

Lawrence Oliphant, was afterwards regarded by his disciples as being anything but an immaculate High Priest; and Madame Blavatsky, also mentioned here, and not always pleasantly, seems to have left some similar record behind her.

On the other hand, spiritualism has been regarded by many as being a species of Black Art, of trafficking with the devil; and it is quite certain that some of its phenomena bear a striking resemblance to some of the practices described and condemned in the Pentateuch. Indeed to persons not initiated in the mysteries of spiritualism, some of its votaries seem like the students of a certain book, of whom a scholar remarked that the book in question either found them mad or left them so. At least, many so-called spiritualists do not think and judge as ordinary rational human beings do.

We think we are right in saying that the general conclusion of impartial thinkers is to the effect, that there is something in all these spiritualistic and mystical phenomena; but that a good deal of unreality or even of falsehood has been connected with them. To the out and out mystic, theosophy is an important auxiliary to religion or a substitute for religion as ordinarily understood.

There can be no question that the subject of the memoir now before us was a very remarkable woman—of great personal attractions and with mental ability of a very high order. She married the Rev. Mr. Kingsford, an Anglican clergyman, in 1867, when she was twenty-one years of age. Soon afterwards she was present at a spiritualistic *séance* where the spirit of Anne Boleyn was supposed to appear. If she did, she gave utterance to some statements which were probably false; but this seems to be the trouble with materialized spirits that they may just as well lie as tell the truth.

Anna Kingsford had one child, a daughter, and after that she lived chiefly away from her husband. In 1872 she went over to the Church of Rome; but this did not long retain any hold upon her; and in later times she explained all its doctrines in a very mystical and non-natural manner. Near the end of her life, she writes in her diary that she hated Rome, "hated the peasants most of all, and the priests. The whole place and its influence left a bitter taste with me."

A great horror and contempt of the degraded cult, called Christianity, which from Rome has gone forth to poison the whole earth, seized me. Worse even than Protestantism in this, that it has taught the people to be cruel to their beasts. . . . And the priests! Pah! they resemble black flies buzzing about the putrid corpse of a dead religion." At the end of the second volume there is a very unpleasant discussion as to whether she died in communion with Rome, into which we here forbear to enter.

It was in 1873 that she first began to receive, as she believed, messages from the invisible world, a certain Anna Wilkes having "received from the Holy Spirit a message for her which was to be delivered in person." This message required her to go on with the study of medicine, which she had begun, remaining in retirement for five years; after which time, she says, "the Holy Spirit would drive me forth from my seclusion to teach and preach, and that a great work would be given me to do."

It may be as well to give her conception of her work in her own words, written some years later. She says: "I have no occult power whatever, and have never laid claim to them. Neither am I, in the ordinary sense of the word, a clairvoyant. I am simply a 'prophetess'—one who sees and knows intuitively, and not by any exercise of any trained faculty. All that I receive comes to me by 'illumination.'"

Now, as we have said, this is no new thing. Without going back to the Neo-Platonists, we think at once of two representative men, who are mentioned more than once in three pages—Jakob Boehme (d. 1624) and Emanuel Swedenborg (d. 1772). These were both remarkable men. Boehme, in particular, was a man of profound intelligence; and many of his thoughts are surprisingly deep and beautiful. Swedenborg was also a man of capacious intellect and wide knowledge; and many striking and original thoughts are found in his writings. But the great bulk of what he left is little better than gibberish to the ordinary reader; and the net result is extremely little; so that perhaps, on the whole, the mystification is a great deal more than the illumination.

We could not honestly put Mrs. Kingsford on a level with either of these. Granting her sincerity, her magnetism,

her very remarkable intelligence, when we ask what she has actually contributed to the information or edification of the race, we are at a loss for an answer. The only or the principle speculative doctrine that she sets forth is that of re-incarnation—a kind of transmigration of souls. We are not sure that such a doctrine is necessarily opposed to the teaching of the scriptures; but the examples given in the book, do not much incline us to a belief in the theory. For example, Mary Magdalene is said to have been re-incarnated in the Empress Faustine. This is evidently based upon the popular notion that Mary Magdalene was a woman of loose character, for which there is not a tittle of evidence.

And we fare no better when we pass from the speculative to the practical. A woman specially called out by God, to do a needed work for Him, would surely leave some practical results behind her. This lady gave up her life mainly to the advocating of vegetarianism and the denouncing of vivisection.

As regards vegetarianism, it is perfectly well ascertained that, whilst it may suit some few persons, it is not advantageous for human beings in general. The vegetarians are generally the most anæmic and powerless of living creatures. Indeed, it seems almost certain that Mrs. Kingsford's life might have been extended, if, in obedience to her physicians, she had taken some animal food. But she could not bear the thought of putting any living creature to death—unless it was human beings, as we shall see.

The second crusade was against vivisection. Now, if outrages such as she mentions were actually perpetrated, it was high time that some one should take the matter in hand. But we must question a little whether Mrs. Kingsford had a right to will the death of three French men of science, because they practised vivisection. According to her own belief, she actually killed two of them by willing their death. In the case of the third, M. Pasteur, she was worsted in the conflict; and, instead of killing, was killed.

These are wonderful things and not easy to judge. It might be that a human being has power to kill a fellow-creature by his will, just as he might with a knife or pistol; but it is perfectly clear that no one has a right to do this unless he has received a divine command. This, then, is substantially what comes of the prophetic work of Mrs. Anna Kingsford; and, although this lady had her merits and her friends, yet, on a candid review of the whole story, we cannot see what good she did. We can see some mischief that she did; and if any lady should fancy that she receives a similar call, we should strongly advise her to regard it not as a message from God, but as a temptation from the devil. C.

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Froude on the Council of Trent.*

THESE lectures, delivered by Mr. Froude, in his capacity of Professor of Modern History at Oxford, were left by him in manuscript, and are now published by his representatives; and we thank them for their discharge of this pious duty. The volume might have been slightly improved, if it had received the author's last touches; but, as it is, it displays its writer's characteristic excellences and defects; but, what is more important, it will convey a fairly accurate notion of the nature and work of the Council of Trent to many persons who otherwise would have known hardly anything about it.

As we have said, the book is Mr. Froude's. It has his point of view, it has his remarkable prejudices (for example, it makes out that the Reformation was, for the most part, a contest between clergy and laity, which is far from true), and it has, like all his works, some errors in detail. Yet it has many merits.

For example, we find here a more living and a more favourable presentation of the Emperor Charles V. than we remember to have met with elsewhere. Doubtless Robertson is excellent, but the sympathy of Mr. Froude with the great Emperor is, so to speak, more genial. He is hardly justified in calling Charles a Spaniard. It is true his mother was one; but his father was an Austrian, although he was Philip I. of Spain, and Charles himself was born at Ghent. This however is a small matter.

Mr. Froude has many excellent remarks on the great

* "Lectures on the Council of Trent, at Oxford. By J. A. Froude. Price \$2.00. New York: Scribner's. 1896.