themselves into systems of suns and planets, but with this difference from ours, that the suns were very large and surrounded with a wide luminous haze, and each of the planets was self-luminous, like a little sun. In some the planets were dancing up and down in spiral lines. In others they were moving in one plane. In still others, in every variety of direction. Some had vast numbers of little planets and satellites. Others had a few of larger size. There were even some of these systems that had a pair of central suns of contrasting colours. The whole scene was so magnificent and beautiful that I thought I could never weary of gazing on it. "Here," said he, "we have the most beautiful condition of systems of worlds, when considered from a merely physical point of view: the perfection of solar and planetary luminousness, but which is destined to pass away in the interest of things more important, if less showy. This is the condition of the great star Sirius, which the old priest astronomers of the Nile Valley made so much of in their science and religion, and which they called Sothis. It is now known by your star-gazers to be vastly larger than your sun, and fifty times more brilliant.[1] Let us select one of these systems somewhat similar to the solar system, and suppose that the luminous atmospheres of its nearer planets are beginning to wane in brilliancy. Here is one of them, through whose halo of light we can see the body of the planet. What do you now perceive?" The planet referred to was somewhat larger in appearance than our earth, and, approaching near to it, I could see that it had a cloud-bearing firmament, and that it seemed to have continents and oceans, though disposed in more regular forms than on our own planet, and with a smaller proportion of land. Looking at it more closely, I searched in vain for

[1] In evidence of these and other statements I may refer to Huggins' recent address as President of the British Association, and to the "Story of the Heavens," etc., by Sir Robert Ball.