evil practice of which the old countries are guilty, and have taken quietude from the land, and suffered a dividing spirit to come among them. Lift up thine eyes and behold."

And I saw them dividing in great heat. This division began in the Church on points of doctrine. It commenced in the Presbyterian Society, and went through the various religious denominations, and in its progress and close the effects were the same. Those that dissented went off with

<sup>1</sup> *The Vision in 1803 of Jos. Hoag.* ed. A. J. Edmunds. 1915.

high heads and taunting language ; and those who kept to their original sentiments appeared exercised and sorrowful ; and when the dividing spirit entered the Society of Friends, it raged in as high a degree as in any I had before discovered. As before those who kept to their ancient principles retired by themselves.

It appeared in Lodges of Freemasons. It broke out, in appearance like a volcano, inasmuch as it set the country in an uproar for a length of time. Then it entered politics in the United States, and did not stop until it produced a Civil War, and abundance of human blood was shed in course of the combat. The Southern States lost their power and slavery was annihilated from their borders. Then a monarchical power arose—took the Government of the States—established a national religion and made all the people tributary to support its expenses. I saw them take property from Friends to a large amount. I was amazed at beholding all this, and I heard a voice proclaim :—“ This power shall not always stand, but with it I shall chastise my church until they return to the faithfulness of their forefathers. Thou seest what is coming on thy native land for its iniquities and the blood of Africa, the remembrance of which has come up before me. The vision is yet for many days.”

I had no idea of writing it for many years, until it became such a burthen that for my own relief I have written it.

The dictated script of the *Journal* only differs from this in small detail, except it adds a sentence about Friends who separated going off “ with lofty looks and taunting, censoring language ”. But some of the seer’s family maintain that this clause was not in the autograph. Another version appeared in *The British Friend*, June 1st, 1861, independent of the dictated text. There are seven minor alterations. It includes the “ lofty looks ” sentence above.

The earliest date to which we can go for confirmation is an attestation which is at the Historical Society’s Library, dated 1878, saying that the credible Quaker signatories vouched for its existence for “ forty to fifty-five years ”, i.e. since the period from 1823 to 1838. His son Lindley Murray Hoag says his father was an old man when he wrote it down. He was sixty in 1822. So that the twenties were the probable date when this unscientific man wrote down his vision of twenty years before. He may even have been stimulated to do so by the Separation of 1827. The fulfilments are :

- i. Cumberland Presbyterian schism, 1810.
- ii. Friends’ Separation, 1827-1829.
- iii. Anti-Masonic agitation following the disappearance of Morgan in 1826. (I take this from Edmunds.)

iv. Civil War, 1861-1865, followed by the defeat of the South and the Abolition of Slavery.

The monarchical Government and the Established Church have not yet arrived, nor their overthrow. Lindley Murray Hoag and William H. Dean, a friend of both father and son, have maintained that the whole passage about a monarchical Government and an Established Church was not in the original autograph.<sup>1</sup>

There is also an Indiana text by David Marshall (Chicago, 1889) which omits "took the Government of the States"; and inserts a slip saying "some very old copies" read that "a monarchial [sic] power arose in this Government and established a national church".

Albert J. Edmunds thinks another vision may have contained these words, in a man who had visions, and in his dictated statement he mixed them together; and some copyists in the Mid-West did the same. It is the weakest point in the story.

We thus have a story not written down for about twenty years, then lost, copied not quite exactly in the Middle West, then dictated again: with doubt cast by early witnesses on the origin of the yet unfulfilled part. Two, or perhaps three, of the events occurred before it was written down. It may be remembered, however, that at ten years old the boy had a vision of his father's opponents, elaborately verified; and that in 1837 he prophesied a further Quaker schism, due to increase of snobbery and wealth, declaring "I have seen it in that light that never deceived me."<sup>2</sup> The second Separation occurred in 1845; it was on the Evangelical theology of Joseph John Gurney. It is possible that an opponent, a simple man like Joseph Hoag, might consider that the high social station of the English visitor had an effect on his followers. But it is rather far fetched to make it the cause.

This faculty continued in the Hoag family; all eight of them became ministers. COMFORT HOAG, who belonged to an earlier generation, was on her way to England on religious service about 1760, had been at sea a week, when she said to her companion Sarah Barney, after a period of

<sup>1</sup> *Friend* (Philadelphia), LXVI, 70, and *Friends' Intelligencer*, 1892, 556.

<sup>2</sup> *Friend* (Philadelphia), 31.x.1885.

silence, "The Lord has accepted my freewill offering . . . and now he releases me from this service, and as a proof of it will bring us back to America." They continued in silence for some time, and then heard the captain calling through his trumpet to another ship that he had sprung a leak and was going home. They never attempted to go by any other ship.<sup>1</sup>

LINDLEY MURRAY HOAG was the youngest son of Joseph Hoag and a famous public Friend. Once in the midst of a great sermon at Westminster Meeting House, he stopped abruptly and said in quite a different voice "Friends, there is someone here who is on the verge of the lowest Hell". He then returned to his sermon. It was only too well justified, but the time for publishing details is not yet.<sup>2</sup>

Lindley Murray Hoag, in 1845, made a wonderful impression in England. One of his admirers writes, "that he was recently widowed, very eloquent, with such an attractive countenance and personality that we fell under his spell at once, drew his portrait, and followed him from Meeting to Meeting. It was thought best by those in authority that he should go home till the furore had abated".<sup>3</sup> He came back in 1853. At Yearly Meeting Esther Seebom seems to have "not doubted that we should all be willing to forgive an erring brother, . . . and cautioned women Friends against so much following about and admiration of poor instruments, and that they might not be content with a superficial view of things which led to this sort of conduct".<sup>4</sup>

One of his acts of service during this visit is among the most beautiful of my stories.

He had in America a dream in which he was in Norway, with a view of a beautiful lake, houses and fields, and snow mountains behind, a definite landscape, and that he ate fish from the lake. In due course he visited Norway with James Backhouse as his companion. He was taken by Endre Dahl as interpreter to all the Quaker groups, and back at Stavanger was told that there were no others. He walked about the room much perturbed, a map was consulted, and

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet*, i, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Thos. Pumphrey of Ackworth, Peter Bedford and John Tertius Southall of Ross, had telepathic impressions about this case.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal, Friends Hist. Soc.*, X, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Hine: *Mirror for the Society of Friends*, 113.

he finally pointed to the mountains in the east, and said that that way was the valley he had specially come to visit. Friends fell in, and the party set off. They appointed a meeting at a place called Sövde, where there was a Meeting House.

We will now see what had happened in Norway. A young man Knud Botnen had felt, four years before and all the time since, inward illumination in silence about the Bible and religion. Entirely unassisted, and regarded as eccentric, he had reached Friends' views, denied clerical authority and Lutheran orthodoxy, and his spiritual freedom had led him to resist war and tithes. A company had gathered round him, largely due to their own convictions, and they abandoned the church and met for silent worship and Bible reading. The Priest had called them Quakers; but they attached no meaning to the word. Then two of them wished to marry, and would not be married by a priest. There was no other form available, so they did without, but were a good deal troubled about it. Knud had a vision of light in the darkness and told them that if they would wait they would be properly married in his house. A kind person (Bjarne Aaby) told the people in Röldal of this Quaker Meeting to be held that night at Sövde. They went, came in when the preacher had begun and heard all their own faith restated. The two ends of the psychic message had met. Next day the English party went to Röldal. On the top of the hill above it Lindley Murray Hoag stood like a statue. It was his dream landscape, seen in America. As they descended they met a man with fish newly caught. These constituted their first meal.

The couple were married after the manner of Friends in Knud Botnen's house. Touch was made with England. A Meeting House and a school and schoolmaster were provided. Sixteen years of increasing persecution for not fighting, and loss for not paying tithes followed—till in 1869 fifty Friends sailed to Iowa, where their descendants form the Meeting of Stavanger, in the Iowa Conservative Yearly Meeting.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Knud Botnen in his old age in 1885 gave these particulars to be written down by his niece Helge Thompson. In 1906 Johan Marcussen visited these Friends, collected the details and published them in the *American Friend*, 1907, 244. I have used a pamphlet reprint published by Bart L. Wick, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Now that we have given the first place to the Hoag stories, I will now take the rest roughly in order of time.

### III

THOMAS HOLMES (or Holmes) a weaver of Kendal, one of the First Publishers, 1654-1666, was the Quaker Pioneer in Wales and died in Cardiff. Married Eliza. Levens, to Margaret Fell's disapproval, because of the difficulty of keeping a child out of the Quaker Funds. They had to apologize. Finally, after some delay, they had three children. The following incident occurred in Cheshire at Middlewich Prison, 1654, when he was aged 26.

The word of the Lord commanded me to deny the bed which I had lain upon and to ask the gaoler for a free prison. But I was put into the place where I had lain before. But in obedience to the word of the Lord I lay on the floor, and waiting upon the Lord about midnight or a little before, the power of the Lord came upon me and there was a sweet melody in me; and the power was so great that it compelled me to sing praise to my God, and the power was so great that it entered into my fellow prisoners, and they were shaken in their beds. I scarcely knew whether I was in the body or not. Then there appeared a light that was very glorious to the beholding of them that were in bed. They wondered and were amazed at the glory of the light. It dazzled my eyes. I feared and trembled. The light often appeared to the beholding of the prisoners in the upper room, who looked down and gave glory to God.

The next night the same happened "the glorious light in the room shone about my feet and astonished me". There appeared in the light the likeness of three men. "When I had beheld them a space they departed." These things occurred for four nights.<sup>1</sup>

This narrative is not like any other that I know of.

The only other phenomenon of Light is one to JOHN WOOLMAN, who after meditating on the goodness and mercy of the Lord, slept and awoke, saw a light in his chamber five feet off, nine inches in diameter, of a clear easy brightness and the most radiant near its centre. He did not feel surprised. He heard in the inward ear "certain evidence

<sup>1</sup> Swarthmore MSS., i, 190.

The great revival in Wales about twenty years ago was accompanied by the seeing of a bright light, not I believe seen by others than natives. Is there any significance in this connection? T.H.'s vision with its "sweet melody" is like that associated with the Celtic temperament. The whole Fell country of Cumberland and Westmorland has hidden in it traces of the ancient British or Celtic race.—M.G.

of Divine Truth". The words were repeated and the light disappeared. This occurred at Burlington, 13.ii.1757.<sup>1</sup>

Woolman was in the habit of dreaming and of thinking a great deal about his dreams. They have been expunged from editions of his *Journal*, till Amelia Gummere, in her definitive edition, rightly inserted them. They are symbolic and not definite enough to amount to prophecies, but he clearly regarded them as Divine intimations. Who shall say?

## IV

PROPHECIES<sup>2</sup>

ESTHER BIDDLE in 1657 crossed to Prince Charles at Breda and prophesied his return, which happened three years later.<sup>3</sup>

THOMAS FORSTER in 1659 prophesied the Great Fire; and his family, on his death, moved at his request, out of the city and were saved.

HUMPHREY SMITH in 1660 prophesied the Fire of London in great detail. He was convinced at Evesham in 1655 and after horrible treatment died in Winchester gaol in 1663.

SOLOMON ECCLES, in 1662, went round with coals on his head prophesying the Fire; and the Plague at the same time, covered with dung.

Four days before the Fire he prophesied it again, scattering his money to show the haste and disorder, and with his stockings down at his heels to show the same. He asked a woman Friend if there was a place called Southwark. She said Yes. He said that would be safe. She therefore removed all her goods thither. Her own house was destroyed.

SAMUEL WALDENFIELD in London foretold the wars in Ireland about 1690, six years before they occurred. And

<sup>1</sup> Woolman: *Journal*, ed. Gummere. 187.

<sup>2</sup> These stories are from William Bury: *A Collection of Sundry Messages and Warnings. Addressed by the compiler to the inhabitants of Bristol.* 1712, 1728. One must add that it was the thing amongst the wonderful band of early preachers in Bristol, to say that the city would be swallowed up by an earthquake, and its site occupied by a pool, with spires only above the water, unless it repented. Perhaps it did repent. Large meetings were established there.

<sup>3</sup> Also see G. Fox: *Journal* (1658), Bicent. ed., I, 445.

ten months before the Prince of Orange came over he sent round an Epistle that the calamities were at the door.

JUDITH BOULBIE, seven years before the wars in Ireland, declared in the streets of Londonderry that famine and sword should come upon them ; printed it and left it with them. In the great siege, where 11,000 died, they recalled the prophecy of that honest woman.

WILLIAM LONG of Jamaica told a magistrate that in a day named his dinner should be ready, but he should not stay to eat it. The magistrate boasted of the failure of the prophecy. But on the day named he left his dinner to go into the yard outside ; and while there an earthquake swallowed him up. This became very notorious in Jamaica and was often talked of thirty-five years afterwards.

## V

JAMES DICKINSON and JANE FEARON told their experience together, supplementing each other's recollections, when they were about 80 years old, to Sarah Taylor, then 18. The facts are so well known that I need not recount them here.<sup>1</sup>

The effect of direct Divine Guidance to James Dickinson was felt by him all through. But there was not necessarily anything beyond the faculties of an acute dalesman in the adventure. He would be sure to magnify the Divine assistance which endorsed his natural perceptions.

We may note that the Guidance did not prevent them stopping at the Inn ; they were trustful and confident

<sup>1</sup> For the benefit of those who do not know them the summary here given will explain the comments which follow.

In 1690, the two Friends, travelling together in the Ministry in South Scotland, stopped one night at a lonely house, though besought not to do so by their guide, who then ran away. From their room they heard unfriendly, ominous talk of themselves and their belongings. They left the house unobserved, abandoning their horses and bags, and made across the moor to a river. Avoiding the bridge at hand they followed the swollen stream and later waded across with difficulty, decided not to rest immediately and only did so on finding a depression in the ground which hid them. Their pursuers with dogs were heard. At daylight they returned to the house, which they found deserted save for one old woman, resumed possession of their horses and baggage, paid for their "entertainment" and went on their way.

Full accounts are printed in : *Annual Monitor*, 1816 ; Comly : *Miscellany*, V, 181 ; Budge : *Annals of Early Friends* ; L. V. Holdsworth : *Friends Q. Exam.*, 1917, and *Romance of the Inward Light*, 1932.—Ed.



people. But the earnest entreaty of their guide not to do so, and his departure, would be enough to set nervousness going from the beginning.

When they actually heard the people of the Inn talking of the value of their horses and their bags there was no need of an inner endorsement of their fears. Flight was the only course as soon as the place was quiet and the night dark.

Jane Fearon had no guidance at all but was in a state of collapse spiritually as she was physically.

The fear of pursuit by a bloodhound may have been, probably was, consciously or subconsciously in James Dickinson's mind, causing him to avoid the bridge and ford the river in desperation. I cannot but think that it must have been clear that the first sandbank was open to the river and the second concealed, even in the dark.

It was inherently probable that the miscreants, in danger from the police, when their victims reported the event, would get away at once.

The story that human remains in various states of decay were found in the house and its environs seems to me hardly credible in that form.

It is a case of a Divinely inspired faith and courage, combined with natural acuteness.

James Dickinson does not mention this incident in his very brief autobiography. He mentions the visit to Scotland in 1690, where he was present at the death-bed of R. Barclay. He does not give his companion's name. It may have sounded curious that she should be a woman. This was due to the fact that Peter Fearon her husband, who was to have gone with them, was taken suddenly ill, but insisted that the other two should go as arranged.

James Dickinson was born a Friend in 1659, and died in 1741. He must have been one of the earliest "born Friends". He spent his whole life travelling in the ministry, speaking first at the age of 19 and including American visits. His *Journal* was published in 1745 and again by Thomas Chalk in 1847, using the original MS. Since the 1745 edition was "considerably abridged", the above incident *may* have been in the MS.

After the journey to Scotland in 1690, James Dickinson was "truly thankful to the Lord, in that he had preserved us from the hands of unreasonable men". On his way

from Scotland he heard at Swarthmoor of the death of George Fox.

## VI

JOHN RICHARDSON in 1700 was sailing to America with three companions, inspected a ship in the Thames and "it was opened clearly to my mind in the light" that he only saw "death and darkness" in it. The ship was wrecked off the Channel Islands and it was said about seventy people were drowned. This reached him in America in two letters from England.

Before he landed he had a dream of a little white horse "which carried me well and many miles". After his first or second Meeting he came with John Estaugh near a great house in Maryland, and saw a little white horse which reminded him of his dream, and they called. The owner asked £8 for the Galloway. John bid him £5. The owner's wife thought that enough. The horse was bought and carried him about 4,000 miles.<sup>1</sup>

The story of Peter Gardner comes here.<sup>2</sup>

## VII

JOHN ADAMS, of Yorkshire, travelled in the Ministry to Holland and Germany in 1712, not knowing the language, and reports :<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Account of the Life of John Richardson, 1757* and many reprints.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Gardner (d. 1695), of Castle Hedingham, Essex, in 1694, had a concern to visit Friends in Scotland. He was but a weakly man, but with no horse, he left his wife and children and went northwards. He said the Lord had promised him hinde's feet. At Bridlington he lodged with John Richardson. His friends accompanying him on horseback were astonished at his speed on foot, saying he hardly seemed to touch the ground. At Bridlington he said he believed he must visit a Friend in a certain direction which he indicated. He was told that way was the sea. Before sunrise he went down to the sea and met on the quay a Friend, a stranger to him, whom he reprimanded for having prevented his wife's going on a journey she had been called to make. He was conducted to the house where the man's wife lay ill. He told her that her will to go a certain journey had been accepted by God for the deed and that she should die in peace. He then again spoke to the man for having hindered her going and told him his affairs would be blasted and himself reduced to want. The woman died, the man's three ships at sea were lost with his sons and their cargoes. Peter Gardner also foretold his own death by small pox. There are three other incidents of a similar kind recorded of him. John Churchman: *Journal*, Phila., 1818, 215-219; or Alexander Jaffray: *Diary*, London, 1833, 586-589. Also W. C. Braithwaite: *Second Period of Quakerism*, 447-449.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Swarthmore MSS. VI, 94.

1. A vision of Christ in light and glory encouraged him to go.

2. At Hull he found several ships ready to go, but was seized with a horror of darkness and as it were death, "fearing destruction if I went". But there were also ships going to London. Though that course seemed dim and afflicting, yet there was enough glimmering of light to go. They had a terrible storm, given in detail, but finally reached London safely. All the ships that had sailed to Holland were lost to the number of nine or ten, in the same storm, and the people perished.

3. An interview with the Devil in a dream, a horrible creature, who wanted to frighten him to return home from Friedrichstadt in Germany. He said his business was going wrong and his wife was dead, he produced her coffin, and testimony from a neighbour who appeared, and threats of Hell and damnation. He was about to flee home when his companion, John Richardson, got a letter from home to say all was well.

Were all three equal in value ?

## VIII

The Vision of THOMAS SAY of Philadelphia (1709-1796) is one of the best. "He was united to the Society of Friends when a young man, and throughout his life was remarkable for the tenderness of his conscience, and the benevolence of his character. He was guardian to a great number of orphan children, and was zealous in supporting schools, for black as well as white. . . . His mode of life was temperate and simple in the extreme."

I frequently used to stretch myself along upon a bench, viewing and counting the stars, and it often arose in my mind, "If there be no Divine Being, whence came the stars ? and why ranked in such order ?" These serious and expostulatory meditations caused me to sigh deeply and tears to flow down my cheeks, while my soul inwardly cried and said, Oh, if there be a God let me know it, before it be too late. . . . At length [being about the age of 16 or 17], he visited me with a sickness called the pleurisy, in which I continued for some time, in extreme anguish both of body and mind. Sometimes a small glimmering hope of mercy seemed to revive me a little ; at other times I was almost in despair. Thus I continued for nine days. The fifth and seventh days, being exceeding thirsty, I cried out to my mother, and said, "Oh, that I could get my thirst quenched for a moment, before I go hence, that I might enjoy a moment's

happiness ; for I am afraid that if it is not quenched here, it will not be quenched hereafter." . . . My speaking in this manner made my mother burst into tears, and say . . . " If that is thy state, what will become of the world " . . .

On the ninth day, between the hours of four and five, I fell into a trance, and so continued until about the hour of three or four the next morning. After my departure from the body (for I left the body) my father and mother, Susannah Robinson, and others, who watched me, shook my body, felt for my pulse, and tried if they could discern any remains of life or breath in me, but found none. . . .

When I opened my eyes I found myself laid on my back in my bed, as a corpse is on a board ; and I was told, after I got better, the reason why they did not lay me on a board was because my mother could at that time not find freedom to have it done. . . .

This they told me when I returned into the body, at which time I inquired why so many sat up with me, not knowing that they thought me dead. They were very much surprised to hear my voice ; the second time I spoke they all rose out of their chairs, and when I spoke the third time they all came to me. My father and mother inquired how it had been with me. I answered and said unto them I thought I had been dead and going to heaven ; and after I left the body I heard, as it were, the voices of men, women and children, singing songs of praises unto the Lord God and the Lamb, without intermission, which ravished my soul and threw me into transports of joy. My soul was also delighted with most beautiful greens, which appeared to me on every side, and such as were never seen in this world. Through these I passed, being all clothed in white, and in my full shape, without the least diminution of parts. As I passed along towards a higher state of bliss, I cast my eyes upon the earth (which I saw plainly), and beheld three men, whom I knew, die. Two of them were white men, one of whom entered into rest, and the other was cast off. There appeared a beautiful transparent gate opened ; and as I and the one that entered into rest came up to it, he stepped in ; but as I was stepping in I stepped into the body. When I recovered from my trance, I mentioned both their names, at the same time telling how I saw them die, and which of them entered into rest and which did not. I said to my mother, " Oh, that I had made one step further ! then I should not have come back again."

After I told them what I had to say, I desired them to say no more to me ; for I still heard the melodious songs of praises, and while I heard them I felt no pain ; but when they went from me the pain in my side returned again, for which I was glad, hoping every stitch would take me off, and longing for my final change.

After I told them of the death of the three men, they sent to see if it was so, and when the messenger returned, he told them they were all dead, and died in the rooms, etc., as I told them ; upon hearing it, I fell into tears, and said, " Oh, Lord, I wish thou hadst kept me, and sent him back that was in pain " ; after which I soon recovered from my sickness. The third [whom I saw die] was a negro, named Cuffee, belonging to the widow Kearney. . . . Some time after my recovery the widow Kearney,

the mistress of the negro man, sent for me, and inquired whether I thought the departed spirits knew one another. I answered in the affirmative, and told her that I saw her negro man die, whilst I was a corpse. She asked me, where did he die? I told her in the back kitchen, between the jamb of the chimney and the wall; and when they took him off the bed to lay him on a board, his head slipped from their hands. She then said so it did, and asked me if I could tell her where they laid him. I informed her that they laid him between the back door and the street door. She said that she did not remember anything of that. I told her he lay there whilst they swept under the window, where he was afterward placed. She then said she remembered it was so, and told me that she was satisfied. They were also clothed. The negro and the person who entered into rest [were] in white; and the other who was cast off had his garment somewhat white, but spotted. I saw also the body in which each lived when upon earth . . . but my own body I did not see. The reason why, I take to be this, that my soul was not quite separated from my body, as the others were

“Though Thomas Say lived to be an old man it was universally remarked by those who knew him that after this vision he walked through life like a traveller desirous to reach his home, . . . the other world was to him the reality, and this world was the shadow.”<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that he left his body, very nearly died, and actually saw three verified deaths, with much detail. He also felt deep happiness and relief. The details, the verdure, heaven's gate, we must not regard as topographical, but due to his mental furniture. Later he had a premonition of great illness, had yellow fever and nearly died, and had a vision of the throne in heaven and the heavenly hosts, on seats raised one above another in a square enclosure. And much from the Book of Revelation. He prayed to have the mystery of the Trinity explained, and was told, “This light that thou seest extending from the Father through me into the hearts of all mankind is one and the same Light.” “And I could say Lord I see it and my heart leaped for joy.” Whether he was in the body then or not he could not tell.

The following case was often quoted by J. W. Graham and he would probably have included it. It is therefore inserted here.—M.G.

Sarah Birkbeck (1706-1740) on her way home after a religious visit to Scotland was taken ill at Cockermouth. Her children at home at Settle

<sup>1</sup> From *Friends' Intelligencer*, 1859, viii, 27th. Text corrected by *Life and Writings of Thomas Say*, Philadelphia, 1796. Also reprinted in Weiss and Ziegler: *Thomas Say, Early American Naturalist* [the seer's grandson], Baltimore, Md., 1931.

were early one morning greatly delighted by their mother's appearing to them. They spoke of having seen her, and one of having heard her speak. The incident was noted down in an account of their doings during her absence, for report to her on her return. At the same time Sarah Birkbeck lay dying at Cockermouth. She said she would be ready to go if she could but see her children. After closing her eyes in complete stillness for ten minutes she looked up brightly and said, "I am ready now, I have been with my children", and then passed peacefully away. Upon comparison of notes it was found that the two experiences coincided exactly in time.<sup>1</sup>

## IX

A Plain Account of a Vision received by MR. FORTH, a Quaker about 60 years of age, of Heckmondwike, Parish of Birstall, Yorks, and taken down by the Parish Priest. Dyne MS., no date. Apparently made in the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Abbreviated.

He had had many scruples concerning the eternal welfare of his soul. A little after Shrovetide was a twelvemonth, when he and his wife were in bed, they heard three violent blows on the chamber floor above them. They were repeated. He asked who was there, and heard a voice bidding him arise. Forgoing his wife's company and a candle he went upstairs, hair on end and quaking with fear, and stood silent before the Lord in much fear. The blows were repeated between his feet. On his enquiry he was told he would leave his body for a few hours and be shown many things to his satisfaction. Some days after he felt he had to go home and read a chapter, and he cried mightily to the Lord for mercy. Some further days after he was taken with heaviness in the fields, came and lay on his bed, fell asleep and appeared to be dead for eight hours. Then he revived with great joy and told what he had seen, not to everyone, but to several serious persons. What he saw is just the landscape and furniture of the unseen world which his previous ideas would have produced. A high wall to be squeezed under in nakedness and humility. Briars and thorns. A high hill up which a good-natured man helped him—who was afterwards revealed as Jesus Christ. Torments of the damned in detail. People who made formal prayers had their backs turned to the great white throne

<sup>1</sup> *Journal, Friends Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Another copy in John Kemp MSS., 327, is dated July 7, 1747.

and were ineffectual. Those turned half-way were ineffectual too. There were the elders who laid their crowns at the feet of Christ. The Book of Life was there as large as a spacious field: names written in gold; but some dulled and some bright. He propounded the favourite theological question as to whether it was possible to fall from grace utterly. No answer was given. He could not see the face of Him that sat on the throne; because he was not pure in heart.

Vision remarkable but contents valueless.

## X

### "MUSINGS AND MEMORIES"<sup>1</sup>

SARAH TAYLOR of Manchester (1717-1791) visiting families of Norwich Meeting, was refused an interview by two brothers, who were members of a club of "infidels". She dreamt that she got up, dressed, walked certain streets in the early morning, noted names on doors, till she came to a house bearing the name of one of these brothers. She knocked, the man-servant said he had orders not to admit Quakers. But she went in and passed through to the garden and found the Friend in a summer house. He said "I believe the Devil could not keep the Quakers out." She sat down and "so spoke that the witness for the truth in him was reached". She awoke, saw that day was breaking, rose and set forth. The whole dream came true in every detail, even to the final triumph. Did she leave her body? That is a crude way to put it. A Heavenly Guide seems demanded by the facts.<sup>2</sup>

WM. DITZLER (1821-1897), a German, a Philadelphia Friend, addressing prisoners at Reading, Pa., could not say "brethren and sisters"—only "sister". There was only one female prisoner, though several other women present. Was he a mouthpiece of one with wider knowledge?

He felt drawn to read aloud from the Bible at the back window of his shop at the dinner hour daily, when his foreman was away. A young woman, in one of the rooms

<sup>1</sup> *Musings and Memories*, a collection of anecdotes. Philadelphia, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 271. The brothers were Edmund and John Gurney.

above, in a decline, heard, and though inaccessible to her minister, "died in the peace of redeeming love". Her minister called to tell him.<sup>1</sup>

## XI

A more ordinary case of Thought Transference at the time of death, occurred to MARTHA ROUTH (1743-1817) of Manchester, attending the Monthly Meeting at Warrington. An American Friend, Robert Valentine, it was announced, had decided to go back to Manchester although he had not concluded there. This struck a sadness like a dart through her whole frame. She knew her nephew and adopted son was dead, and that the funeral was the cause of R. Valentine's change of plan. She told her aunt; took refuge in a Friend's house, and told her; and then found inwardly he was drowned. Told her husband. Returning home they found his body laid out, due to an accident in a whirlpool by the bathing place.<sup>2</sup>

HESTER MOXHAM (1731-1798). Dream, 30.x.1762. In the first sleep after the birth of her daughter Deborah, she had an elaborate and very painful dream of Heaven and Hell and some formal worshippers in between, copied later for her by Ann Capper. She awoke, retaining the choking sensation of brimstone, and feeling for a time suffocated. She felt the vision was because she had long had a sense that she would be called to appear in the Ministry. This caused many struggles and deep conflicts through nine months of illness. If she continued disobedient she felt she would lose the use of her limbs. This happened. But when she gave in to be obedient the paralysis suddenly fell away. She went to Meeting and preached for the first time. She lived till 1798 and was buried at Melksham, Wilts.

This is perhaps the worst of the struggles against Ministry.<sup>3</sup>

JOHN KING, on returning from service in Ireland dreamt he was pleasantly ruminating on the great service he had had, when a strong man came up to fight him and said his name

<sup>1</sup> Memorial of Philadelphia M.M., 1898, *Annual Monitor*, 1899.

<sup>2</sup> From Martha Routh's letter, 27.vi.1782. MS. copy in Portfolio 18, III Part printed in *Records of the Gibbins Family*, Birmingham, 1911.

<sup>3</sup> Dyne MS. The Dyne MS. was copied from one by Joseph Williams, Junr., made for Rebecca Jones apparently in 1785.



was Self. They fought and John left him for dead and walked about in great elevation on his tiptoes, as if the place could scarce contain him. Then came a much stronger man who was Self Redivivus who completely defeated John and pressed him down under him. But he got his head out and prayed for Heavenly help. This was granted and he killed Self; and walked afterwards humbly and modestly all his days.<sup>1</sup>

## XII

REBECCA JONES (1739-1817), on 25th April, 1784 was inspecting ships at Chester in the Delaware for England. There were two—the larger was a merchant vessel quite suitable. They sat in silence in the cabin. Samuel Emlen saw only "death and darkness". Others agreed with him. So they sailed on the other one, smaller, but quicker; it had been a privateer. They travelled safely. A fortnight afterwards the merchantman was towed in, on her beam ends, keel out of water, after a time of great danger and distress.<sup>2</sup>

Mother and daughter fleeing from a dangerous seat in Cork—told at Shanagarry in 1698 to Thomas Story.<sup>3</sup>

"Go to Launceston." Saved a life in the Court.

Red morocco pocket book. Seen by Prisoner.<sup>4</sup>

A resident of Plymouth was awakened from sleep by an insistent inward voice calling to him "Arise and go to Launceston". After some hesitation he saddled and rode thither in the night, twenty-two miles. After breakfasting at an inn he enquired the features of interest in the town and was advised to attend the assizes. There he found a prisoner in the dock asserting his innocence of a burglary, of which it seemed likely he would be pronounced guilty and sentenced to death, saying he was in Plymouth and could prove it if he had the witness of the man he was with. He then recognized the stranger in the gallery as the man he wanted. Although the latter had no recollection at first, the truth of the prisoner's claim was proved by reference, under the date in question, to his red morocco note book in which the prisoner claimed he saw him make a note of their interview. The narrator, a minister in the Society in Cornwall, does not state that the man experiencing the call was a Friend.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Allinson: *Memorials of Rebecca Jones*. Philadelphia, 1849. 51ff.

<sup>3</sup> When William III's army invested Cork "a Gentlewoman of good sense and character" and her daughter were sitting in their house. Under a sudden fear she felt a strong impulse to move from their seat and cross the room, which was no sooner done than a cannon ball struck and smashed it to pieces. Neither of them was injured. *Journal of Thomas Story*. Newcastle. 1747. 133.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> *Musings and Memories*. Philadelphia. 1875. 177ff.

Cases of telepathic communication between leading ministers naturally occurred. Rebecca Jones lying near death from yellow fever in 1793 told Thomas Scattergood of his intention to travel in Europe, which he had opened out to no one, and encouraged him in it. She said the Lord sometimes entrusted some of His secrets to her, and she was faithful in keeping them.<sup>1</sup> Stephen Grellet, in London on his way to his great Third Journey to Europe, told William Allen that the Lord had designed that he should go with him as companion. Independently, before Stephen Grellet came, the same concern had been upon William, who was a man much in affairs in London. The engagement lasted two years, 1818-1820.<sup>2</sup>

GEORGE DILLWYN (1738-1820) and his coming in to the two arguers about Special Providence, at dinner-time and when raining.

G. D. sitting at home in Burlington, N.J., felt impelled to go out, not knowing whither. Reaching a certain house he entered it and found two men arguing. One had just said he would believe in particular Providence if George Dillwyn should then enter the room.<sup>3</sup>—Ed.

He saw that Sarah Grubb was on *terra firma*, when Friends were anxious about her being delayed in crossing the Irish Sea. They turned round to Ballitore and met her on the road.<sup>4</sup>

When Samuel Emlen and his Friend George Dillwyn were in London together sitting in a Meeting, George Dillwyn was feeling that some religious service was being called for from him but where he did not know. Samuel Emlen suddenly turned to him and said, "Thou must go with me to Holland."<sup>5</sup>

George Dillwyn had become closely attached as a father in the Truth to a young minister from England, named Susanna Horne. She went home in 1812. George Dillwyn in much brokenness and humility rose after a Meeting for Worship in Burlington and said that she had arrived safely in England. This was duly verified many weeks afterwards.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of Rebecca Jones*. 1849. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet*. 1862. I, 316.

<sup>3</sup> James Hurnard: *A Memoir*. 1883. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Scattered Fragments rel. to G. D.* 1858. 18.

<sup>5</sup> R. M. Jones: *Later Periods of Quakerism*. 227.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 225.

THOMAS SCATTERGOOD'S LIFE (1748-1814) is one continuous record of a service fulfilled in frequent poverty of spirit, one silent Meeting after another, always helplessness, and at times the Lord's power glorified. In 1797 he had a call a hundred miles away "Go to Sheffield. Go to Sheffield. It shall be shown thee that thou shalt do. Hasten thee. Hasten thee." The result was a wonderful series of meetings. There were said to be 3,000 people at each of at least three gatherings, and others nearly as large. A special meeting for journeymen and apprentices, and another for female servants, to which 2,000 came. There were many other Meetings for Friends—all in great power. Friends had filled up a large old foundry with gallery and seats for a Meeting room. Ten Meetings were held altogether, in twelve days.<sup>1</sup>

A friend had borrowed \$5,000 for land improvement, \$3,000 from a rich friend and \$2,000 from an Insurance Company. Under a commercial panic, both creditors suddenly demanded their money the same day. His land was unsaleable at such a time and he was in great distress. He attended Arch Street Meeting to gain help. John Leachworth arose and addressed one in peculiar money embarrassment, encouraged him, adding "The money will come before thou needs it." After Meeting he visited his rich creditor, who had started for Europe and left a message that he was to take his time in repaying. In the afternoon a Friend, Thomas Stewardson, called and asked "Dost thou want to borrow two thousand dollars?" Thus, in the atmosphere of a Meeting for Worship, some helper or help had come through three people.<sup>2</sup>

JOHN JUSTICE, Bucks Co., Pa., a good Methodist, was impressed to go to Meeting, but for a long time would not, as he did not believe in Divine revelation to the souls of men. One day, almost involuntarily, he felt impelled to go to Meeting in Kay's Alley, Philadelphia. He decided to bend down behind the bench in front, and to sit by the door, so that anything applicable to him must be by Divine revelation, as he could not be seen. In that position a piece of writing was shown him, and he read it. It vanished, and another came and was read. Then Samuel Smith arose,

<sup>1</sup> Evans: *Memoirs of Thomas Scattergood*. 1845. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Musings and Memories*. 1875. 173.

quoted the first passage and part of the second and sat down. Then Thomas Scattergood rose, and repeated the rest of the second passage. Then he affectionately addressed someone in John Justice's state, as though familiar with all his secret thoughts and exercises from his youth. So he came to believe in Divine Revelation and became a Friend and Minister. I suppose the first of the Justice family of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

THOMAS LEE, formerly of Exeter, Berks Co., Pa., felt he must go to a neighbour's, just in time to save workers in a quarry from an overhanging landslide. One was temporarily buried in the earth but got out alive.<sup>2</sup>

### XIII

ARTHUR HOWELL, who frequently seemed to use telepathy or clairvoyance or premonition, once felt on a Sunday morning that he must go from home in Philadelphia to Germantown in haste. Near the (then) village he met a funeral. It was revealed to him that the deceased was a woman whose life had been saddened by the suspicion of a crime of which she was innocent; and that she wished him to say so at her funeral, though she was a stranger to him. He attended the service and afterwards asked to speak, told about the false accusation and said that in a few weeks she would be cleared—that she had had a certain talk with a clergyman then present a few weeks before her death. He then repeated the interview. The clergyman, astonished, said it was correct word for word, but known to no living being on earth but himself. The woman had left her baby in the fields for a short time on a bed of leaves. On returning it was gone. Vain search was followed by suspicion against the mother for infanticide. This, though never openly brought out, had clouded her life, already bereaved. She also told the clergyman that the young man to whom she had once been engaged, had never forgiven her for not marrying him. Evidently some connection with him was in her mind. A few weeks later the young man confessed that he had stolen the baby. He had followed her to the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 353.

<sup>2</sup> *Musings and Memories.* 1875. 163.

field, and overcome by jealousy in revenge he had carried the baby off ; and had placed it out to nurse ; where it was found alive and well.<sup>1</sup>

Points in this narrative seem to make it certain that the dead mother told her tale after death to a perceptive sensitive soul, Arthur Howell.

Another incident of Arthur Howell's sight of things to come is recorded in Stephen Grellet's *Journal* for 1798. Stephen was devoting himself to the care of sufferers from the Yellow Fever epidemic—had himself had the disease and nearly died, was indeed registered among the deaths. On his first Second Day morning meeting he was able to attend Arthur Howell mentioned his recovery, saying that the Lord had a service for him to the isles and nations far off, to the east and west, the north and south. Stephen Grellet was then twenty-five years old, a recent convert only two years in membership and just recorded a minister. Such a vision of the future had occurred to himself in his sickness, and from that source it may telepathically have reached Arthur Howell—but one or both had a vision of a remarkable future abundantly realized.<sup>2</sup>

The mother of Isaac T. Hopper writing in her diary long preserved in the family, said that it was often told her from the Lord in a still small voice, without outward sound, "Thou shalt lose a son, and he is a pleasant child." Her son James lived with relatives in Philadelphia and was drowned when bathing in the Delaware in trying to save a friend. A messenger came to tell her, but before she saw him she heard the Inward Voice: "James is drowned," and said abruptly to the messenger, "Thou hast come to tell me that my son James is drowned."<sup>3</sup>

Isaac Hopper told Jacob Lindley that once in a serious illness his spirit had left his body for several hours during which time he saw visions of heavenly glory not to be described. He felt grieved that he had to come back and never after felt the same interest in earthly things.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. M. Child: *Isaac T. Hopper*. 1853. 259. Pike: *Quaker Anecdotes*. 1880. 201.

<sup>2</sup> B. Seebohm: *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet*. 1862. 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Isaac T. Hopper*. 1853. 262.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 258.

## XIV

STEPHEN GRELLET and the Shanty in the wood miles away. Verified years after by a man in London, who had been reformed from an evil life.

Stephen Grellet, on his way to preach in a lumber camp while in America, came to a deserted camp and felt impelled to preach in one of the empty huts, though nobody was in sight. He then returned without going further. Years later a man stopped him as he was crossing London Bridge, saying that, returning to the old camp for some forgotten tools, he had heard the sermon, been changed by it, and that as a result of this not less than a thousand souls had been saved.<sup>1</sup>—Ed.

Stephen Grellet, at that time a young business man of 25, in New York, felt, on hearing that John Hall of Cumberland was coming to America on a religious visit, that he must stand prepared to be his companion. He prayed that if this were the case, it might be given to John Hall to see it clearly himself. When in New York, John Hall took him aside and told him in a solemn manner that he was the identical person he had seen at sea, prepared of the Lord to be his companion. Stephen Grellet was even then very cautious, went with him as far as Philadelphia "to try the fleece". He found it the right duty.<sup>2</sup> They became lifelong friends. Wilfrid Irwin showed me a letter written to John Hall by Stephen Grellet in later life, on business.

Stephen Grellet tells how he heard from a near relative about a young man named John Carter in North Carolina, who felt it his duty to open a disused Meeting House and sit in it alone. One day he felt it his duty to rise and speak to empty benches. Soon after sitting down in came several young men, his former associates, who had followed him out of curiosity, and had been listening outside through the cracks. They were much affected, some continued to come and became valuable Friends. The Meeting was built up till it was a large one, and was called Spring, from having thus sprung into renewed life.<sup>3</sup>

Entering a Meeting at Williamsport, a town across the Alleghenies in the heart of Pennsylvania, Stephen Grellet

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Garrett: *Short Life of Stephen Grellet*. Philadelphia. 1917. 27-28.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet*. I, 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Musings and Memories*. Philadelphia. 1875. 347.

felt that the yellow fever had broken out in New York, and he heard "One of thy near relations is taken with it." With a feeling of submission and surrender he devoted his mind to the interests of the Meeting, and took a powerful part in it. He thence went to Norwich and had a Meeting. Under the strong impression that some of his near relatives were down with the fever he believed to have broken out in New York, he set off for home. He crossed the mountains. In a couple of days he heard that there was yellow fever in New York, and "it seemed as if I was following some of my near relatives to their grave". He preached a strange, but peculiarly suitable sermon, and hastened home. Found his mother-in-law had died, and his wife was lying very dangerously ill. She was conscious of his presence in the room. She just recovered but remained long an invalid.<sup>1</sup>

## XV

The practice of "visiting families" by these anointed ministers did what the confessional does for Roman Catholics and more than pastoral visiting does among Protestants, in binding the ministers to the people. It was pastoral work at its deepest. The family would gather, and sit in living and urgent silence. The minister after deep preparation would be likely to speak, and might easily end by addressing the company individually—often in a most revealing way; it was rather to be expected, or at least hoped, that the minister would successfully "read the state" of someone. Even if this consummation was not reached, the family and the visitor had shared an intimacy not easily forgotten. They had been together in the presence of the Lord. The labour to these devoted ministers of a series of a dozen family visits a day, totalling hundreds at the end, must have left them like a squeezed lemon at the end, as with a Quaker chaplain going from cell to cell among conscientious objectors to military service.

SAMUEL EMLÉN of Philadelphia (1730-1799) was one of these seers. A young man, visiting Philadelphia with his father, knowing that he had something to conceal, kept

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Garrett: *op. cit.*, 19-20.

away from the awe-inspiring reader of thoughts, sat at the bottom of the Meeting, unluckily found he had to dine at the same house at Samuel Emlen's own suggestion. After dinner he sat in the remotest corner of the parlour—but Samuel fell into silence, and addressed the fearful youth in a way that revealed all his secret. But sympathy accompanied, and good resolutions fairly kept closed the encounter.

On another occasion in a company of two others, one a youthful elder, the other advanced in years, Samuel began to speak to the state of a young man, very grievously. The elder did not feel that it fitted him, and he went out by the half-opened door, only to find a young man standing weeping in the next room.<sup>1</sup>

I have once experienced this family sitting from an American Friend in my youth. I regret to say that it was all wrong in my case, and I thought it was pretence. This gift cannot be had by routine.

ELIZABETH NEWPORT (1796-1872) began to speak in the Hicksite Meetings in Philadelphia in 1829, just after the separation; but the theological issue does not appear to have meant anything to her. She was in delicate health constitutionally, and the mother of eight children, of whom six survived. The very early religious experience which seems to come to all these favoured seers, came to her. "At the early age of five or six, I was so forcibly impressed with the love of my heavenly Father, that I earnestly desired that He would take me out of the world rather than that I should live to offend Him."<sup>2</sup> Her ministry developed rapidly and family visits formed a conspicuous part of it. She habitually saw with great definiteness into the "states" of the people present. Seventy-three pages of her memoir yield seventy-one striking cases. She travelled in the Ministry with intervals till 1862, so long as health lasted. She was frequently shut up from speaking at all, but when the Master opened the way, she would sometimes speak for an hour and a half. She ordinarily did about ten family visits in a day. She felt the tax and the fatigue they imposed all the time. She suffered, and lay

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Jones: *Later Periods of Quakerism*. 226, 227.

<sup>2</sup> A. Townsend: *Memoir of Elizabeth Newport*. Philadelphia. 1878. 6.



afterwards a physical and mental remnant, a temporary wreck.

Her first recorded telepathic experience was three years before she began to preach. On the evening of her mother's funeral she heard a voice which might have been her mother's saying "Fear not, Eliza, another and a greater trial awaits thee: this night two weeks thy little Margaret shall be taken from thee." She at once told her sister. The child was then well but had the infection of measles and died at the time named.<sup>1</sup>

This brings in the difficult phenomenon of Premonition, of which there were not a few instances in Elizabeth's life. She once addressed a large family with convincing power. One son, she said, would if faithful become a minister, which he did. One daughter was told that it would be her privilege to nurse her beloved father who would ere long be taken ill—that by her devoted care she would relieve his pain—and that soon after his death she would follow him. Within a few months both had died.<sup>2</sup>

Once after having had a sitting with a family, she returned in a day or two and asked to see a relative who lived in another part of the house, and of whom she knew nothing. She warned him that his days were numbered and that his mind and thoughts were too much absorbed with earthly things. He could not take his earthly things with him. He was, actually though unknown to her, wealthy and miserly. He lived only a few months.<sup>3</sup> No wonder that a mother of a family who were upstairs when Elizabeth called, said to her husband and children:—"Now let us all go down and see what the old witch has to say to us." When seated in silence downstairs, Elizabeth turned to the mother and said "I must tell thee I am not an old witch." Nothing more was said at that sitting.

With regard to Premonitions I have nothing to say by way of explanation. The Society for Psychical Research has collected an enormous number. But they have no theory which brings them into touch with other facts. All we know is that there appears to be in our spiritual environment something outside Time—something Eternal in its

<sup>1</sup> Townsend: *op. cit.*, II.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 47.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 69.

nature. And it is not surprising that one whose mind and heart were strenuously directed to God who dwells in eternity, should from time to time function in a timeless Eternity. More I cannot say.

One peculiar kind of intuition used to come to Elizabeth Newport. She would feel that she was wanted in a certain geographical direction, and sometimes when the names of people who lived that way were given, she would identify the name, which she appeared to know.

Once, when resting upstairs after dinner, she came down saying there was no rest for her. She was heavy-hearted and the cause was over there. Her host drove her out of the lane, and said, "Now, Elizabeth, which road shall we take?" She replied, "Turn to the left and follow this road about half a mile." So she continued to point out the way for several miles, though the road was very winding and most difficult for a stranger to find. At a certain house, "This is the place," she said. The man's "state of doubt and unbelief was portrayed, and his condition represented as a fearful one". It was a solemn time, and the man thanked her for coming; and after Elizabeth Newport's death said all her predictions had been fulfilled.<sup>1</sup> These experiences of stretching out to the minds of others were not easy. They were extremely costly, and painful often, followed by utter exhaustion.

She travelled much in the slave States and had many close interviews with slave-holders. She was uncompromising but her views seem always to have been received quietly and without anger or violence. A woman can perhaps be tolerated more than a man. Joseph Hoag met with anger and sometimes threats of violence, in similar testimony.

The Ministry which ran to an hour or an hour and a half had somehow missed its mark, and deserved to die out. I met its last manifestations in America in 1896. By that time it had long died out in England, but I am just old enough to remember its last exponents, or at any rate preachers who maintained the old mannerisms—the intonations, the sonorous passages from the Old Testament, "the Key of David and the bright and morning star". Thought had not gone to its making, subject was to seek, and human

<sup>1</sup> Townsend: *op. cit.*, 118.

capacity for fruitful listening was strained beyond any elastic rebound. It came from a part of the personality not in contact with the world above the threshold of consciousness, with supra-liminal humanity.

## XVI

WILLIAM BECK (1823-1907) was crossing a flooded river on the South Island of New Zealand—in the Ottira Gorge, by a tree trunk as an improvised bridge, slipped and hung on only by his arms. He was not muscular, but drew himself up to everyone's astonishment. That night he told his travelling companions that he had felt a hand placed beneath him, which lifted him up.<sup>1</sup>

Explanation only conjectural, but there is somebody who helps us.

SYBIL JONES (1808-1873) whom perhaps some old Friends still remember on her visits with Eli Jones to England, had for a time, but only at any rate exercised for a time, this uncanny gift of premonition of deaths, in visiting New York Yearly Meeting.

Once she pointed in Meeting to a Friend, John R. Willets, sitting with his back to her on one of the forms facing the Meeting, and said that he would die in a few days. In less than a fortnight he fell through a skylight in his own house and was killed. In a family visit she prophesied the early death of one present. A boy who was there died in a week.

We may be glad that this terrifying faculty, or at any rate its exercise, did not persist.<sup>2</sup>

*Dreams, Visions and Essays*, 1927, by Ada S. Wormall (d. 1931).<sup>3</sup>

WILLIAM FORSTER'S (1784-1854) private interview with the young Benjamin Seebohm at the age of 17 at Tottenham, at the time of Yearly Meeting in 1815.

<sup>1</sup> *The Friend* (London). 1907. 791.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. S. Wood : *Friends in New York City in the Nineteenth Century*. Privately printed. 1904. 63-64.

<sup>3</sup> She recounts many cases of psychical experience both in her own life and in those of others. It contains a section on the experiences of Friends.—Ed.

Never to be forgotten was a private interview with Wm. Forster. . . . At his request Mary Stacey, Sarah Hustler and I retired with him from the company into another room. After a short pause, he addressed me in a very remarkable manner. The secrets of my heart seemed to be laid open before him and some things he said were so unusual and so strikingly in accord with my inmost feelings that the impression never left me.<sup>1</sup>

#### MARY PRYOR (1737-1815).

In 1797 before a ministerial visit to America she followed the practice of some Friends in choosing her ship by visiting it and sitting in it in silence to feel whether she was guided to embark in it or not. After rejecting several she chose an unseaworthy vessel, the *Fame*, with a drunken master. On the voyage the *Fame* leaked so badly that in spite of ceaseless pumping she began to sink. When rescue seemed impossible Mary Pryor encouraged the seamen by announcing she had a vision of a ship approaching, foretold its name and the approximate time of its reaching them. Events proved her right and the company were all saved.<sup>2</sup>—Ed.

### APPENDIX

#### ELI YARNALL : PREMONITIONS.<sup>3</sup>

The remarkable case of Eli Yarnall is not properly part of our subject at all. There was about this boy nothing religiously notable. It is only inserted because it is an undeniable case of the reality of consciousness and mental action at a distance, of telepathy and some premonition. So that it is not any longer hard to accept the stories as facts. Stones split the same way whether broken into ruin by earthquake, or craftily cut for use in building ; and so apparently do minds. The mental excitement of the hero and the lunatic are alike in their mechanism, but differ in their cause.

The account below is taken, with abbreviations, from a MS. written by John Fry,<sup>4</sup> an English Friend travelling in America, and dated April 1797—a contemporary narrative. I have given his facts, not verbally, but omitted his reflections. He puts the faculty down to a Divine gift intended to defeat the ideas of infidels.

He puts down Eli as a boy of nine, at the time presumably when most of the phenomena occurred, or when he saw him : but they would appear to have occupied more than one year. His mother was a widow, a Friend with three children living at Redstone, a Quaker colony in West Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> *Private Memoirs of B. and E. Seebohm.* 1873. 103.

<sup>2</sup> John Thompson MSS. 390. Summarized in R. M. Jones: *Later Periods of Quakerism.*

<sup>3</sup> He must not be confused with another Eli Yarnall, of Chester Co., Pa., who was a well-known minister and died in 1812 in his sixtieth year.

<sup>4</sup> Portfolio 2, 17.

There would appear to have been some bad people there besides Friends. But I notice that in the Journals of the many ministering Friends who visited the Meeting there, it is spoken of as a place where spiritual life was low. Two such visitors mention the boy Eli, and one says that his mother always declined to accept payment offered for his clairvoyance, believing it to be a gift which would be degraded by making money through it. This testifies to the notoriety of the case. John Fry says he selects a few cases only out of many, as follows :

1. His father (presumably his mother had not been long a widow) had once not returned from a journey at the time expected. Eli said he would return the next evening with another man, not expected, whose name he gave. He said, "They are on the top of a little hill on the Laurel Ridge. Their jug of water has just fallen. They are laughing to see it rolling down the hill." The mother made a memorandum of these points, and they were all confirmed.

2. He told his mother that he saw a company of men marching in blue uniforms, coming to Redstone from Philadelphia. Their boots came half-way up their legs, and were tied with strings. When doubt was thrown on this, he persisted and called his brother to look ; of course in vain. They were a military body on the march.<sup>1</sup>

3. A number of neighbours and strangers came to see him ; and after some unwillingness to be questioned, he described without effort their houses and families.

4. Not only can he see outward events, but inward intentions and designs ; so they told and described to John Fry.

5. A neighbour consulted him about a lost hoe. He said who had taken it and in what field he was now working with it. The culprit determined on revenging himself on the boy, who clairvoyantly saw him coming, and hid himself.

6. Another bad man who resented his revelations tried to waylay him on his way to school, and again on his way home. He did that for two days, but Eli, knowing of it clairvoyantly, went and returned by himself another way ; and the man desisted. Next day Eli accompanied the other boys as usual, and explained that he knew his enemy had given it up.

7. He became offensive to certain bad characters. So for safety he was removed to the protection of a Friend and Minister, Rees Cadwallader, who lived elsewhere "where he now is", writes John Fry (1797).

8. On his arrival there Rees asked him when and how he, Rees, would take a contemplated journey. This was by way of a test. The boy answered : on such a day, on horseback, with a named companion. "No," Rees answered, "my wife is going with me, so we go in a chaise." But his wife fell ill, and the journey was taken as foretold.

9. A man named Garratt came some distance to consult Eli. He had come home and found his house burnt down and his two children gone. Eli told him that certain persons whom he described had killed his

<sup>1</sup> The MS. states that this was found to relate to soldiers sent from Philadelphia against some rebels.

two children with a stick which he would find all bloody in a particular corner of his barn, accurately described. They then burnt the house, taking away two single horse carts loaded with his property. The whole story was found to be true.

10. His eldest sister had an acquaintance with a young man of whom his mother disapproved. The mother consulted Eli as to what was happening. He replied "Thou need not be uneasy about my eldest sister, but my second sister will marry him," which happened in the fulness of time.

11. Charity Cook and Philip Price, travelling ministers, investigated him when they came to Redstone. The latter says he made mistakes sometimes, but his answers were generally true. He says he closed his eyes and spoke without hesitation. He told how many children Charity Cook had, and that she had lost two; described her house and its aspect (N, S, E, or W.) from four to five hundred miles away. He said her husband was away at a great town. She knew he was intending to go to Charleston. She herself was on her way to England on a ministerial journey. He did not know this; but said he saw her on a ship. To Philip Price he told the number of his children and that two were away from home at two different places.

12. An inquiry was organized from Philadelphia to propound test cases, arrange for people to be doing certain things at fixed times, when questions were to be asked of Eli: quite in the best manner of the S.P.R. This inquiry was proceeding when John Fry was there. The boy jokingly said to an inquirer from Philadelphia that he might bring him a warm overcoat from his store at home. This puzzled the inquirer and was a mistake. The boy had visited the wrong store, and next morning was aware of it, saying "Thy store is full of bottles of doctor's stuff, and there is a man walking about there with an odd awkward arm," whose motion he imitated exactly. This man was the apothecary's servant who had a maimed arm.

13. Eli said there was a little boy beyond the sea who had the same faculty that he had—that one of them would die and the other grow up. I have not verified this. It appears that there was a clairvoyant boy in Dublin at that time, who "has been" totally blind.

I know nothing more at present about Eli; except that I remember one of the Minister's Journals says his gift did not last all his adult life.

For was and is and will be are but is,  
 And all creation is one act at once,  
 The birth of light: but we that are not all,  
 As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,  
 And live perforce from thought to thought, and make  
 One act a phantom of succession; thus  
 Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time.