

THE PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALIST

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VOL. 8.

CHICAGO FEBRUARY 3, 1894.

NO. 219

OUR ECLECTIC MAGAZINE

THOUGHTS FROM FOREIGN EXCHANGES.

They Will Prove An Intellectual Feast!

And Bring Our Readers in Touch With the Old World

They Will Give You a Comprehensive View of Spiritualism.

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OUR ECLECTIC MAGAZINE.

The Cream of Foreign Literature

PUBLISHED EVERY 8TH WEEK.

This MAGAZINE will contain the CREAM of our Foreign Spiritualist exchanges. It will prove invaluable to every reader of the Spiritualist. This number will be devoted exclusively to Spiritualism and kindred subjects in foreign countries. The two worlds, Light, Medium and Dark, are all equally good, always containing some rays of truth, something of great value, something with which each one should be familiar. Each one will find in the future to draw upon, to assist in making for our readers an INTELLIGENT PRIZE of rare merit. Spiritualists, insist that your neighbor shall join with you in subscribing for our paper. Insist upon his contributing at least a cent per week for our support in this great work.

OH! RELIGION!

The Religion of Criminals.

How the Criminal Feels Toward God.

Facts! Facts! Facts!

FROM THE ITALIAN OF PROFESSOR CESARE LOMBROSO.

[I have translated the following article from Lombroso's great work on the Criminal ("L'Uomo Delinquente," quarta ed., Torino, 1893, vol. I.), in which it forms the eighth chapter of the third part, devoted to "the biology and psychology of the born criminal," pp. 434-441. Some interesting facts respecting the religion of English criminals may be found in Mr. Havelock Ellis's "The Criminal" (London: Walter Scott, 1890), pp. 156-161.]

There are many people who think all criminals are irreligious, because religion applies the most potent of all restraints to every defective mind in the spiritualist ranks. This number will be devoted exclusively to Spiritualism and kindred subjects in foreign countries. The two worlds, Light, Medium and Dark, are all equally good, always containing some rays of truth, something of great value, something with which each one should be familiar. Each one will find in the future to draw upon, to assist in making for our readers an INTELLIGENT PRIZE of rare merit. Spiritualists, insist that your neighbor shall join with you in subscribing for our paper. Insist upon his contributing at least a cent per week for our support in this great work.

Da mihi fallere: da justo sancto quo videri. Noctem peccatis et fraudibus obijce nubem.

In Cervantes' third novel, in which he has well depicted criminals, one of them, Rincon, says to his companion: "I am a thief in order to serve God and upright people." "What sort of a god is that?" "I do not wish," is the reply, "to discuss theology; but everybody after his fashion praises God, and our chief wishes that of every one of our thefts a part may be employed for oil for a holy image, and it is to that we attribute the miracle that many of us did not feel the agony of the torture. Many of us do not rob on Friday, nor on a woman bearing the name of Mary. As for restitution, it never occurs to us to think of that."

Dostojewski observed among his companions (in Siberia) a remarkable respect for Christmas, and was to him who should disturb the peace at that time! At Easter they prayed with true devotion, and all made offerings of peace and wax-candles for the church. "Every thief has his devotions," says the proverb; and we have found, among the fastidious criminals, 238 with religious symbols. In criminal argot, God is the "magno" ("First of May"), the "soul's perpetua" ("the everlasting"), "proving a belief in God and in the immortality of the soul." In Spanish argot, the Church is known as "safety."

German murderers believe themselves secure from all suspicion if they leave their execution at the place where they have committed their crime. Among us (the Italians) they dip their finger in the blood of the victim, and then make the sign of the cross, and believe that they may obtain divine pardon by wearing for a year the shirt

which they had on when the crime was committed.

"Thieves are always superstitious," writes Ave Lalemant, in the Middle Ages they were even believed to be inspired, and transported from place to place by the devil. Handsalter injured eight of his mistresses when pregnant in order to take out the heart of the fetus to wear when he went to steal. In 1802 Charles Le Beau performed similar operations upon pregnant women in order to obtain from the fat of their embryo children a light which should lull to sleep those who were to be robbed. Thieves believe that their victims will not wake while they are still employed in their room, if they cover them with ash.

Gottfried carried about with him a written prayer: "Dear Lord God and dear Mary, send me to a house in which there is plenty of money!" Ave tells of a Jewish prisoner that for an entire year, while in prison, he took only coffee and bread, lest he should contravene the rabbinical law.

In a curious ballad in argot, published by Biondelli, a thief replies to those who object that robbery violates the principles of religion, that there is already one thief, Saint Dismas, among the saints in heaven. St. Dismas is also in the mountains and in the sea. Tortora, who had killed by his own hand twelve soldiers and also a priest (but one who was, as he claimed, excommunicated), believed himself invulnerable, because he had carried the consecrated host in his bosom.

A famous band of criminals in France adopted a series of rites of their own for births and marriages in their society; they had, partly in joke, partly in earnest, their curate, who presided over the marriages, concealing, mutatis mutandis, in Latin. The nuptial ceremony consisted, in addition to these prayers, in the couple jumping over two rods crossed and held by one of the chiefs of the band, who asked the bridegroom after the manner of our syndics: "Vagabond fellow, will you have this woman?" The question was reversed for the woman, and, upon receiving a reply in the affirmative, the order was given, "Then jump." It is curious that divorce was prohibited under severe penalties in this society, and was only conceded when, in later years, it was introduced into the revolutionary laws of France. In 1670 Parisian female poisoners of high degree alternated their "succession powders" with diabolical masses to obtain the death of a husband or the fidelity of a paramour. A priest read mass to a pregnant prostitute, and afterwards cut the throat of the child, whose blood and ashes served as a philtre. Voltaire alone killed 2,500 of these tiny victims.

The Manzani band of brigands was loaded with amulets. That of Aruso met woods and grotesque reputations, sacred in honor of which they burnt holy candles. Verenzi, who strangled three women, was one of the most sincere and exemplary attendants at church and confessional, and was descended from a family not only religious, but bigoted. The companions of La Gala sent to prison at Pisa refused obstinately to eat on Fridays during Lent, and when the prison governor remonstrated, replied: "What do you really take us to be a lot of excommunicated heathens?"

The greater part of London thieves, says Mayhew, make a profession of knowing the Bible. And even now the thieves and camorristi of Naples make splendid gifts to St. Pascal, whose magnificent convent they adorn; and a few years ago, as the famous patriot, Vincenzo Maggiorani, revealed to us, the archbishop published upon the gates of the cathedral a compendium—that is to say, a list of prices to be paid to the Church in order to cancel any sin whatsoever. The murderers, Bertoldi, father and son, used to assist every day at mass, upon bended knees, their faces almost touching the ground. A Neapolitan youth of twenty-four, who had killed his father, was devoted to a certain Madonna. "Indeed," he said, "it was over her hand that we quarreled, and at the first stroke my father fell upon the ground." When Maria Forlini, who had strangled a child and torn it to pieces to be revenged of its parents, heard the death-sentence pronounced, she turned around to her advocate and exclaimed: "Death is nothing; the salvation of the soul is everything. That saved, the rest is not worth troubling about."

Boggia, a tramp, condemned at Milan as guilty of thirty-three murders, listened every day to mass; held the canopy during the Holy Sacrament, and preached continually morality and the

religion of Christ; and there were no pious associations in which he had not part.

La Trossarelli was most devoted to a special Madonna. Troppmann, writes the Abbe Crozes, confessed himself on August 23, 1870. On the 25th he committed his notorious butchery. Vidocq found some thieves who said a mass for luck, after having obtained nothing for some months.

L'Avelline, murderer of her husband, in letters to her accomplice, continually invoked God to aid her in her crime. "Avaline is not well," she wrote, "if God wills it. He is ill. Oh! if God would have pity upon us, how I should bless him. When he complains [of the effects of the poison] I praise the Lord in my heart. I have burnt a wax-candle for the realization of my project." And her accomplice replies: "I shall go to mass to-morrow. I pray heaven that it may aid us to attain our object." And again: "He was ill yesterday; I thought God had commenced his work. I have wept so much that it is not possible that God can pass over my tears without pity."

Zambecari made a vow to present a chalice to Notre Dame de Loretta if she succeeded in poisoning her husband. Giovanni Mio and Fontano, before killing their enemy, betook themselves to confession, and Mio remarked after the murder: "God did not wish to be mixed up in this matter, nor even the priest; I myself got him into it."

"B, before her husband had become cold, threw herself down upon her knees and prayed to the Blessed Virgin because she had given her strength to accomplish her evil deed. Michiell, accepting the plan of an assassination, said to his companion: "See and do as God inspires you." Gall tells of a thief who robbed to build a church, and robbed to be able to furnish it; and of a band of criminals who believed they saw assassins reciting a Lord's prayer for every single victim. Laocellange, while strangling a poor man, gave him absolution in articulo mortis, and upon selling stolen property said mass, and when Vincent of Aragon murdered a student he did not forget to first give him absolution. How most religious, or, better, most bigoted, was the Marchioness de Brinylliers, who, in cold blood, long before her arrest, made a catalogue in writing to the secret confessional, including her parricide, her arson, her poisonings, and her immorality, as well as her omissions or less diligence in confession, and who, from the first, held strictly to the rites of the Church, and refused to eat fat on fast days! And there were Mendace, wife-murderer, who went to his death singing the De Profundis, and Martinali, who founded a prison-chapel in which to say his devotions. And Mo, a murderer, was he not called and believed by all to be the saint?

Bourse had scarcely finished a theft or a murder when he went to kneel down in church. The girl Gallia, according to Despine, while setting fire to the house of her lover, was heard to cry: "Now may God aid the Blessed Virgin do the rest." Madame, a wife-murderer, who went to his death singing the De Profundis, and Martinali, who founded a prison-chapel in which to say his devotions. And Mo, a murderer, was he not called and believed by all to be the saint?

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certain sum of money, promised to exchange Catholicism for Protestantism; but the promise was never fulfilled, for they afterwards recanted, and returned to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Not a few, though believers in the Christian religion, will not believe in the existence of a hell. They are utilitarians even in their faith.

All this is very natural, because religion is the result of an atavistic sentiment, and, except in absolute barbarism, grows much more when the mind is less cultivated and the people more primitive, and, because in its degeneration religion accommodates itself to all excesses.

AGNOSCO.
in *Agnostic Journal*, London, Eng.

CHRISTIAN-PAGAN VICE

Appalling Crimes and Superstitions.

Christian writers, both Catholic and Protestant, never weary telling us how dreadfully wicked and immoral the Pagans were. One cannot lift a religious book without finding reference made to the impiety, lawlessness, adulteries, and murders of the heathen. Christian writers have told us that Augustus was a great adulterer; that Titus was a notorious drunkard, and that he accepted an invitation to sup on 'only on condition' that he should be waited upon by naked wenches; that Caligula wished to be able to cut human throats with a wink; that Claudius Drusus complained that it had always been his misfortune to be fettered in unchaste wedlock; and that Nero fastened the Christians on crosses and burnt them to death. Christian writers have faithfully recorded all the crimes, all the debaucheries, all the adulteries, all the impiety, all the abominations, and all the vices of the Pagan world. In "The History of the Twelve Caesars" the writer says that Vespasian died blaspheming. "Methinks," quoth he, "while sitting on the close-stool, I am defying or growing up to be a god." Apparently Vespasian was a Freethinker after my own heart. Christian men, I say, have faithfully recorded all the baseness of the heathen world, forgetting that nothing, absolutely nothing, is gained.

History proclaims that the orgies of the Vatican far exceed in mass and in fouls the orgies said to have been committed in the palaces of the Pagan emperors. We learn from Hallam, Lecky, Mosheim, Wylie, M. Pelice, and others, that no adequate idea can be formed of the depravity of Christian popes and Christian priests. "Men," says Dr. Wylie, in his essay on the Papacy, "sat Peter in the chair of Peter; whose consciences were stained with perjuries and adulteries, and whose hands were stained with murder." And Edgemoor says: "A mass of moral impurities might be collected from the Roman hierarchy sufficient to crowd the pages of folios, and glut all the demons of pollution and malevolence." Pope, bishops and priests were guilty of the most disgusting crimes. Love feasts became the scenes of debauchery, and priests, while professing celibacy, kept mistresses; and some actually paid a tax for the privilege of living in unlawful commerce.

The next time Canon Farrar ventures to write on Pagan vice and Pagan baseness, I hope he will bear in mind that the names of John XII., Boniface VII., John XIII., Sixtus IV., Alexander VI. (Borgia), Julius II., Innocent VIII., and other pontifical villains, are stained with the foulest crimes. In common fairness he ought also to remember that, after the assassination of the Duke of Guise, women and girls, covered only with a chemise or sheet, formed night processions in the streets of Paris, and, in the midst of sacred songs, revealed in the robes of the Virgin, all the abominations of the French Revolution. Canon Farrar would, doubtless, turn up his eyes and whine that "they gave themselves up to unnaturalia, worthy of the Pagan world in its most vicious days."

M. Pelice, the French historian, tells us that the soldiers of the League committed acts of infamy even on the steps of the altars, and that the disgusting atrocities committed in the church of St. Symphorien, as well as in that of St. Armand and many others, cannot be recorded in print. The Cardinal of Lorraine gave one of his bastard daughters in marriage to the murderer of Coligny; and it is recorded that time upon time ecclesiastics have actually pawned the vestments and utensils of the church as well as pawned the manuscripts of the gospels. It is on record that monasteries and cathedrals were built with Jewish money, and when the day of reckoning came, Christian knights, Christian nobles, and Christian ecclesiastics repaid their debtors, not with money, but with death and pollution.

Canon Farrar and Earl Russell ought to hide their heads in confusion and in shame, instead of slandering dead Pagans. Vice, forsooth! Canon Farrar should think of the court of Catherine de Medici. Courtiers actually kept wax figures in their cabinets, and into these rude statues they stuck pins in order to bring about the death of their enemies. The same superstition prevailed in Scotland some two hundred years ago. In show of the wealth of the court of the clergy, and of the people and of the soldiers was a mixture of superstition and gore and immorality. Margaret of Valois, the princess of Conde, the duchess of Nemours, of Guise, of Montpensier, all led lives of immorality and sin. The Devil. Two out of thirty-four applicants, in order to secure a

IN FOREIGN LANDS.

Cleanings Therefrom by "Light," London.

CREMATION—SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS—N. F. RAVLIN—PREDICTIONS—THE BERLIN SEANCE—MATERIALIZATIONS

CREMATION AND SPIRITUALISM.

In the Spanish journal "Constancia," of Buenos Ayres, the subject of cremation in connection with Spiritualism has been mooted, and the question is treated in the following fashion: Given the Spiritualistic theory that the soul and body remain united for a certain time after death, does cremation, disintegrating immediately the molecules of the body, not place itself in opposition to a natural law? In reply "Constancia" says: "As a general rule the spirit separates from the body at the moment of what we call death, and in certain cases, some seconds previously. There are instances, however, when the spirit seems bound to the body for a brief time, but are twenty-four hours have elapsed the separation is complete. In all these examples the ties after death do not signify punishment, but a natural fact which may be modified through the action of a natural law. The only case in which the spirit remains apparently united to the body for many days, months or years after death is when a punishment is undergone, or, to speak more accurately, when the link is the fulfilment of a natural law. With a suicide, for example, it often happens that the spirit sees itself united to its body as punishment for having sought to liberate itself contrary to morality, which commands us to be resigned to the trials of life and submissive to Divine law." "Constancia" believes these ties to be only seeming. "The conviction which the spirit experiences that it is still attached to a decomposing organism is merely the logical result of an infraction of natural law, and it is the conscience of the being—in these moments realizing the enormity of its guilt—which makes it believe itself united to the material which is hateful to it. Cremation is, therefore, in no way prejudicial to the action of natural or moral law."

IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS?

From the "Neue Spiritualistische Blätter" we take the following comments on a paper in "Photographic Adversaria." At the head of a long and highly interesting article by Dr. Th. Hansmann there are some photographs of the writer with an unusually plain image of the deceased American President, General Grant, and we must say is one of the best that we have seen. The General's bust appears sometimes beside and sometimes in front of the doctor's figure, so that it almost looks as if the half of the latter's body were enclosed in that of the General, as in a case. The whole of Dr. Hansmann's left shoulder, breast and arm are covered by the apparitional image, and although they are seen as through a mist or veil, the contour of the figure, coat of arms, vest and shirt-front are plainly discernible. The most remarkable feature here is again, as we have found, the difference in the size of the different figures—the different size of the two images. General Grant is taken as big again as Dr. H., so that his image is not fully on the plate, and is only visible as far as the left shoulder. A further remarkable thing is the different lighting. That on Dr. H. comes from the right, while that on the spirit image falls from the left, so that the shadows of both mingle. (If General Grant manifested twice as large as Dr. H., one focus would give the image exactly as described. The curious thing is that all the pictures which the "Blätter" has seen were of that description, as that implies that all the apparitions on them manifested themselves to the camera double the size of their mediums.)

REV. N. F. RAVLIN.

The Spanish paper, "La Irradiacion," gives an interesting biography of this indefatigable Spiritualist, from which the following paragraphs are selected: He was born in New York State in 1831. While very young he was at farm work from dawn to dusk. At eighteen he became a woodcutter, and then he sold a small farm which he owned in order to procure funds for educational purposes. He became a convert to Christianity at nineteen, and abandoned his other work to study for the ministry; was made a pastor at twenty, and preached in Chicago for fourteen years afterwards, where he drew immense congregations, and by means of his preaching paid off the debts of some fifty-one Baptist churches. In 1881 he went to California, to the church of St. Joseph, an edifice which, four months after his arrival, collapsed. He had it rebuilt, endowed it with a magnificent organ, and it is now said to be the grandest and most beautiful church in the city. He studied for two years at Manchester University, and settled ultimately in a provincial pastorate, but his modes of thought were, apparently, too advanced for the orthodox, and he eventually retired. During his public ministry he was a determined opponent of Spiritualism, but one day, while in the home of Dr. Schlegel, he found the elements of Spiritualism. He was in his own home, he prosecuted his researches and demonstrated the reality of the life beyond the grave. For seven years he has been a "confirmed" Spirit-

ualist, and since then almost all the "so-called" doors which were formerly open to him have been closed. Thanks, however, to his work, the Spiritualist Society prospers and its members increase.

PREDICTIONS.

In the course of an article by M. Jean Frolo, editor of the "Petit Parisien," the following singular series of predictions occurs. It is quoted by "Le Spiritisme," from whose columns we take it. The celebrated Dr. Liebeault was one day visited by a young man who bore traces of much excitement. He told the doctor that a prediction, at which he laughed at first, was once made to him by a woman. She told him he would lose his father in a year; that he himself would become a soldier for a very short time; that he would soon marry; and that he would die at the age of twenty-six. Dr. Liebeault's predictions had been fulfilled as precisely as could be imagined. His father died; his own period of military service extended to seven months; he afterwards married and there were two children. He was approaching his twenty-sixth year, and he confessed to be somewhat afraid. Dr. Liebeault thought him a monomaniac who required to have his mind disabused of the notion which had taken possession of it. He therefore put him to sleep, and while in this state suggested brighter and more cheerful ideas to him, and that he would not die for forty years. The effect was marvelous. He became quite gay; the fixed idea which had haunted him entirely vanished, and he absolutely forgot his former fears. One day, however, Dr. Liebeault received an intimation of the death from peritonitis of his former patient, at the age of twenty-six. "In order that it may not be supposed," writes the doctor, "that what I have narrated is an extravagant illusion of my own mind, I still retain that letter as well as the register from which I have drawn the foregoing observations. These are two written irrefragable witnesses."

THE BERLIN SEANCES.

From "Psychische Studien"—On Monday evening, September 18th, the second of these seances was held under somewhat less favorable conditions than on the previous Saturday evening. When Dr. Gr. C. Wittig, the representative of Herr Aksakow, entered the room in company with Madame Wittig, there was a large number already assembled and seated. Dr. Wittig says: "My wife and I were this time seated in the middle, opposite the medium. On my left sat Herr Nordmark, the President of the Gothenburg Society, who had come with us, and on whose left sat Dr. Egbert Muller. After a considerable amount of harmonic playing and of singing, the materializing forms did not venture far in front of the curtain. On this occasion it was to be dark, and the medium had in consequence donned a bright toilet, but she was also only recognizable on her chair by means of an exceedingly weak light. Still, during the appearance of the forms, I heard her several times talk with Mr. Fidler and Herr Rahn, who sat at her right hand. The apparitions moved at first around the medium, and hardly ventured farther than to a distance of about three paces from the surrounding sitters. The total distance of the half-circle from the medium was something like six paces. Some of those sitting on our right received; it is true, a few handshakes, as also did my wife once from a woman, life-like hand, but they were of transient duration, and I personally had no experience of them. Herr Nordmark, beside me, had some flowers in his hand, from which he took a rose and repeatedly offered it to a form which came near to us, but she drew slowly back, although he several times begged her to take it. She did not come close to us, but remained in the middle, between the medium and the sitters. Thereupon Herr Nordmark got up and approached the feebly glowing shape which kept moving to and fro the front portions of her veil, and pressed into her hand the rose, which she now accepted, whereupon its outline was plainly seen, relieved against the white, shimmering bosom of her dress; and she at once withdrew behind the left side curtain, but immediately reappeared to the medium's right, and gave the rose to Herr Rahn, who was heartily grateful for this distinction. In the intervals of playing and singing new shapes constantly appeared before us, but they were very timid, and their visits of brief duration, though once, on our right, there were three little ones quite close together. Later a female form of medium height appeared and danced before us, keeping good time to the harmonica music, and waving her veil about in a graceful manner. At the same time I heard the medium speaking in her place with Mr. Fidler and Herr Rahn. A subsequent shape which, however, I did not see approaching us, quite unexpectedly threw a black veil over my wife's head and face, from behind forwards, the head having been first touched by a hand. This enabled my wife to realize quite plainly that the veil was of a fine, soft texture, but neither before it was placed over her nor after its removal did she perceive any form in front; and immediately afterwards a white handkerchief was flung in my face over my glasses, and fell before me to the floor. I instantly stooped for it, thinking in that way to reach the invisible form that threw it, but I found neither the handkerchief nor any shape before me, although as I rose, a long strip of veil was over my head, and a lady and gentleman behind touched the ends of it and held them. That were,

however, requested to release it, and as the invisible being drew it away over my head I felt the fine material disturbing my hair when with my right hand, I seized it, and plainly realized its soft muslin texture as it folded together. As soon as I let it go it was swiftly drawn away. In spite of all my efforts I could perceive nothing in front of me. Immediately thereafter a discussion arose on our right as to whether a piece of the material might be cut off, but the medium declined to permit it. Shortly afterwards a fine kind of drizzle was driven into the faces of many of the sitters, including my wife, but I did not perceive it. Finally we heard, as those present were singing, a song, a light voice joining in from the back-ground of the cabinet. A lady and gentleman were asked by the medium—who had in the meantime caused the red lamp to be lit—to sing a song together, and we heard, as if behind the curtains, a still lighter voice accompanying. We saw the medium now plainly sitting opposite us.

"These last experiments occupied about fifteen minutes while in the brighter light no more forms appeared in front of the curtain, although we could see now and then something peering out at the sides. I counted on this evening nineteen forms. Some of the sitters, who afterwards expressed their opinions to me, did not appear to be quite convinced, as they had not, unfortunately, seen the medium sufficiently. As the singing and playing was always silenced during the appearance and disappearance of the different forms, the slightest movement of the medium's chair must have been observed, and as she was brilliantly clad, her rising up and sitting down, or her entrances and exits between the curtains of the cabinet, could not fail to be noticed. Those who know the lady more intimately than the doubters are far removed from any kind of suspicion, and those who saw, as I did, parcels of glimmering light shoot up from the floor at my feet, and develop into such forms, would see how impossible it is that these phenomena can originate with the medium. Further, I say, and many others with me, several forms before us at the same moment of time."

MATERIALIZATIONS IN CHRISTIANITY.

From the Italian journal "Annali dello Spiritismo," we extract the following portion of an account of a seance in the above town. On June 19th, at half-past seven, about fifteen ladies and gentlemen of the Psychological Society were present by invitation, but the total number of the sitters amounted to about thirty. The conditions were not particularly favorable in consequence of some discontent manifested by a portion of the company with regard to the positions which were assigned to them. The sitting was opened with a hymn sung by four voices, but the medium, who sat outside the cabinet, was slightly upset. Now and again various long white shapes seemed to project from it, but their efforts to leave it entirely were futile. Observing this, it was proposed to diminish the light, which was done, though still leaving quite sufficient to enable almost everyone present to watch the medium. The writer of the article never, in fact, lost sight of her for a moment, and could almost distinguish everyone in the room. Many shapes manifested, and developing after the manner of apparitions, slowly opened the curtain from the inside as if to make us understand their inability to get outside. Several of us heard a creaking sound within the cabinet and fancied the spirits meant in that fashion to signify their annoyance at being unable to act in conformity to their own wishes. The medium suggested that the light should be turned up and the sitters rearranged, which was done, with very satisfactory results. Several forms appeared at both sides of the medium, but they still kept in the vicinity of the cabinet and had a vaporous appearance, while some seemed to dematerialize and vanish into the floor. Suddenly, and to our surprise, a tall and well-developed form stepped from the cabinet to the right of the medium. She raised her right arm, and all those sitting near her saw under the white veil that it was a woman's arm, perfectly formed and revealed from the shoulder downward, the fingers being long and jeweled. She shook hands with some and touched others, and then re-entered the cabinet only to reappear, however, almost immediately, when she advanced three paces and stopped, moving her arm up and down under her veil. She once more returned to the cabinet, but came out again almost instantly, and this time a very rare occurrence is recorded. The apparition went straight to one of the sitters, who is called Mr. E., and this gentleman's account of what happened to him is given in his own words: "When the spirit came out of the cabinet, for the third time she came hastily towards me, seized my hands, and made me rise from my chair, drawing me into the open space in the middle of the circle. During this incident I observed that the form was almost of my own height, and I am above the medium stature. She then placed her hands on my shoulders, a movement which enabled me to see very clearly under the white drapery of the veil that her arms were round and perfectly formed. In my turn I extended my hands towards the spirit, and found that the form was solid and completely materialized. She then slightly drew back, still keeping her hands on my shoulders, while with some force she obliged me to kneel on the floor, and pressed, for a few moments, her hands on my head, beginning to say, 'I have been a confirmed' Spirit-

Continued on 6th page.



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VOL. 8.

CHICAGO FEBRUARY 3, 1894.

NO. 219

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OH! RELIGION!

The Religion of Criminals.

How the Criminal Feels Toward God.

Facts! Facts! Facts!

FROM THE ITALIAN OF PROFESSOR CESARE LOMBROSO.

[I have translated the following article from Lombroso's great work on the Criminal ("L'Uomo Delinquente," quarta ed., Torino, 1889, vol. I.), in which it forms the eighth chapter of the third part, devoted to "the biology and psychology of the born criminal," pp. 434-441. Some interesting facts respecting the religion of English criminals may be found in Mr. Havelock Ellis's "The Criminal" (London: Walter Scott, 1890), pp. 156-161.]

There are many people who think all criminals are irreligious, because religion applies the most potent check to crime—in fact, some of the masters of crime, such as Lacenaire and Lemaire, and in general the criminals of our great cities, have found it advisable to free themselves from whatever check might be placed upon the exercise of their brutal passions, and go to the opposite extreme, ridiculing not only the religious but also the moral sentiment. The majority of convicts, however, more especially if country born, are very far from being Atheistic; and, indeed, they fashion for themselves a religion, sensual and accommodating, which makes the God of peace and justice a sort of good-natured teacher of crime. Casanova, who should have known something of this matter, has observed that all those who live by unlawful professions put their trust in the help of God. Horace puts into the mouth of a vagabond the words, "Beautiful Laverna, goddess of thieves," and—

"Da mihi fallere: da justo sancto que videri
Noctem peccatis et fraudibus obijce nubem."

In Cervante's third novel, in which he has well depicted criminals, one of them, Rincone, says to his companion: "I am a thief in order to serve God and upright people." "What sort of a god is that?" "I do not wish," is the reply, "to discuss theology; but everybody after his fashion praises God, and our chief wishes that of every one of our thefts a part may be employed for God for a holy image, and it is to that we attribute the miracle that many of us did not feel the agony of the torture. Many of us do not rob on Friday, nor touch a woman bearing the name of Mary. As for restitution, it never occurs to us to think of that."

Dostojewski observed among his companions (in Siberia) a remarkable respect for Christmas, and was to him who should disturb the peace at that time! At Easter they prayed with true devotion, and all made offerings of peace and wax-candles for the Church. "Every thief has his devotions," says the proverb. In criminal argot, God is primo maggio ("First of May"), and the soul la perpetua ("the everlasting"), proving a belief in God and in the immortality of the soul. In Spanish argot, the Church is known as "safety." German murderers believe themselves secure from all suspicion if they leave their excrement at the place where they have committed their crime. Among us (the Italians) they dip their finger in the blood of the victim, and then suck it. The gypsies, after a murder, believe that they may obtain divine pardon by wearing for a year the shirt

which they had on when the crime was committed. "Thieves are always superstitious," writes Ave Lallemand. In the Middle Ages they were even believed to be inspired and transported from place to place by the devil. Handsalter injured eight of his mistresses when pregnant in order to take out the heart of the fetus to wear when he went to steal. In 1802 Charles le Beau performed similar operations upon pregnant women in order to obtain from the fat of their embryo children a light which should lull to sleep those who were to be robbed. Thieves believe that their victims will not wake while they are still employed in their room, if they cover them with ashes.

Godfried carried about with him a written prayer: "Dear Lord God and Mary, send me to a house in which there is plenty of money." Ave tells of a Jewish prisoner that for an entire year, while in prison, he took only coffee and bread, lest he should contravene the rabbinical law. In a curious ballad in argot, published by Biondelli, a thief replies to those who object that robbery violates the principles of religion, that there is already "one thief, Saint Dismas, among the saints in heaven. St. Dismas is also in the mountains and in the sea." "Dismas, who had killed by his own hand two soldiers and also a priest (but one who was, as he claimed, uncommunicated), believed himself invulnerable, because he had carried the consecrated host in his bosom.

A famous band of criminals in France adopted a series of rites of their own for births and marriages in their society; they had, partly in joke, partly in earnest, their curate, who presided over the marriage ceremony, muttering some prayers in Latin. The nuptial ceremony consisted in addition to these prayers, in the couple jumping over two rods crossed and held by one of the chiefs of the band, who asked the bridegroom after the manner of our syndics: "Vagabond fellow, will you have this woman?" The question was reversed for the woman, and, upon receiving a reply in the affirmative, the order was given, "Then jump." It is curious that divorce was prohibited under severe penalties in this society, and was only conceded when, in later years, it was introduced into the revolutionary laws of France. In 1670 Parisian female poisoners of high degree alternated their "succession powders" with diabolical masses to obtain the death of a husband or the fidelity of a paramour. A priest read mass to a pregnant prostitute, and afterwards cut the throat of the child, whose blood and ashes served as a philtre. Voisin alone killed 2,500 of these tiny victims.

The Manzi band of brigands was loaded with amulets. That of Caruso met in woods and grotesque reputed sacred, in honor of which they burnt holy candles. Venzoni, who strangled three women, was one of the most sincere and exemplary attendants at church and confessional, and was descended from a family not only religious, but bigoted. The companions of La Gala sent to prison at Pisa refused obstinately to eat on Fridays during Lent, and when the prison governor remonstrated, replied: "What do you really take us to be a lot of excommunicated heathens?"

The greater part of London thieves, says Mayhew, make a profession of knowing the Bible. And even now the thieves and camorristas of Naples make splendid gifts to St. Pascal, whose magnificent convent they adorn; and a few years ago, as the famous patriot, Vincenzo Maggiorani, revealed to us, the archbishop published upon the gates of the cathedral a compendium—that is to say, a list of prices to be paid to the Church in order to cancel any sin whatsoever. The murderers, Bertoldi, father and son, used to assist every day at mass, upon bended knees, their faces almost touching the ground. A Neapolitan youth of twenty-four, who had killed his father, was devoted to a certain Madonna. "Indeed," he said, "it was over her hand that we quarreled, and at the first stroke my father fell upon the ground." When Maria Forlini, who had strangled a child and torn it to pieces to be revenged of its parents, heard the death-sentence pronounced, she turned around to her advocate and exclaimed: "Death is nothing; the salvation of the soul is everything; the saved, the rest is not worth troubling about."

Borgia, a tramp, condemned at Milan as guilty of thirty-three murders, listened every day to mass; held the canopy during the Holy Sacrament, and preached continually morality and the

religion of Christ; and there were no pious associations in which he had not part.

La Trossarello was most devoted to a special Madonna. Troppmann, writes the Abbe Crozes, confessed himself on August 23d, 1870, of the 25th he could not find his way to the altar. He admitted his notorious butchery. Vidocq found some thieves who said a mass for luck, after having obtained nothing for some months.

L'Aveline, murderer of her husband, in letters to her accomplice, continually invoked God to aid her in her crime. "Aveline is not well," she wrote, "if God wills it. He is ill. Oh! if God would have pity upon us, how I should bless him! When he complains [of the effects of the poison] I praise the Lord in my heart. I have burnt wax-candle for the realization of my project." And her accomplice replied: "I shall go to mass to-morrow. I pray heaven that it may aid us to attain our object." And again: "He was ill yesterday; I thought God had commenced his work. I have wept so much that it is not possible that God can pass over my tears without pity."

Zambecari made a vow to present a chalice to Notre Dame de Loreto if she succeeded in poisoning her husband. Giovanni Mio and Fontana, before killing their enemy, betook themselves to confession, and Mio remarked after the murder: "God did not wish to be mixed up in this matter, nor even the priest; I myself got him into it."

V. B., before her husband had become cold, threw herself down upon her knees and prayed to the Blessed Virgin because she had given her strength to accomplish her evil deed. Michielin, accepting the plan of an assassin, said to his companion: "See and do as God inspires you." Gall tells of a thief who robbed to build a church, and robbed to be able to furnish it; and of a band of criminals who believed they saw assassins reciting a Lord's prayer for every single victim. Lacollange, while strangling a poor man, gave him absolute in articulo mortis, and upon selling stolen property said mass. And when Vincent of Aragon murdered a student he did not forget to first give him absolution. How most religious, or, better, most bigoted, was the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, who, in cold blood, long before her arrest, made a catalogue in writing to the secret confessor, including her parricide, her arson, her poisonings, and her immorality, as well as her omissions or less diligence in confession, and who, from the first, held strictly to the rites of the Church, and refused to eat fat on fast days. And there were Mendacio, wife-murderer, who went to the first mass, the De Profundis, and Martingon, who founded a prison-chapel in which to say his devotions. And Mo, a murderer, was he not called and believed by all to be the saint?

Bourse had scarcely finished a theft or a murder when he went to kneel down in church. The girl Gallia, according to Despine, while setting fire to the house of her lover, was heard to cry: "Now may God and the Blessed Virgin do the rest." Masina, having met three countrymen, among whom was a priest, proceeded to saw the throats of two with a knife badly sharpened, and then, turning to the priest, his hands still covered with blood, demanded to communicate with the sacred host. A thief, brought up in a Christian school, hid his stolen property under the picture of its founder, believing his booty to be secure under the protection of that semi-saint.

Many prostitutes, says Parent, though assuming an irreligious air with their paramours or with their companions in the orgy, are still not such at heart, as many observations have proved. The priest refused to enter into a house of ill-fame to minister to one of these women who was dying. The members of the brothel arranged to have her removed elsewhere, and then, in order to say a great number of masses for the other companion who had died, subscribed a large sum of money. Another having her child taken ill, burnt holy candles to obtain its cure. A Neapolitan prostitute, in honor of St. Bridget, abstained on Tuesday. Those of Paris will not, unless compelled, carry on their business on Friday.

This religiosity can be, moreover, proved by statistics, by the frequency of attendance at church. Marro found among 500 convicts:

Regular attendants, 46 per cent.
Irregular attendants, 25 per cent.
Non-attendants, 33 per cent.

and among 100 normal individuals:

Regular attendants, 57 per cent.
Irregular attendants, 33 per cent.
Non-attendants, 29 per cent.

Among sexual offenders the attendants amount to 61 per cent of the whole number, and among murderers to 56 per cent. Maxime du Camp looked into thirty-three of the cellars at Mazas during service, six prisoners only were moved or attentive, the others remained at work. Out of two hundred murderers Ferri could not find one who was not religious.

Rossi found fourteen devotees among forty convicts, but all possessed a religion of their own; while five out of sixty-eight declared themselves devout, but added that they went to church when they should not have gone there, and many said that in prison they confessed to pass away the time. Of another group five out of seven became enemies of God, because they had asked him for sins and he had sent none, therefore they revolted and gave themselves to the Devil! Two out of sixty-four epileptics, in order to procure a

certain sum of money, promised to exchange Catholicism for Protestantism; but the promise was never fulfilled, for they afterwards recanted, and returned to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Not a few, though believers in the Christian religion, will not believe in the existence of a hell. They are utilitarians even in their faith.

All this is very natural, because religion is the result of an atavistic sentiment, and, except in absolute barbarism, grows much more when the mind is less cultivated and the people more primitive, and because in its degeneration religion accommodates itself to all excesses.

AGNOSCO,
In Agnostic Journal, London, Eng.

CHRISTIAN-PAGAN VICE

Appalling Crimes and Superstitions.

Christian writers, both Catholic and Protestant, never weary telling us how dreadfully wicked and immoral the Pagans were. One cannot lift a religious book without finding reference made to the impiety, lewdness, adulteries, and murders of the heathen. Christian writers have told us that Augustus was a great adulterer, that Tiberius was a notorious drunkard, and that he accepted an invitation to supper only on condition that he should be waited upon by twelve wenches; that Caligula wished to be able to cut human throats with a wink; that Claudius Drusus complained that it had always been his misfortune to be fettered in unchaste wedlock; and that Nero fastened the Christians on crosses and burnt them to death. Christian writers have faithfully recorded all the crimes, all the debaucheries, all the adulteries, all the impieties, all the robberies, and all the perjuries of the Pagan world. In "The History of the Twelve Caesars" the writer says that Vespasian died blaspheming. "Methinks," quoth he, "while sitting on the close-stool, I am defying or growing up to be a god." Apparently Vespasian was a Freebinker after his own heart. Christian men, I say, have faithfully recorded all the rascality of the heathen world, forgetting that nothing, absolutely nothing, is gained.

History proclaims that the orgies of the Vatican far and away exceed in foulness the orgies said to have been committed in the palaces of the Pagan emperors. We learn from Hallam, Lecky, Mosheim, Wylie, M. Felice, and others, that no adequate idea can be formed of the depravity of Christian Pagans and Christian priests. "Men," says Dr. Wylie, in his essay on the Pappay, "sat Peter in the chair of Peter, whose consciences were stained with perjuries and adulteries, and whose hands were stained with murders." And Edgar says: "A mass of moral impurities might be collected from the Roman hierarchy sufficient to crowd the pages of folios, and glut all the demons of pollution and malevolence." Popes, bishops and priests were guilty of the most disgusting crimes. Love feasts became the scenes of debauchery, and priests, while professing celibacy, kept mistresses; and some actually paid a tax for the privilege of living in unlawful commerce.

The next time Canon Farrar ventures to write on Pagan vice and Pagan rascality, I hope he will bear in mind that the names of John XII., Boniface VIII., John XXIII., Sixtus IV., Alexander VI. (Borgia), Julius II., Innocent VIII., and other pontifical villains, are stained with the foulest crimes. In common fairness he ought also to remember that, after the assassination of the Duke of Guise, women and girls, covered only with a chemise or sheet, formed night processions in the streets of Paris, and in the midst of sacred songs, revelled in debauchery. Canon Farrar would, doubtless, turn up his eyes and whine that "they gave themselves up to unnaturalia, worthy of the Pagan world in its most vicious days."

M. Felice, the French historian, tells us that the soldiers of the League committed acts of infamy even on the steps of the altars, and that the disgusting atrocities committed in the church of St. Symphorien, as well as in that of St. Agnes, and many others, cannot be recorded in print. The Cardinal of Lorraine gave one of his bastard daughters in marriage to the murderer of Coligny; and it is recorded that time upon time ecclesiastics have actually pawned the vestments and utensils of the church as well as pawned the manuscripts of the gospels. It is on record that monasteries and cathedrals were built with Jewish money, and when the day of reckoning came, Christian kings, nobles, and Christian ecclesiastics repaid their debtors, not with money, but with death and spoliation.

Canon Farrar and Earl Russell ought to hide their heads in confusion and in shame, instead of slandering dead Pagans. Vice, forsooth! Canon Farrar should think of the court of Catherine de Medici. Courtiers actually kept wax figures in their cabinets, and into these rude statues they stuck pins in order to bring about the death of their enemies. The same superstition prevailed in Scotland some two hundred years ago. In short, the religion of the court, of the clergy, of the people and of the soldiers was a mixture of superstition and gore and immorality. Margaret of Valois, the princess of Conde, the duchess of Nemours, of Guise, of Montpensier, of Nevers, all led lines of immorality and foulest wickedness. It was

CONTINUED ON 8TH PAGE.

IN FOREIGN LANDS.

Cleanings Therefrom by "Light," London.

CREMATION—SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS—N. F. RAVLIN—PREDICTIONS—THE BERLIN SEANCE—MATERIALIZATIONS

CREMATION AND SPIRITUALISM.

In the Spanish journal "Constancia," of Buenos Ayres, the subject of cremation in connection with Spiritualism has been mooted, and the question is treated in the following fashion: Given the Spiritualist theory that the soul and body remain united for a certain time after death, does cremation, disintegrating immediately the molecules of the body, not place itself in opposition to a natural law? In reply "Constancia" says: "As a general rule the spirit separates from the body at the moment of what we call death, and, in certain cases, some seconds previously. There are instances, however, when the spirit seems bound to the body for a brief time, but ere twenty-four hours have elapsed the separation is complete. In all these examples the ties after death do not signify punishment, but a natural fact which may be modified through duelling the action of a natural law. The only case in which the spirit remains apparently united to the body for many days, months, or years after death is when a punishment is undergone, or, to speak more accurately, when the link is the fulfillment of a natural law. With a suicide, for example, it often happens that the spirit sees itself united to its body as punishment for having sought to liberate itself contrary to morality, which commands us to be resigned to the trials of life and submissive to Divine law." "Constancia" believes these ties to be only seeming. "The conviction which the spirit experiences that it is still attached to a decomposing organism is merely the logical result of an infraction of natural law and it is the conscience of the being—in these moments realizing the enormity of its guilt—which makes it believe itself united to the material which is hateful to it. Cremation is, therefore, in no way prejudicial to the action of natural or moral law."

IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS?

From the "Neue Spiritualistische Blätter" we take the following comments on a paper in "Photographic Adversaria." At the head of a long and highly interesting article by Dr. Th. Hansmann there are some photographs of the writer with an unusually plain image of the deceased American President, General Grant, and we must say it is one of the best that we have seen. The General's bust appears sometimes beside and sometimes in front of the doctor's figure, so that it almost looks as if the half of the latter's body were enclosed in that of the General, as in a case. The whole of Dr. Hansmann's left shoulder, breast and arm are covered by the apparitional image, and although they are seen as through a mist or veil, the contour of the figure, coat, lappels, vest and shirt-front are plainly discernible. The most remarkable feature here is again, as we have found in almost all spirit photographs, the different focus—the different size of the two images. General Grant is taken as big again as Dr. H., so that his image is not fully on the plate, and is only visible as far as the left shoulder. A further remarkable thing is the different lighting. That on Dr. H. comes from the right, while that on the spirit image falls from the left, so that the shadows of both mingle. (If General Grant manifested twice as large as Dr. H., one focus would give the image exactly as described.) The curious thing is that all the pictures which the "Blätter" has seen were of that description, as that implies that all the apparitions on them manifested themselves to the camera double the size of their mediums.)

REV. N. F. RAVLIN.

The Spanish paper, "La Irradiacion," gives an interesting biography of this indefatigable Spiritualist, from which the following paragraphs are selected: He was born in New York State in 1831. While very young he was at farm work from dawn to dusk. At eighteen he became a woodcutter, and then he sold a small farm which he owned in order to procure funds for educational purposes. He became a convert to Christianity at nineteen, and abandoned his other work to study for the ministry; was made a pastor at twenty, and preached in Chicago for fourteen years afterwards, where he drew immense congregations, and by means of his preaching paid off the debts of some fifty-one Baptist churches. In 1881 he went to California, to the church of St. Joseph, an edifice which, four months after his arrival, collapsed. He had it rebuilt, endowed it with a magnificent organ, and it is now said to be the grandest and most beautiful church in the city. He studied for two years at Manchester University, and settled ultimately in a provincial pastorate, but his modes of thought were apparently too advanced for the orthodox, and he eventually retired. During his public ministry he was a determined opponent of Spiritualism, but one day, while in the home of Dr. Schlesinger, he found the elements of his future convictions. Afterwards, in his own home, he prosecuted his researches and demonstrated the reality of the life beyond the grave. For seven years he has been a "confirmed" Spirit-

ualist, and since then almost all the "society" doors which were formerly open to him have been closed. Thanks, however, to his work, the Spiritualist Society prospers and its members increase.

PREDICTIONS.

In the course of an article by M. Jean Frolo, editor of the "Petit Parisien," the following singular series of predictions occurs. It is quoted by "Le Spiritisme," from whose columns we take it. The celebrated Dr. Liebeault was one day visited by a young man, who bore traces of much excitement. He told the doctor that a prediction, at which he laughed at first, was once made to him by a woman. She told him he would lose his father in a year; that he himself would become a soldier for a very short time; that he would soon marry; that two children would be born to him, and that he would die at the age of twenty-six. Four of these prophecies had been fulfilled as precisely as could be imagined. His father died, his own period of military service extended to seven months; he afterwards married and there were two children. He was approaching his twenty-sixth year, and he confessed to be somewhat afraid. Dr. Liebeault thought him a monomaniac who required to have his mind disabused of the notion which had taken possession of it. He therefore put him to sleep, and while in this state suggested brighter and more cheerful ideas to him, and that he would not die for forty years. "The effect was marvellous," he became quite gay; the fixed idea which had haunted him entirely vanished, and he absolutely forgot his former fears. One day, however, Dr. Liebeault received an intimation of the death from peritonitis of his former patient, at the age of twenty-six. "In order that it may not be supposed," writes the doctor, "that what I have narrated is an extravagant illusion of my own mind, I still retain that letter as well as the register from which I have drawn the foregoing observations. These are two written irrefragable witnesses."

THE BERLIN SEANCES.

From "Psychische Studien"—On Monday evening, September 18th, the second of these seances was held under somewhat less favorable conditions than on the previous Saturday evening. When Dr. Gr. C. Wittig, the representative of Herr Aksakov, entered the room in company with Madame Wittig, there was a large number already assembled and seated. Dr. Wittig says: "My wife and I were this time seated in the middle, opposite the medium. On my left sat Herr Nordmark, the President of the Gothenburg Society, who had come with us, and on whose left sat Dr. Egbert Muller. After a considerable amount of harmonica playing and of singing, the materializing forms did not venture far in front of the curtain. On this occasion it was to be dark, and the medium had in consequence donned a bright toilet, but she was also only recognizable on her chair by means of an exceedingly weak light. Still, during the appearance of the forms, I heard her several times talk with Mr. Fidler and Herr Rahn, who sat at her right hand. The apparitions moved at first around the medium, and hardly ever ventured farther than to a distance of about three paces from the surrounding sitters. The total distance of the half-circle from the medium was something like six paces. Some of those sitting on our right received, it is true, a few handshakes, as also did my wife, but they were of transient duration and I personally had no experience of them. Herr Nordmark, beside me, had some flowers in his hand, from which he took a rose and repeatedly offered it to a form which came near to us, but she drew slowly back, although he several times begged her to take it. She did not come close to us, but remained in the middle, between the medium and the sitters. The medium, Herr Nordmark, got up and approached the feebly glimmering shape, which kept moving to and fro the free portions of her veil, and pressed into her hand the rose, which she now accepted, whereupon its outline was plainly seen relieved against the white, shimmering bosom of her dress; and she at once withdrew behind the left side curtain, but immediately reappeared to the medium's right, and gave the rose to Herr Rahn, who was heartily grateful for this distinction. In the intervals of playing and singing new shapes constantly appeared before us, but they were very timid, and their visits of brief duration, though once, on our right, there were three little ones quite close together. Later a female form of medium height appeared and danced before us, keeping good time to the harmonica music, and waving her veil about in a graceful manner. At the same time I heard the medium speaking in her place with Mr. Fidler and Herr Rahn. A subsequent shape which, however, I did not see approaching us, quite unexpectedly threw a black veil over my wife's head and face from behind it, towards the head having been first touched by a hand. This enabled my wife to realize quite plainly that the veil was of a fine soft texture, but neither before it was placed over her nor after its removal did she perceive any form in front, and immediately afterwards a white handkerchief was hung in my face over my glasses, and fell before me to the floor. I instantly stooped for it, thinking in that way to reach the invisible form that threw it; but I found neither the handkerchief nor any shape before me, although as I rose, a long sort of veil was over my head, and a lady and gentleman behind touched the ends of it and held them. They were,

however, requested to release it, and as the invisible being drew it away over my head I felt the fine material disturbing my hair, when, with my right hand, I seized it, and plainly realized its soft mass texture as if folded together. As soon as I let it go it was swiftly drawn away. In spite of all my efforts I could perceive nothing in front of me. I immediately thereafter a discussion arose on our right as to whether a piece of the material might be cut off, but the medium declined to permit it. Shortly afterwards a fine kind of drizzle was driven into the faces of many of the sitters, including my wife, but I did not perceive it. Finally we heard, while those present were singing a song, a light voice joining in from the background of the curtain, and some gentlemen were asked by the medium—who had in the meantime caused the red lamp to be lit—to sing a song together, and we heard, as if behind the curtains, a still lighter voice accompanying. We saw the medium now plainly sitting opposite us.

These last experiments occupied about fifteen minutes, while in the brighter light no more forms appeared in front of the curtain, although we could see now and then some thing peering out at the sides. I counted on this evening nineteen forms. Some of the sitters, who afterwards expressed their opinions to me, did not appear to be quite convinced, as they had not, unfortunately, seen the medium sufficiently. As the singing and playing was always silenced during the appearance and disappearance of the different forms, the lightest movements of the medium's chair must have been observed, and as she was brilliantly clad, her rising up and sitting down, or her entrances and exits between the curtains of the cabinet, could not fail to be noticed. Those who know the lady more intimately than the doubters are far removed from any kind of suspicion, and those who saw, as I did, parcels of glimmering light shoot up from the floor at my feet, and develop into such forms, would see how impossible it is that these phenomena can originate with the medium. Further, I saw, and many others with me, several forms before us at the same moment of time."

MATERIALIZATIONS IN CHRISTIANITY.

From the Italian journal "Annali dello Spiritismo," we extract the following portion of an account of a seance in the above town. On June 19th, at half-past seven, about fifteen ladies and gentlemen of the Psychological Society were present by invitation, but the total number of the sitters amounted to about thirty. The conditions were not particularly favorable in consequence of some discontent manifested by a portion of the company, with regard to the positions which were assigned to them. The sitting was opened with a hymn sung by four voices, but the medium, who sat outside the cabinet, was slightly upset. Now and again various long white shapes seemed to project from it, but their efforts to leave it entirely were futile. Observing this, it was proposed to diminish the light, which was done, though still leaving quite sufficient to enable almost everyone present to watch the medium. The writer of the article never in fact lost sight of her, for a moment, and could also distinguish everyone in the room. Many shapes manifested, and developing after the manner of apparitions, slowly opened the curtain from the inside as if to make us understand their inability to get outside. Several of us heard a creaking sound within the cabinet and fancied the spirits meant in that fashion to signify their annoyance at being unable to act in conformity to their own wishes. The medium suggested that the light should be turned up and the sitters rearranged, which was done, with very satisfactory results. Several forms appeared at both sides of the medium, but they still kept in the vicinity of the cabinet and had a vaporous appearance, while some seemed to dematerialize and vanish into the floor. Suddenly, and to our surprise, a tall and well-developed form stepped from the cabinet to the right of the medium. She raised her right arm, and all those sitting near her saw under the white veil that it was a woman's arm, perfectly formed and revealed from the shoulder downward, the fingers being long and jeweled. She shook hands with some and touched others, and then re-entered the cabinet only to reappear, however, almost immediately, when she advanced three paces and stopped, moving her arm up and down under her veil. She once more returned to the cabinet, but came out again almost instantly, and this time a very rare occurrence is recorded. The apparition went straight to one of the sitters, who is called Mr. E., and this gentleman's account of what happened to him is given in his own words: "When the spirit came out of the cabinet for the third time she came hastily towards me, seized my hands, and made me rise from my chair, drawing me into the open space in the middle of the circle. During this incident I observed that the form was almost of my own height, and I am above the medium stature. She then placed her hands on my shoulders, a movement which enabled me to see very clearly under the thick drapery of the veil that her arms were round and perfectly formed. In my turn I extended my hands towards the spirit, and found that the form was solid and completely materialized. She then slightly drew back, still keeping her hands on my shoulders, while with some force she obliged me to kneel on the floor, and pressed, for a few moments, her hands on my head, begin-

Continued on 8th page.

REAL LIFE IN THE SPIRIT-LAND
Given inspirationally by Mrs. Maria M. E.
You will not become weary while reading this book.

THE GIORDANO BRUNO. COMPILED FROM THE FREETHINKERS MAGAZINE. VOL. 1.

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

How to Hold Seances Effectively.

Translation of a Letter to the Sphinx Society in Berlin.

PUBLISHED IN UBERSINNICHES WELT.

I am in receipt of your very valuable and highly artistic presents, for which I heartily thank you. At the same time, I must confess that I feel a little sorry that you should specially honor me for the share I took in the work.

Every member present, who had specially fitted him or herself to be present to assist in producing the manifestations, is just as deserving of the thanks of your society as I am; that is, if either I, or any one, ought to be thanked.

This fact ought never to be overlooked, otherwise there will always be a tendency to mislead the opinions of those who are trying to teach. If I am wrong in my views, you will, I am sure, forgive me for thus expressing them; but I cannot close my eyes to the evidence I have had, that it is the members of the circle who render it possible that there shall be success or failure. It does not depend on me any more than on any one present; therefore, how is it possible that I can arrogate to myself the right to accept of any expression of gratitude which belongs to all in proportion as they have fitted themselves to be present.

Kindly try to impress this upon your members, and ask them one and all to accept my thanks for their help. I am unable to show them that I am grateful for their assistance, by sending them any such beautiful material evidence of my gratitude as you have kindly honored me with; yet I feel that when I have been favored, that I am receiving what belongs to them more than to me. They are the real medium of the manifestations, and I only one of their number.

These views will partly show you why I so strongly object to any public mention of my name, or the mention of any name or address that will lead people to infer that I am the medium of the manifestations, which are due to those present. Another reason why I object to be singled out as worthy of any praise is the unpleasantness that usually follows. As soon as any one says a kind word about me, or credits me with trying to do my duty, there are always ready a number of newspaper editors and others, who, like a lot of hornets, think it their duty to sting me. Even now, here in Sweden, a piece is being performed at the theatre, and my name is used, not with a view to raise me in the estimation of any one, but calculated to insult and lower me in the opinion of all who may see me misrepresented.

I have no objection to my name being published as one of a circle. If I am mentioned as one of twenty or thirty, I willingly take my share of the responsibility; but I can scarcely say that I am always prepared to receive all the abuse which, if apportioned somewhat equally to the other nineteen or twenty-nine, would scarcely be felt by any one.

These thoughts are not entirely dictated from a selfish feeling. I urge your consideration of them for the sake of those who may work in a similar capacity to that which I have done, because by placing mediumship in a right light one innocent person will not have to bear burdens that ought to fall on others.

When I was in Berlin I heard of a lady having been put in prison in Germany for deception at seances. Judging her public punishment from my own, inflicted by private people and editors, I am inclined to think her judges may have been as unjust as in my own case. I therefore feel very strongly impressed to ask you to judge her from your own point of view, and when you have done so I am sure you will deem it a duty to seek to obtain her release. Even if your efforts fail, it will always be a relief to her to know that you sympathize with her.

Had she been taught to hold her work in proper estimation, she could not have been led into an error, such as I understand she is charged with.

If we take a camera, and expose a sensitive plate, there are many ways of destroying its sensitiveness without obtaining a beautiful picture. There are innumerable ways of injuring a highly-sensitive person, who is usually termed a medium, and I regret to say that the great majority of our best sensitives have been injured by so-called scientific sitters, and when the phenomena have been of the same character as the people present, they turn on the sensitive and say: "You impostor, rogue, vagabond; we see how we are cheated by you!" and the poor sensitive, not knowing that they are the real impostors, has to suffer for their shortcomings and wrong-doings. There is no question but that the sitters are the real and responsible medium, and the conditions they provide will be shown in the results, which will be a reflection of their own disposition and character. This being the case, are we not justified in giving the lady in question the benefit of any doubts we have as to who ought to answer for the results of the seances, and if possible securing her release.

The only proper course to pursue in all spiritual investigations is to surround the sensitive by the highest spiritual conditions possible; and this can only be done by one and all of the sitters fitting themselves properly to be present, not only by the disuse of nicotine and alcohol in all forms, but by the use of pure food; and, in fact, in every way cultivating the highest physical health and moral purity possible.

When this is done, one and all will develop their own spiritual gifts so that all become, as it were, their own mediums, without the need of any circle.

Scientific investigation may be of use in directing men to the light, but it will never develop a man's spiritual faculties; and if Spiritualism is to be of any real good to humanity, it must not simply be a science, but much more, it must be a scientific religion.

It is my earnest wish that your society may realize the truth of what I am feeling trying to express, and that your great country may be indebted to you for leading the way in a high and beautiful form of spiritual development.

Again thanking you as a society, and each member individually, for your exquisite presents and for all your kindness, I am, &c.—E. E. in MEDIUM and DAYBREAK, London, Eng.

SUICIDES.

An Epidemic Thereof in England.

This Stage of Existence is a School.

There has been much comment lately in the public press on the number of suicides that have been brought before the various coroners' courts; so many, indeed, have been the cases that the heading of this article has been not infrequently used by the journalist. Unfortunately the epidemic seems to be a real one, and one naturally asks why should there be such an epidemic at all?

The surface answer to this question is easy enough generally. The "struggle for life," when that struggle results in what is called "failure," is held to be sufficient in some instances, perhaps in most, though this does not cover the cases where fear of shame and loss of position appear to be potent factors. In certain instances lately, the latter appear to have been the ruling agencies. In addition to this "epidemic," it is to be noted, and the thing is of some gravity, that an advocacy of suicide is beginning to develop with a certain class of people.

Now, what is suicide? The word, of course, means "self-killing." But what is "self-killing"? The religiousist would probably say, the going into the presence of a man's Maker before his time, or something of that sort; hence the commission of a grievous sin. The materialist would perhaps say the cowardly ending of what he would call human life, while the new school or pro-suicides would call it the very proper "euthanasia" of a man who is tired of the present state of things. But this is all surface answering.

Now, if there be one thing more than another which a knowledge of the unseen brings to men, it is the certainty that this stage of existence is a school in which no man may play truant, or run away from it with impunity. The education is offered, and must be accepted. The suicide breaks off that education before it is properly finished, yet finished it must be somewhere. Unhappily, it is not recognized that this schooling is necessary. The lives that men live have come to be thought of either as epochs of misery without any reason for that misery, or of sensual or sensuous happiness with an equal absence of reason for that happiness. Pessimism and optimism are both prevalent, but pessimism is predominant. From a general point of view the church, which teaches contentment in "that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me," is not altogether wrong. This general way of looking at life is, however, not sufficient. Who ever it was that said that every man had "to dree his own weid" gave the world a truer view of things than the time-honored answer of the church catechism.

And it is the "dreeing one's own weid" where the trouble comes in and where the adversary lies in wait, watching his chance, prompting to suicide, and the dwarfing of the spirit's progress. For the majority of people this "dreeing" is an unknown quantity; their lives are fairly placid, and for them, if everything is not exactly for the best in this best of all possible worlds, at least the discomfort is not very great. To eat, to sleep, to marry, to die, are verbs which represent the lives of the majority; the education there is simple, though they be archbishops or cheesemongers. These are not the people who commit suicide. It is where, consciously or unconsciously, the touch with the unseen comes in that suicide is possible, for there the tempter finds his opportunity and sees that he may lay his snares, while the tempted do not understand.

"Not to be worse off than here" is a common expression which finds its physical meaning with the suicide. Yet if the unhappy man who, with this bald belief, goes out into the unseen, uncalled for and not wanted, did but know that there may be "worse" than here, he might hold his hand.

The adversaries, however, have done and do their best to render this knowledge difficult of access. The weak teaching of the churches, which treats men to a show of "words" and would faint call them "things," knows nothing of the evil agencies which surround them—agencies which lie in wait for men when the avenues wide to their ingress.

Lately these avenues seem to have been opened frequently; our social life lends itself more and more to the encroachments of the enemy, and his onslaughts will be more vigorous and effective until it is recognized that as always there, and our lives are so ordered as to keep him out.—LIGHT, London, Eng.

We are often prophets to others only because we are our only historians.—Mrs. Swetchnine.

SIXTEEN SAVIORS.

WORLD'S CHRISTIANITY CRUCIFIED. Baviors or Christianity Before Christ. Containing new and startling revelations in religious history, which show the Oriental origin of all the doctrines, principles, precepts and miracles of the Christian New Testament, and furnishing a key for unlocking the mystery of the sacred mysteries, comprising the History of Sixteen Oriental Crucified Gods. By Kersey Graves. This wonderful and exhaustive volume will, we are certain, take high rank as a book of reference in the field which has chosen for it. The amount of mental labor necessary to collect and compile the varied information contained in it must have been severe and arduous indeed, and now that it is in such convenient shape the student of free thought will not willingly allow it to go out of print. But the book is not meant to be a mere collection of views or statistics; it is a carefully planned and executed work, and will be seen by its title-page and chapter-heads—vol. 1. A valuable work. 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