

FOR THE LAMP.

LETTER TO A HOME CRUSADER.

DEAR FRIEND,—You were speaking of Christmas in your last, and of the wealth of purely mystical meaning in the word, which the world as yet so dimly perceives. Thinking it over, I have been wondering if even we Theosophists fully realize the very deep significance of this particular Christmastide now so close at hand? Does it not at one and the same time voice a prophecy fulfilled and a prophecy of times to come? What was that old saying—which also embodied a command, “But first must the gospel be preached to all nations . . . and then will the end come.” The Gospel of Good Tidings was and is and can never be other than the selfsame message of “Truth, Light, and Liberation,” by way of the old Wisdom Religion, which is even now being once again preached to all nations. Carried around the globe, all of good will may hear, and each in turn speed the message onward, as the Standard Bearer passes by.

And the “End,” is it not already almost at our doors? The close of 1897 will see the consummation of *this* age or cycle. And after? who shall say? I can see only one thing plainly, as in a vision of the era to come, and that is a Building, a Temple, within the courts of which shall be gathered as teachers and students all those engaged in the work of uplifting Humanity. The Presiding Spirit of this Temple knows no East or West or North or South in its impartial distribution of man-redeeming knowledge and power . . . Without money, and without price, but to the safe-guarded only. For, outside of this temple, are upheavals of prevailing institutions and stress and storm—things that mark the transition phase from the old age to the new, and the Sacred Science can therefore be trusted only in the hands of the tried and faithful. And again, what comes after, who shall say? Our Christmas visions are probably only pale shadows of the future glorious Reality.

When I meditate on the Crusaders I follow a line of Light starred here and

there with central points of flame. I begin at Boston, and the flame there is as a great pyramid up-leaping. From Boston to New York. From New York to Liverpool, London, and thence along triangular bases to Dublin, where the Flame becomes a Form Gigantic, and so on to Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Vienna, Athens. Wherever, in fact, the Crusaders have been and stopped, there is the line of light, and the altar fires kindled, some new, some fanned out of ashes that have long seemed dead and cold, all now burning brightly. The golden thread of Love Light runs on to Egypt, and here the altar fire, once breathed upon, becomes a sea of resounding Flame in the midst of which appear the shining forms of Pyramid and Sphinx. And the air there is thick with the still lingering shadows of witnessing multitudes. On to India! Burns the flame there as brightly? Of a different hue, perhaps, but who can doubt that it burns? And so, finally, I overtake my Crusaders wherever their camp may be, and the line of Light ends in the Light Bearer and the Link Bearer Herself. In a sense, this line of Light and the message it bears, is America's Christmas gift to the world; but in the larger sense, we know it is the old, old story of Lodge Doors thrown open, and the coming forth of a new Messenger and Leader with power to wake the sleeping Christ in the hearts of humanity. *Salut au Monde!* Comrade, for surely the sleeping Christ awaketh!

M.

LI HUNG CHANG, THE OCCULTIST.

The *Metropolitan Magazine* for November, in an article about the great Chinese Viceroy, gives some personal details which serve to confirm the impression that some people had formed concerning him. He belongs to the inland race of the Chinese mentioned in the “Secret Doctrine.”

The most striking characteristic of Li Hung Chang, says the *Metropolitan*, as he is seen with his suite of officers and body attendants, is his great and massive frame, which, even when he is sitting, towers head and shoulders above