

APRIL.

My thoughts grow not so blithe in any moon
As when these clear, bright, blue-skied days
shine out.

With sudden beauty for the bare earth's
breast.

Green buds, shy flowers, and liberated brooks.
The gladsome dawn leaps lightly o'er the land,
The fair day never tires, the tender hours

Move gently forward, full of faith and hope.
Till Venus' sevenfold radiance rules the night.

There is no rapture in the year's ripe charms
Like that inspired by April's innocence;

She is the little maid among the months,
For May braids up her hair, and June's a

woman;
But April, laughing-eyed and venturesome,
With wind-loose locks and timid-daring feet,

Who neither asks for love, nor knows, but
takes

And gives and makes a joy of life—fresh-
cheeked,

A girl is April, pure and young of heart!

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Young-hearted were we all, but some forget;
Lark-song and primrose bank and sunny
gleam

Fade out and fail and will not be recalled.
Dim and deformed the gods of youth are laid

In cells of death that shuddering memory
shuns;

For men wear winter when the spring is high,
And only poets keep the crown of life.

—Albert E. S. Smythe, in *The Sunday World*.

**SOME POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS
CONCERNING THEOSOPHY.**

In view of the many misconceptions current at the present time in regard to Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, a few statements as to what it is not, may serve to dispel the clouds from people's minds, and show the practical side of what is at once Religion, Science and Philosophy.

First, it should be understood that the Theosophical Society is not a Miracle Club, as some people would believe. Far from it! Theosophy teaches man first and foremost, that he must learn to control his lower nature,—his passions, his personal desires and faults. Until such work is accomplished, it is useless, nay, dangerous, to attempt the acquisition of new powers. A knowledge and use of the hidden forces of nature is alone safe when in the service of the purified soul. And thus the work of the Theosophical Society is with the souls and minds of men. It teaches them to think, not to be thought for, to study themselves, to analyze their motives for actions, to simplify and purify these motives, to gain strength to overcome temptation, to conquer selfishness, and to develop a deeper spirit of brotherly love. When these things are gained, then indeed it

will be time enough to learn of Nature's laws and forces for the benefit of others, not ourselves.

It should likewise be stated that Theosophy is not Spiritualism, so-called, nor a branch of it. It does, however, explain the phenomena of seance rooms. It says that these things, though often fraudulent, may be genuine, but that the untrained student lays himself open to harm and danger when he dabbles in mediumship, or courts the visitation of so-called spirits. Mediumship, it tells us, is a most pernicious practice, as it tends to the weakening of the will, man's greatest possession, and by which he, and he alone, must work out his own salvation. It teaches that our friends, on leaving their earthly bodies, pass on to higher stages of existence than this world can offer, and that to communicate with them we must rise to their condition, that they rarely descend to ours. The "spirits" of the seance rooms are not the souls of our friends, but entities with whom it is best we should not connect ourselves. Spiritualism is fully explained in the philosophy of Theosophy, while its practices are strongly discouraged.

An idea current among many people is that Theosophy is something which has been invented by the late Madame Blavatsky. This is a great mistake. Madame Blavatsky, while bringing this system of teaching before the Western world, disclaimed any originality whatever in the matter. She wished herself to be looked upon only as an instrument. The service she performed was in bringing to our attention the fact that there is in existence, as there always has been, a body of literature which gives man a perfect philosophy of life. Such teaching she adapted as best she could to Western modes of thought. She strove to wake people up to an understanding of the reason for existence; that life is a battlefield, on which we must conquer the foes of selfishness and sin, and that we must do the fighting—no one else can do it for us. Life, therefore, is not for sensuous enjoyment, not to gain personal comforts, but for the development of strength and purity of soul. These and other lessons Madame Blavatsky strove to impress upon the world, and as the servant of Beings greater and wiser than herself, she strove to interest humanity in their teachings. And although she devoted herself to the work, gave up country and kindred,