

BORDERLAND:

A QUARTERLY REVIEW AND INDEX.

VOL. III.

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No. I.

I.—TO MY READERS.

IN beginning the new volume of the new Series of BORDERLAND it is necessary to say a few words of explanation as to the change that has been made in the appearance and price of the Magazine. When it was started the price was fixed at eighteenpence, partly because this was one-fourth of the price of the old-established quarterlies, and partly in the hope that it might develop into a sixpenny monthly. The experience, however, of the last two years and a-half has shown that I have not time to publish it as a monthly, while every quarter I am more and more submerged by the quantity of matter that ought to be published. So I have decided to enlarge the Magazine, improve it in many ways, and raise the price from the somewhat inconvenient eighteenpence to half-a-crown. The increase in price is more nominal than real. For in future I propose to discontinue making any charge for admission to BORDERLAND Circles. I shall regard every reader who registers at my office his name and address as a Borderland student as a member of the BORDERLAND Circle. The original scheme of circles has not worked very satisfactorily. Members so often forgot to report upon their experiences or to attend to the rules, that it will perhaps be better to drop the experiment of subscribing members, and to regard every subscriber as *ipso facto* a Circle member. The publication of the names and addresses of as many of our readers as may desire to be known to each other for the purpose of mutual acquaintance and the exchange of experience would be useful, and if it were even approximately complete, it would, taken together with the lists published in this number, furnish us with a very useful directory of those interested in psychic study.

Henceforth all readers are free to use the Library, paying postage on books sent to a distance, and making a deposit or security for their return. All readers are welcome to seek information or suggestion as to psychic study from me or from any of those with whom I may be able to place them in communication. And I need hardly say how heartily I shall welcome from any or from all such information or such well-attested narratives of personal experience as will enable the confraternity of BORDERLANDERS to know more certainly the truth of the mysterious region in which lie hidden the secrets of the future and the key to the enigma of life.

In consequence of the removal of the editorial office to Mowbray House, the BORDERLAND correspondence no longer passes through "Miss X.'s" hands. She is, however, still glad to be of any service to her many friends and informants in all parts of the world who have psychical phenomena to discuss, or facts to contribute, which they may desire to communicate to herself personally. Letters addressed to her at the BORDERLAND Office and marked *Personal* will be forwarded, or may be sent to "Miss X.," c/o Society for Psychical Research, 19, Buckingham Street, Strand.

In future the only contributions to BORDERLAND for which "Miss X." is responsible are those signed with the letter "X."

244

XV.—THE VICE-REGENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS. THE DEATH OF THE DUCHESSE DE POMAR.

ON the 2nd of November last, at her hotel in the Avenue Wagram, in Paris, died Marie, widow of the Duc de Pomar and of the Earl of Caithness, editor of *L'Aurore du Jour Nouveau* and terrestrial

representative, if not something more, of Mary "Queen of Scots."

One turns to the organ of her cult for details of her biography, to be told only,—



THE SÉANCE ROOM, WITH STATUE OF MARY STUART.

"It does not concern us either to give the biography of the Editress of *L'Aurore*, nor to judge of her doctrines, nor to offer an appreciation of her work. Others will undertake this in the right time and place. The Duchesse de Pomar played a considerable rôle in the contemporary occult movement. Later only when one sees the growth of the seeds she has sown, and

the ripening of the fruit she has planted, will one understand the bearing of her mission.

This is disappointing, for her claims are so tremendous that one would like some personal details. Mary of Scotland is to all an object of interest passing the

interest of Queens in general ; to many a heroine, to some a saint and a martyr ; beautiful, scholarly, a musician, and possessed of that rare gift of personal fascination which not only commanded the devotion of the men and women of her own day, but which has blinded the critics of this, the cause alike of her ruin, and of her immortality. History, and romance, and song, and tradition, tell us a thousand details of the life of Mary Stuart. Though over three hundred years have passed since her brutal murder, every school-girl knows the story of her friendships and her sorrows.

THE VICE-REGENT OF MARY OF SCOTLAND.

What do we know of her "vice-regent" ? the woman to whose hands Mary Stuart—so the Duchesse informs us—committed "the white banner of the truth" announcing that "the flower of the ages was ready now to expand."

One turns, in dealing with the history of the widow of an English peer, naturally to *Burke*, where we learn that the Earl of Caithness married

Secondly, 6th March, 1872, Marie, only surviving daughter of the late Senor Don Jose de Mariategui, and widow of his Excellency General the Conde de Medina Pomar.

Oddly enough, *Burke* neglects to point out how the Conde became, posthumously, a Duc ; perhaps we shall learn this among other details in the biography promised to us. One had hoped, too, that there might have been some vestige of truth in the widely-current story that the "Duchesse" herself hailed from a spot not far from Edinbro' Town ; there is somehow a lack of local colour in the selection by a Franco-Scot, of a Spanish West Indian as her "counterpart." It is confusing, too, that the Duchesse should talk of the graves at Holyrood as of those of her "ancestors."

HER TRAINING FOR THE POSITION.

How this selection came about we are thus told :—

For long, the name and the face of Mary Stuart had exercised upon her a magic attraction. Her thoughts dwelt continually upon her beauty, her charms, and her misfortunes. It seemed to her that she had perhaps been one of those young girls of noble family who had been attached to her service, and who had followed her about from Court to Court, from exile to exile, from prison to prison, throughout a life of romance and tragedy. . . . Little by little she felt herself in communication with this beloved Being. Her warm breath enveloped her. She heard her soft voice, "sometimes in the silence of midnight in her own room, sometimes on the wild hills of Scotland, and upon the high cliffs of Caithness which dominate the stormy Pentland Firth."

AN APPOINTMENT AT HOLYROOD.

One day, the gentle voice which spoke within her, ordered her to go at midnight to the Chapel of Holyrood at Edinburgh. She did not doubt for a moment that this was her dear Queen who made this appointment, and whom she should see. "The thought that I was going to meet this being so beloved gave me courage to go alone, and without fear, in the middle of the night to the place indicated, my feet among the tombs of my ancestors."

She means, presumably, those of her second husband.

She entered, and knelt upon the stones, deeply moved by the lugubrious aspect of the ruined cloister lighted only by the stars.

"Where are you ?" asked the visitant, after a fervent prayer.

"Here, with you," said a sweet voice, and turning she beheld a vague and uncertain form which little by little became more precise in outline. The visitant supposed that the spirit of the

Queen of Holyrood was about to speak of her terrestrial adventures, to give her new details upon her life and misfortunes. But the voice, now become grave and solemn, proceeded to discuss the different spheres of spirits in nature, the angelic circles, and their desire to manifest themselves to men, predicting to her a new religious cycle for the earth, in which humanity would again have consciousness of the Invisible, realising in itself, and becoming the reflection of, its Image.

THE VALUE OF THE COMMUNICATION.

One cannot but regret that "the visitant's" expectation should have been altogether disappointed, as even one or two "new details of her life and misfortunes," could they have been verified (as in the story Mr. Lang tells about her jewels), would have provided us with at least a trifle of the sort of internal evidence which would have made criticism possible. However, those most concerned are probably content to receive the story in simple faith. It is one "to take or to leave," like "the spirits in nature" and "the angelic circles."

THE DEDICATION.

Finally, the voice asked if she would consecrate herself to the service of God. She replied with an overflowing heart :

"I swear to consecrate my life and all I have received to His service now and always."

We are not told whether the duchess was unbaptised and unconfirmed, as this inquiry would suggest !

And the voice replied, "I charge thee as my representative on earth to keep firm and pure the white banner of the Truth which I place now in thy hands. . . . Know that aspiration is inspiration. Inspiration brings growth, and without aspiration there is no growth. . . . The flower of the centuries is now about to expand."

HOLYROOD IN PARIS.

The sketch now before us does not tell how, as the outcome of this, the Countess established a Parisian Holyrood, a lordly pleasure-house, of which the decoration was intended to recall that of the mouldering palace of the kings of Scotland, a reproduction in the gayest and brightest capital in Europe of the atmosphere of Auld Reekie. What money could do was no doubt done (it is more abundant in the West Indies than "within a mile of Edinbro' Town"), and the pictures and decorations and sculptures and tapestries were very expensive indeed. Every known portrait of Queen Mary was copied and reproduced and a Presence Chamber dedicated in which the Countess had audience of her royal mistress and learnt all the secrets of Christian Theosophy, and Spiritualism, and Esoterism and Psychology and the dawn of the new day !

Some of these are reproduced for us in *L'Aurore*, where we can learn how the *fin de Siècle* as represented by a West Indian lady in a Parisian Holyrood was philosophised over by a wronged and suffering and devout gentlewoman of the sixteenth century.

THE WORK SHE ACCOMPLISHED.

The Duchesse de Pomar founded the periodical from which we quote,

She thought of nothing but the propagation of the ideas of which she had become the depository and which developed themselves in her as it were a sort of spontaneous vegetation, fructified always by spiritual suggestions and influences. In all her labours one may distinguish two parts ; that of her personal ideas, her historical and philosophical studies, and those of spontaneous inspiration which seem to us by far the most original and life-like.

Her principal literary works seem to have been *La Nouvelle Ère*, which dealt with the same subject with which Mr. Maitland and Mrs. Kingsford have occupied themselves—"the rôle of the feminine principle in the evolution of worlds and of terrestrial humanity. For, according to her familiar spirits, it is necessary that the truth should be incarnated in woman before divine love can reign upon the earth." Of course it is not for us to decide in this connection among the conflicting claims of Joan of Arc, the Countess of Caithness, Mrs. Kingsford, Joanna Southcote, and it is impossible to say how many others.

The published pamphlets on *Theosophy, Christian, Buddhist and Semitic*, and a volume on *The Science of Life*, in which, so we are told, she developed a new theory on the formation of will and the progressive growth of human individuality by the double process of aspiration and inspiration, which had the good fortune to please M. Jules Baissac.

In her last book, *The Secret of the New Testament*, she has written with, it is said, much originality on the destruction of Jerusalem, the destinies of the Jewish race, and the cycle of humanity now beginning. It has not pleased orthodox theologians, nor Atheists, but "it has attracted the attention of all free religious spirits by its depth and its bravery."

Thus the life of the Duchesse de Pomar was crowned by the accomplishment of the work of her choice, and, what is given to few, the entire accomplishment of her dream. . . . Before death she was able to say that she had executed the promises exacted by her spiritual guide, and received the assurance that "there need be no tears or mourning about death when there was wisdom and faith."

HER MAGAZINE.

The December number of *L'Aurore du jour Nouveau* opens with the announcement that its publication will be suspended for the present, but that it is hoped that the Duc de Pomar (the only son of the late Duchesse) will be able to assume its direction before long.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE DUCHESSE.

It is obviously out of the question to criticise such a position as that assumed by the Duchesse de Pomar. There is no evidence, internal or external, negative or affirmative. She was not able to prove that Mary, Queen of Scots, was her personal adviser and inspiring genius; but, on the other hand, no one can prove that she was not. Some of us may not think it likely, but the idea, true or false, seems to have been harmless enough, and the teaching, if not exactly original, was, at all events, always in the direction of right, of visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world—or, at any rate, this world.

HER GOOD WORKS.

Those who best knew the Duchesse de Pomar testify to the sincerity of her beliefs, and if, as we are told, she employed and encouraged professional mediums, not so guileless as herself, at all events we owe to her perspicacity the exposure of Mrs. Williams. She was, or intended to be, very particular indeed whom she brought into the Presence Chamber, and tolerated nothing which clashed with her ideals of what was fitting in this connection.

She was kind and liberal to the poor, doing her alms generously, without ostentation. The present writer was never but once brought into personal relations with the Duchesse de Pomar, and the occasion remains with her as a more worthy and pleasant recollection than that of any of these so-called "occult" phenomena. A sorely afflicted woman, a hopeless invalid, one of the sad class of destitute gentlewomen, was dependent upon the help of friends, and was so unfortunate as to survive those most able to be of use to her. We found the task of collecting the annual sum necessary for her wants (which were the greater by reason of her suffering and helplessness) increasingly difficult, and it was at length suggested that the Countess of Caithness (Duchesse de Pomar), upon whose husband's family our poor friend had some small claim, should be invited to contribute a trifling sum. Lady Caithness, then in England, took a considerable journey on purpose to visit her, and a few days later wrote that she "had been directed" to supply her needs for the remainder of her life, which she generously did, frequently accompanying her gifts by kind personal inquiries and messages, which made them the more acceptable.

One wishes that familiar spirits more often gave "directions" so worthy as this, on the whole more valuable than statements (not susceptible of proof) about the "angelic circles."

THE SOCIETY FOUNDED BY THE DUCHESSE.

Probably we shall hear something now about the French Psychological Society. In the spring of 1894 we heard a great deal about a society to be founded on the Continent, of which M. Richet of Paris was to be president, and which the Duchesse de Pomar was to establish and endow. Some of those best known in the *Society for Psychical Research* were to hold office, and the public was invited to subscribe. It was to be a very important society, very far-reaching in its aims, and the Duchesse was to leave to it a large share of her valuable property. I can answer for one would-be member, who made early application, and who has heard no more about it beyond two communications, one to the effect that we should know more presently, and another, that the subscription would be double that originally mentioned. X.

THIS Whitsuntide a Congress of Occultists will be held at Berlin in connection with the exhibition that is to be held there this year by our contemporary the *Sphinx*, whose address is Berlin North, Eberwalder-strasse, No. 16, Portal 1. Mediums who wish to give test sésances at the Congress are requested to communicate with the Secretary of the Scientific Association of *Sphinx* of this address.