



THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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September / October 2004 – # 48

WHY ALLAN KARDEC?

D.Villela

Revelation is the process through which the Superior Spirits promote the education of human beings as eternal individualities, enlightening them on their spiritual nature and the existence of a creating power (initially conceptualized in a fragmented way), as well as behavioral guidelines for their happiness.

The individuals responsible for bringing the revelations to us are naturally on an evolutionary state above us since the concepts and postures they convey to us need to originate in them, who have to exemplify them personally. Not rarely this demands from them renunciation and sacrifices, sometimes even their own lives, which they courageously give in defense of truth and righteousness. Jesus is the maximum exponent of this action of renewal carried out for our benefit under the structure of the Divine Laws.

Appearing in the 19th century within Western Civilization, Spiritism had to adapt itself – as always happens in such movements – to conditions and characteristics of the times. It should be noted that Western Civilization was already influencing, and continued to influence, much of humanity thanks to the conquests carried out under its watch (technology, human rights, democratic governments), and which, although at a slow pace, are still expanding to all corners of the earth. The new concepts arrived, thus, in an era of rationality and objectivity, circulation and examination of ideas, alongside with the old ghosts of selfishness, illusion, and moral indifference. God and the Universe, the journey of the Spirit created for relative perfection, the primacy of love and divine justice would be once more presented to human comprehension, under a new facet capable of satisfying the most demanding reasoning and the most sensitive heart.

An initiative of the Spirit World, the new revelation would count on a team of incarnate and discarnate workers coordinated and directed by a unique individual

up to a task of such magnitude. And, as we know, the chosen one was reborn in Lyon, France, on October 3, 1804, under the name Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail. A scholar, possessing a highly developed intelligence and vast culture, a practical spirit with a keen sense of observation and discernment coupled with a profound sentiment of fraternity, Rivail – who adopted the name Allan Kardec – achieved his mission with total success, working in a way that the message from the Higher Spiritual Planes arrived with security in the material realm. Under his supervision solid bases were introduced and firmly established, the bases over which the great construction of rational faith would rise, and whose dimensions we are not yet completely aware of. They shall nevertheless benefit all humanity because its principles belong to the natural order of things, and the time will come when they will take their place among the branches of human knowledge. (*Spirits' Book*, Question 798).

In quantitative and qualitative terms, the work accomplished by Kardec is exceptional. In the space of 12 years he published five outstanding books and founded the first Spiritist periodical, of which he was the editor in chief. He also carried out trips for the dissemination of the Doctrine, and tended to, either in person or through a voluminous correspondence, thousands of people who sought him out for information on the new doctrine. Additionally, he established guidelines, evaded illusions and distractions, and confronted with serenity all external attacks and divergences among the adherents of the new doctrine, thus securing cohesion and coherence to the movement just nascent.

As the Spirit Benefactors explain, “A critical mission [given by God] is only entrusted to a spirit qualified to fulfill it.” (*The Spirits' Book*, Question 579). Nowadays, we undoubtedly comprehend, looking at the totality of his personal characteristics, that Allan Kardec had all the conditions to overcome the obstacles and to fulfill his mission to the end. That is precisely why he was chosen.



Force tyrannizes. Love reigns.

Emmanuel

IMPORTANCE OF KARDEC'S WORKS

Cesar Soares dos Reis

If we evaluate the scientific and technological knowledge at Kardec's time, we undoubtedly verify that today we have far superior knowledge, instruments, and equipments. Information Technology, Astrophysics, quantum physics, relativity, electronic microscopes, were all words that probably did not exist at the latter half of the 19th century. And we are not even mentioning the production of electric energy, the discovery of anesthesia, which was making its first appearance in medicine, the paving of streets, the treatment of water and sewage, and the concepts of psychology, sociology, and human rights.

It seems that we are thousands of years away from that dreadful and dark world, filled with fevers and illnesses, or from the Greek thought that dominated the philosophies in vogue in Europe before the age of reason. Despite this, however, Kardec's century was one of great conquests in science, of great ideas that were later developed. In reality, we observe the emergence of physics, chemistry, botany, and biology as sciences in the 19th century. Along with this blossoming of the new times, we also see the religious questionings with theories of evolution, transcendental phenomena, and the social and material quests especially in the French Revolution and the manifests that shook the world.

At the very moment human knowledge commenced to leave behind the darkness of the middle ages, the Higher Spirit World initiates its plan to integrate science, philosophy, and religion in an harmonious whole, searching for the synthesis that would bring together the best of thought, sentiment, and human actions. And it is right there that Kardec's personality stands tall, he himself a synthesis of knowledge, good sense, discipline, rationality, and good sentiments. Only an advanced educator would be able to consolidate in human language such an integration. To fulfill its role, the Spiritist Doctrine would have to be presented to the world as a work of personal

and social education. It would not be a philosophy like so many others, nor a religion of the mystical, the magical, the supernatural, or the mysterious. Once more Kardec's rises to the occasion, as one can apprehend from the text in *Genesis*, Chapter One, Item 13: "That which characterizes the spiritual revelation is the divine source from which it proceeds, that the initiative belongs to the spirits, and that the elaboration is the work of man."

Galileo, Newton, and Einstein, among others, were geniuses who opened new paths for humanity. But Kardec is the pedagogue who took mankind by the hand so that it could, with security, walk the paths of goodness, light, and peace, in the direction of the Master, in search of happiness for which we were all created.

Because of Kardec, Spiritism is a different revelation. It is not the perfect and definitive word of the Divine Law as described in the Ten Commandments of Moses. It is not the unquestionable message that Jesus brought to us, especially in the *Sermon of the Mount*. The Spiritist revelation recognizes its imperfection when it describes itself as evolutionary and adaptable to the new knowledge of mankind. It is a revelation that progresses with the progress of humanity, but which is, at the same time, an anchor of security, a compass for direction, a smooth wind to move the human boat in its sailing towards the sea of love which is God, our origin and our destination. It is still in *Genesis*, Chapter One, Item 55, that we read: "A later character in the spiritual revelation, which is drawn from the conditions in which it is produced, is that, leaning upon facts, it is, and ever must be, essentially progressive, like all sciences based upon observations."

A new science emerged naturally from the efforts of mankind's observation and research. New philosophies flowed from the clearer perception of life arising from the progress of science. Somehow there was an inversion. In times past philosophies

determined the paths of the sciences. Nowadays, the sciences orient the steps of philosophies. The religious quest always got a different treatment because it leaned towards myth, the incomprehensible, and, moreover, because it represented a search, a longing, something that is in the essence of human beings and which attracts them inevitably. To complicate things more, historically religions are associated to political powers, to domination, to command, to interests of all sorts, and are viewed with distrust by scientists and philosophers.

The gigantic task of Kardec was to present to humanity a new science, a new philosophy, a new religion, all integrated in one sole body. Spiritism is not a philosophy, a science, and a religion. It is a whole that is scientific, religious, and philosophical. In reality it does not present any original novelty. It was not Spiritism that invented the concept of God, but the Spiritist concept of God, presence and law, justice and mercy, is new. It was not Spiritism that invented reincarnation. But the Spiritist concept of reincarnation, coupled with evolutionary processes, is a novelty. It was not Spiritism that invented mediumship. But the Spiritist concept of mediumship, linked to communication and human transcendentalism is, in fact, a novelty.

Kardec was able to bring together, starting from phenomena apparently without much importance, a series of non-novelty that constituted as a whole a great novelty, and transformed them in a revelation for the new times.

One day humanity will rever the Master's great apostle Allan Kardec. As Emmanuel says in "Path Towards the Light," Chapter 23: "His task was to reorganize the crumbling building of belief bringing civilization back to its deep religious bases." A task for a giant of thought and sensibility. Allan Kardec's work is a monument of human culture, of human sentiments, of the noblest human ideals, a work considered advanced as long as humankind cannot see itself in its plenitude. Perhaps the word plenitude defines the importance of Kardec's body of work, that is, to help mankind to get to know itself integrally, as a divine being, respectable, created for the light, and capable of creating paths of light. Kardec's work came to educate mankind to reach its plenitude. It will echo throughout the centuries offering dignity and hope to all. One day, in the era of regeneration, we certainly will understand it better.

AROUND THE WORLD

• ARGENTINA

The *Fundação de Estudos e Divulgação Espírita* [Foundation for Spiritist Studies and Dissemination] is now headquartered at Duarte 127 – Santa Rosa – 6300 La Pampa – Argentina – Internet: fundacioneespirita@yahoo.com.ar.

• AUSTRALIA

The *Fundação Joana de Cusa* [Joana de Cusa Foundation] operates now as a department of the *Casa Espírita Franciscanos* [Spiritist Center Franciscanos], doing what it did before: gathering clothes, shoes, and utensils for distribution to assistential organizations all over the world. The Foundation, which before had no religious aspect, is now totally Spiritist. The president is Valéria Leal, and the address is 1/3a, Railway Parade – Kogarah – NSW – 2217 Sydney – Australia – phone 9553-1616 – Internet: spiritisthouse@hotmail.com.

• BOLIVIA

The Bolivian Spiritist Federation is offering at www.spiritist.org/bolivia/index.html issues in Spanish of the *Revista Espírita* [Spiritist Review] of Allan Kardec. At the same site, also available for reading and printing, are the bulletins *Camino de luz* [Path of Light] with news from the Spiritist Movement in countries where Spanish is spoken. Questions should be addressed to cristinaeduardo@cotas.com.br; fax 337-6060; Calle Libertad, 382 entre Seoane y Buenos Aires – Casilla de Correo 6746 – Santa Cruz de la Sierra – Bolivia.

• CUBA

The *Grupo Espírita Cristiano Hermanos del Bien* [Christian Spiritist Group Brothers in Goodness] is asking the Spiritist community and publishing houses to donate Spiritist books new, or gently used, in Spanish. Part of these books will be forwarded to the Group's library and made available to the public. The rest will be distributed through the continuing campaign the Group sponsors for the dissemination of Spiritist literature on Cuban soil. The donations – including newspapers, magazines, and other similar publications – should be sent to the Group at Calle 22 nº 60 entre 15 y 26 de Julio – Reparto Camilo Cienfuegos – Bayamo – CP-85100 Granma – Cuba.

• HUNGARY

The "Internacia pedagogia revuo" [International Magazine on Pedagogy] a trimestral publication of the *Liga Internacional de Instrutores de Esperanto* [International League of Instructors of Esperanto] carried in a recent issue a request from Esperantist Duncan Charters, from the United States, addressed to all involved in activities in the pedagogic field on the International Language. Charters, who was president of the International League of Esperantist Instructors from 1993 to 1998, requests news, opinions, proposals, and everything else that might be helpful in putting together a complete guide he in-

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THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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tends to launch for the Instructors of Esperanto, whether graduated or not. He states that "I am looking for direct contact with instructors who have taken the initiative to establish interesting programs using methods that reached extraordinary results, whether for Esperanto or other languages."

Mail to Duncan Charters should be sent to Principia College – Elsau – 62028-9799 Illinois – USA, or by email to charters@prin.edu.

Contacts with the magazine can be made through its editor, József Németh, at Föu, 41/5 – HU-8531 Ihász – Hungary; email: jozefo@mail.globonet.hu.

• PORTUGAL

The *Federação Espírita Portuguesa* [Portuguese Spiritist Federation] launched the campaign "Em Defesa da Vida" [In Defense of Life]. The objective is to enlighten public opinion on the problems of spiritual nature caused by abortion and other similar practices. The campaign is on the national level and includes all federated Spiritist Centers. To participate, interested organizations can request the pamphlets [in Portuguese only] directly from the *Federação*, at Casal de Cascais – Lote 4 R/C – Alto da Damaia – 2720-090 Amadora – Portugal – phone 351 21 497 5754 and 351 21 497 5777; e-mail feportuguesa@iol.pt.

• UNITED STATES

Visitors to Washington, D.C., will have the opportunity to get to know the doctrinal activities of the *Grupo Espírita Fé, Amor e Caridade* [Spiritist Group Faith, Love, and Charity], headed by Regina Dray Prince. It offers meetings for the study of Spiritism every Wednesday, at 8 PM at 15115 Interlachen Drive, #907 – Silver Spring – MD 20906 – USA. For more information write to lperr@bol.com.br.

BOOK REVIEW

AND FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES

It is a special book, for all ages, because it rescues sweet episodes of our childhoods, in search of a life of harmony and happiness. And at the same time, it brings us examples, in its 38 stories, of how to adequately solve conflicts in children's conduct, and to orient them towards goodness.

The author, Wallace Rodrigues, wrote it inspired by a generous mentor, according to the commentary of educator Anny Silveira, in the preface:

"Breeze... there would be no sweeter and more delicate name that can be given to the pleasant impression that we had when, one day, we entered the office of an old friend: Wallace Leal V. Rodrigues.

"There was nothing outside that would justify the presence of the pure and fragrant air that enveloped the area and produced upon our skin a strange yet pleasant chill. I was as if we were in an open field or at the top of a mountain, or perhaps near the oceanic coast during a fall afternoon.

"There were no air conditioners or fans inside the office.

"The leaves outside, which could be seen from the door, were still.

"However, inside the office, the sweet and fragrant breeze would flow back and forth.

"Then, I said: 'How strange, Wallace. Where is this breeze coming from?'

"He smiled and we noticed flashes of happiness and goodness inside his eyes, which have always been characteristic of his soul: 'It is a friend of mine, Anny. A friend who has come to visit, who announces her presence with the breeze you now fell in the air. I call her Breeze, and she seems to like the name. But what is of great interest is that when she is present, we feel inspired to write about children... sometimes, memories of the past; other times, brief accounts that were inspired or experienced by her. They are always situations that involve an adult and a child.

"For this reason, her presence invariably brings a sensation of peace, love and tenderness while describing the little ones that you, as an educator, understand and feel in your soul, whom for so many years have confided in you."

And for the Rest of Our Lives, containing 127 pages, is a book written in easy language, with marked examples, leaving beautiful lessons in each story, among them "The Watch," "The Doll," "The Hairstyle," "The Laziness," and others. We chose "The Remedy" to highlight the importance and beauty of the book.

"Thanks to a technique my father taught me, I was able to learn how to control my anger at a very young age.

"Me and my brother always fought amongst each other.

"We also had altercations very frequently.

"One day, while seeing us very angry and without getting angry himself, my father gave each of us a piece of rag. Then he took us next to a glass door.

"You will all clean the same sheet of glass, but each one of you will clean a different side. Start from here."

"We were forced to look at each other's eyes constantly, and it left us angry and restless.

"Soon thereafter, me and my brother burs "And so we forgot about our anger.

'Laughter,' said my father. 'Is the best medicine for anger.'

"Even today, when I am irritated by someone, I imagine our faces displayed through the glass as we stand, face to face, cleaning it.

"And each and every time my anger fades away."

The original in Portuguese was launched in 1979. The English version is from May 2004, a translation of Renan Lacerda, Marcia Lacerda, and Jussara Korngold, members of the Spiritist Group of New York (www.sgny.org).

Copies can be acquired at *Casa Editora O Clarim* (Rua Rui Barbosa 1070 – Matão-SP – 15990-903 – Brazil – Internet: www.oclarim.com.br), in both languages.

FROM OUR FELLOWS

THE STANFORDS AND THE SPIRITS

Frederico Guilherme Kremer

Those visiting the famous Stanford University in California will see in its chapel a plaque informing visitors that that respectable learning establishment was founded in memory of Leland Stanford Jr., by his parents, Leland and Jane Stanford. The couple's saga is well known in some sectors of American society.

Leland Stanford and Jane Lathrop (her maiden name) got married in 1850, in Albany, New York. Albany was approximately 150 kms away from Hydesville, the town of the Fox family. Two years prior, the Fox sisters had been protagonists of the famous *raps*, which initiated the movement that would culminate with the Codification of the Spiritist Doctrine by Allan Kardec.

In February of 1850, the Fox sisters, after going through the town of Rochester, showed their experiences an the Hotel Delevan, in Albany. It was probably right then that the Stanford couple first heard of the Fox sisters' supernatural phenomena, but they probably did not pay much attention to it at that time.

We would like to point out that the American spiritualist movement was growing fast in 1854, a time when the U.S. Congress received a petition of 15 thousand sympathizers soliciting funds for the study of this phenomena. Despite not being approved, the interest for spiritualist ideas continued intensely, so much so that at the end of the 19th century there were millions of followers. The sufferings of the Civil War (1861-1865) further activated this interest.

Leland Stanford was a lawyer, but had had no success in the profession. For this reason, after getting married, the couple moved to California in the middle of the gold rush. Leland got rich selling mining equipment and founding the Central Pacific Railroad. He ended up participating in American politics as a Senator for California.

Only in 1869 Leland Jr. was born, almost after 19 years of marriage. Leland Jr. was a much expected child by his parents, who gave him all the luxury and comfort that the world could offer.

However, destiny dictated that Leland Jr. would disincarnate prematurely in 1884

during a family trip to Europe. The boy probably contracted typhoid fever in Constantinople, and died in Florence, Italy.

The couple naturally suffered greatly the loss of their only son. It was during this painful time that they remembered the spiritual ideas, and searched for comfort in the concept of the immortality of the soul. In their journey back to the United States with their son's body, they went through Paris and New York, where they participated in Spiritist meetings.

In San Francisco, at their mansion in Nob Hill, they carried out several mediumistic meetings. During this difficult time, they received the spiritual support of Thomas Welton Stanford, younger brother of the Senator, who, living in Australia, sent a series of spiritual articles as well as objects that were materialized in the meetings carried out by him. Thomas was one of the precursors of the Australian spiritualist movement, helping to found the "Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists," and editing the journal *Harbinger of Light*, in 1870.

Slowly the Stanford couple began conquering the pain of missing their son, being able to transform it in renewal and hope. And since Leland Jr. would not be able to take advantage of the family's material resources, the couple decided to utilize them for the common good. They promoted and participated in many activities in the area of social assistance, and in October of 1891, they founded the University of Stanford on the grounds of their ranch, in Palo Alto, with the objective of bringing education and knowledge to young people.

Senator Stanford disincarnated in 1893, in San Francisco, and Jane Stanford, in 1905, in Honolulu, Hawaii. The year before, Jane visited Thomas Welton Stanford, in Australia.

Stanford University firmed itself in the constellation of the great centers of human knowledge. In its library, to this day, visitors will come across a sector where they will see spiritualist texts and the materialized items sent by Thomas Stanford to his sister-in-law Jane Stanford almost 115 years ago.

This information was obtained in a *Stanford Magazine* article by Theresa Johnston of June 2000. We would like to point out that these facts, contemporary to the happenings which signaled the appearance of the Spiritist Doctrine, were, on more than one occasion, used by Divaldo Pereira Franco in his lectures, one of them we had the pleasure to attend, at the *Escola de Comando e Estado Maior do Exército*, in Rio de Janeiro. The important contribution of the Leland boy was highlighted, recalling his vocation for goodness, and as someone who inspired his parents to make real his ideals through the foundation of a university destined to generate and disseminate knowledge, and thereby promoting progress.

IN THE SPIRITIST MOVEMENT

• DVD ON KARDEC

The 52-minute movie in Portuguese "O Espiritismo – de Kardec aos dias de hoje" [Spiritism - from Kardec to Now] has been launched in DVD. Filmed in historical location and costumes, it gives a general vision of the basic principles of the Doctrine, the books of the Codification, and its contribution for the progress of humanity. It also shows a panorama of the current Spiritist Movement, with texts and testimonies on the importance Allan Kardec had in this process. Among those interviewed are the Secretary General of Nestor João Masotti; the president of the French and Francophone Spiritist Union, Roger Perez; the president of the International Spiritist Medical Association, Marlene Nobre; and the medium and lecturer, Divaldo Pereira Franco.

Directed by cinematographer Marcelo Taranto, the DVD comes with subtitles in Portuguese, French, Spanish English, Italian, German, Swedish, and — for the first time — Esperanto. For more information, contact the *Federação Espírita Brasileira* at Av. L2 Norte – Quadra 603 – Brasília-DF 70830-030 – Brazil – phone 55 61 321-1767; imprensa@febnet.org.br; or www.dvdveratil.com.br.

• CHICO, IN MOVIE AND TV

Due to its great success, the book *As Vidas de Chico Xavier* [The Lives of Chico Xavier], by journalist Marcel Souto Maior, will soon become a movie. The contract between the author and a producing company called Lumière has already been signed. The minute Frenchman Marc Bauchamps, one of the partners of Lumière – who by the way had never had any information on Chico – read the book, he became enthralled by the medium from Minas Gerais and asked to adapt the book. In addition to the film, the signed contract includes a TV mini-series of the life of the medium given the title "Minas Gerais Person of the Century." This production will be a partnership between Lumière and the Brazilian TV network *Rede Globo de Televisão*.

• "GET TO KNOW SPIRITISM"

Good news for the dissemination of the Spiritist Doctrine around the world: the pamphlet "Get to Know Spiritism," published by the *Federação Espírita Brasileira* has been launched in Esperanto, and is now available in the Internet. The pamphlet carries explanations on what is Spiritism, what it reveals, and its fundamental teachings, among others.

For your information, the *Federação's* webpage can be found at www.febnet.org.br.

• KARDEC POSTAL STAMP

Empresa de Correios e Telégrafos, do Brasil, the Brazilian postal entity, launched a commemorative stamp for the Bicentenary of Allan Kardec's birth, issuing 800,010 units showing Tarcísio Ferreira's design situating to the right of the stamp the internationally known logo of the Bicentenary. At the bottom left Mr. Ferreira utilized the colors green and yellow, in a reference to Brazil, the country wherein Spiritism laid more profound roots. Upon these colors he put Allan Kardec's signature and below the motto "Work, Solidarity, and Tolerance," which is the dictum that directed the life of the eminent French master.

The stamp, whose face value is R\$ 1,60, was launched on 5 October in Brasília. The stamp can be seen on www.correios.com.br/selos.

• RIO DE JANEIRO RADIO STATION

From anywhere in the world it is now possible to follow the Spiritist programming aired by *Rádio Rio de Janeiro* [radio station]. The transmissions are in real time, and, according to the station, tuned in by an average of 4 thousand listeners a month from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Holland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, among other countries. To tune in the Station of Fraternity, please visit www.radioriodejaneiro.am.br, and click on the icon "Ouça a nossa programação" on the upper left side of the monitor.

• MANUAL FOR SPIRITIST EVENTS

The *Manual de apoio ao planejamento e organização de eventos espíritas nacionais e internacionais* [Supporting Guide for the Planning and Organization of National and International Spiritist Events] was produced by the director of the Department of Integration of European Countries, Coordination in Support of the European Spiritist Movement, Elsa Rossi. The material explains how to conduct a Spiritist event, whether a congress, encounter, *workshop*, symposium, seminar, or public lecture. It deals from the estimating and provision of monetary resources to the choice of the location and the manners by which to publicize the event, including in real time in the Internet. The manual has 66 pages and can be downloaded, free of charge, at www.spiritist.org/ftp/Portuguese/moeneiportcei.pdf.

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Do not relinquish exercises in courage and good demeanor. You will need them in the difficult moments of life.

Emmanuel