

INTERNATIONAL S.S. LESSONS.

February 24. John ix: 1-11.

In spite of the direct testimony conveyed in this passage to the fact of re-incarnation and the recognition of Karma law by the disciples as the alternative to the theory of heredity, many readers seem to think that Jesus' reply ignores both principles. What Jesus says is simply that the man did not sin in previous lives so as to merit directly this disadvantage, neither did his parents sin so that by heredity the defect of blindness in their child becomes a burden and punishment to them, but for another reason of still greater importance. To one blind from birth, blindness is not a hardship as in the case of one stricken blind; this man was a type of the race in its evolution; he had attained a certain stage of development; still another faculty has to be added "that the works of God may be manifested in him." We are all born lacking some important faculty, and its development is the continual miracle of life. He who is the Light of the Kosmos, the life, the health or salvation (Ps. lxxvii: 2; Luke ii: 30) of the race, and who dwells potentially in every man must be permitted to shine in our hearts and give this light. The night cometh, when all growth is arrested.

March 3. John xi: 30-45

The author of "Supernatural Religion," an English Churchman, declines to characterise "the artistic narrative of the raising of Lazarus, the greatest miracle ascribed to Jesus, yet so singularly unknown to the other three Evangelists, who, so readily repeating the accounts of trifling cures, would most certainly not have neglected this had they ever heard of it." (p. 177. 6th Ed.) Lazarus, from Eleazar, Helped of God, is evidently a type of the buried soul, and the interpretation must be spiritual, as verse 26, declaring that the believer shall never die, cannot refer to the body of Lazarus, else he were still alive. Note the parallel between this narrative and that of the Crucifixion. The Christ cries with a loud voice and the stone is rolled away from the tomb and he that heareth is unloosed from the grave-bands forever.

March 10. Mark x: 17-27.

The incident is related in Matt. xix. and Luke xlviii., also where the phrase, verse 21, "Take up thy cross," as in the Revised Version is omitted, affording a

good example of the additions frequently made. The idea of crucifixion had not then been broached among the disciples, and the young man, a stranger, could not have understood the modern interpretation. The phrase was suggestive, however, in connection with the Egyptian and other mysteries where the initiation of the tau or cross was the consummation of the life of the disciple-ascetic, who had sold everything and given to the poor. It is significant that on this one occasion upon which Jesus is directly asked about the way to salvation he does not give an answer at all approaching the usual modern western one. He disclaims any merit in Himself, and enjoins not only strict observance of the whole law, but a further sacrifice which would be looked upon in the present day as good grounds for committal to an insane asylum. But no compromise is permitted, and though Peter was aware of it and had so acted the disciples "were astonished out of measure." Our astonishment assumes the form of disbelief and disregard.

March 17. Luke xix, 1-10.

The sycomore tree into which Zacchæus climbed was the Egyptian fig, and the fig has ever been the symbol of material, as the vine of spiritual things. Adam after the Fall was clad with fig leaves. Having climbed up to see the Master, He who has come to seek and to save that which was lost recognizes Zacchæus and offers to abide with him. Truly, the pressure is great when the Master passes.

THE LOCAL BRANCH.

On 30th January a resolution was adopted nem con., acquiescing in the resolutions of Aryan T. S., expressive of confidence in Mr. W. Q. Judge, and requesting him to retain his office. Volun-
tuninous circulars, etc., from Mrs. Besant, Mr. Keightley, Col. Olcott, and various branches have been read and considered with respect to this action.

On 20th January Mr. F. E. Titus was by invitation at Hamilton and addressed a meeting in the Unitarian Church there on "Theosophy." Discussion ensued and much interest was aroused, which, it is hoped, may result later in the establishment of a Branch. Mr. Titus was entertained at the house of A. S. E. Rogers, of the Minneapolis Branch, who read a paper on "Reincarnation" in the same church on 2nd February.