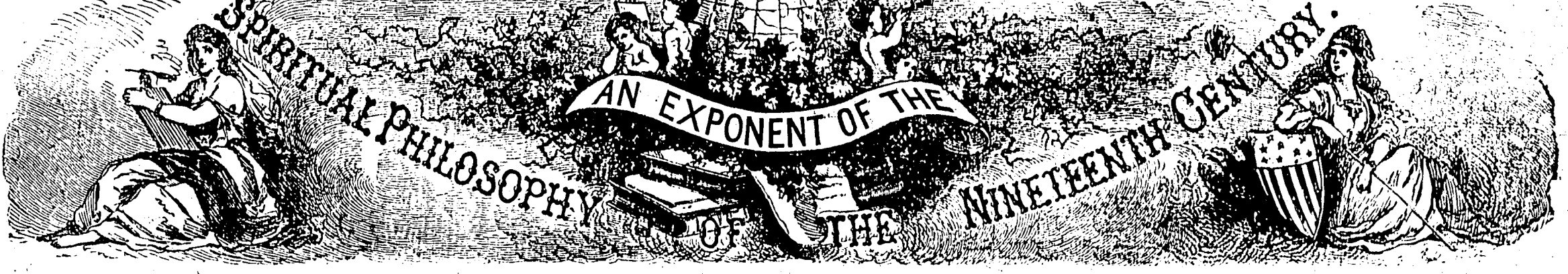


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Written for the Banner of Light.

ANGELS.

BY ANNE VANCE.

I feel their touch upon my hair,
Upon my cheek and on my brow;
I know that they are everywhere,
That they are with me even now.

The air grows softer as they move,
The day seems brighter when they come,
And all my soul melts into love,
And longs for its immortal home.

For there the smiles are true as heaven,
And all words mean the speaker's faith,
And promises are never given
That can be broken, even by death.

For in that heavenly summer-land
Death dare not show his pallid face;
None there can feel his honey hand,
Nor measure life with life's disgrace.

I had a friend some days ago,
Dear as my heart, and fond as true;
While winter beat, or summer shone,
All truths to her white soul she drew.

And I was happy in her smile,
Nor knew a grief if she was nigh,
Nor saw, stamped on her brow the while,
The chilling truth that she must die.

But after dismal days had fled,
And I was weary with my sighs,
I saw her whom I deemed was dead,
Like a crowned angel from the skies.

She stood beside me, white as light,
And pure with heaven's own purity;
Since then, no death can dim my sight,
Since then, there is no death to me.

1424 Corcoran street, Washington.

The Lecture Boom.

"The Mutual Relations Between Ancient and Modern Spiritualism."

An Address Delivered before the National Convention of Spiritualists, in Lyceum Hall, Troy, N. Y.,

BY ROBERT T. TALLOCK, M.D.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

After a thorough weeding out of "old-time" sayings, and a sweeping condensation of the wisdom and inspirations of the ancient seers and prophets of his race into the simple statement that fidelity to the supreme central fact of the universe, and faithfulness toward all that lives within the sphere of one's individuality, Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy that law, or to overthrow the inspired men through whom its cognate truths have been revealed. Those two unitary principles are the central ideas around which cluster whatsoever of truthful declaration or of illustration belong to the law and the prophets; and I am not come to destroy either, but to fulfill."

Thus (in substance) spake the great Spiritualist of the first century concerning the sacred records of a people whose living inspirations had even then, ages before, passed into history. Eighteen centuries have elapsed since that memorable commentary upon the law and the prophets which had preceded him; and the Spiritualists of to-day, looking over the records founded upon his life and teachings with a like discrimination—that is to say, after setting aside the misconceptions of his disciples, the compromises of Paul and the metaphysics of St. John, cutting through all these and coming down to the basic fact and doctrine of what to us is ancient Scripture, the modern Spiritualists, like him of Nazareth, have to say to the multitude about us, "Think not that we have come to destroy the validity of the work that he performed, or principles which he revealed, or to undervalue the life that he founded upon them; but, on the contrary, rather to say with him, 'To this end were we born, and for this purpose came we into the world, that we might bear witness to a living experience, we might bear witness to the truth.'"

For what, in reality, is the central fact of these Christian Scriptures? Is it not the immortality of life brought to light? Surely, we are not here to destroy that truth, but to fulfill it—to give it broader utterance, deeper and wider significance. The arts of Jesus—what are called the miracles—were open evidence of the power of the life that lies beyond the body. Ourselves being witnesses of the same, and thousands of us the subjects thereof, to deny or try to destroy the substantial veracity of the record, would be treason to our own experience.

By way of detraction it is often affirmed that Jesus taught nothing new; that the Golden Rule is as old, at least, as Chinese history, and that his precepts are in nothing superior to those of the Stoics, &c. With these thinkers, the originality of the ethics of Jesus being refuted, there is nothing left of him. In fact, with French philosophy for basis, Renan might have written his life of Jesus on the plan of Bret Harte's condensed novels. The meaning, if not the moral of that popular production, may be stated in three lines—"Somebody (name unknown) plundered the libraries of Greece and Rome, and wrapped their purple moralities around the person of a diseased enthusiast." That is the life of Jesus under the combined illumination of modern science, patronizing benevolence and "Free Religion."

It is the history, also, of modern Spiritualism, according to the founder of the New York Tribune, only that, seen through his spectroscopic, there is no line of morality, observable, either original or stolen. And it has brought forth nothing new; it may have kicked over a few tables in some doubtful way, possibly, but it has not made money any more plenty; it has added no increase

to the products of the farm or the workshop; it has done nothing for politics, art, science or literature, etc.

Now admit, in either case, this charge of non-originality in ethics or in art, (which we by no means do) and it does not touch the hem of the garment of uses which enwraps Spiritualism, whether ancient or modern. What matter by whom, where or when a sound moral maxim first got utterance? Our real interest is in its truth, not its origin. We neither know nor care who first compiled the multiplication-table, but we trust it.

It was not the newness, or the truth even, of a morality for the better government of life; it was the spiritual nature and indestructibility of life itself that constituted the real newness of the gospel of Jesus. It was the gospel—the bottom fact upon which rested the significance of all else that was said and done then and there. And this same fact, seen to-day as of old—namely, the duality and continuity of life—is the nucleus around which must gather all sober thought and action now.

But how profound the ignorance of the assertion, as applied to Spiritualism, whether ancient or modern, that there is nothing new in its revelations. True, in a restricted sense, there is nothing new under the sun, nor over it either, probably. Nevertheless, every discovery of truth affects the consciousness with a sense of novelty; and whatever truth or fact is not in our consciousness is the same to us as though it had never been. Thus, the facts of our experience as Spiritualists are not, as to character, new in themselves; they are simply newly born. They are new to us, just as the facts of Jesus were new to the people of his day; but the newness of either is only another mode of saying that they have not before been observed. What men have cause to deplore is, not the poverty of the universe in matters of fact and law, but the poverty of the consciousness and the understanding. It is fair to conclude that Saul of Tarsus found something new—that is, a new sensation—in the facts and doctrine of Jesus. True, he did somewhat mistake the teachings of the Nazarene; but the fact of a personal interview after the crucifixion changed not only his name but his character as well, and supplied him with all the assurance and consolation he had in this world. And yet Paul is rationally supposed to have been a pretty well read man; not gifted in modern science, it may be presumed, but he had visited Greece and other countries, had talked with the wise men of Athens, knew as well, probably, as any lawyer in Jerusalem what the sacred books of his nation had to say, and nevertheless found much that was new in fact and doctrine where so many modern writers affect to find nothing either new or true. And, so impressed was he with the importance of what was to him so new, that he actually sacrificed his mortal life in trying to tell it.

There is not a more glaring exhibition of stupidity and assumption in modern literature than the biographies of Jesus. If the narrative ascribed to Matthew is unreliable, what test have we for the truth of theirs? One writer, persistently shutting his eyes to facts similar to those of the time of Jesus, as set forth in the New Testament, takes a long and dreary look at the barren rocks of Palestine instead, and then, with all the coolness of actual knowledge, labels his speculations "The Life of Jesus." Neither he nor his admirers seem in the least aware that, instead of a life of Jesus, he has simply given us the most charitable opinion of him entertained at present in Paris. His criticisms are deduced from physical science and French philosophy. Then we have another "life," the materials for which are drawn from the ample storehouse of German metaphysics; and, again, others, whose pages are a mere reflection of church creeds, without a fact within the knowledge of either biographer upon which to found a rational judgment of the man whose life they assume to portray. Hence, their lucubrations have no more value than would have those of a man who should bore us with a life of Euclid, knowing nothing of the mathematics, and believing, the while, that what anybody else assumed to know about it was sheer humbug.

The story of Jesus—the only "life" of him worth reading—stands centuries back in the past; and, however imperfect, it is too late now for modern scholarship to improve it. The schoolmen can make nothing of it. Its contradictions are a disgust, its fragmentary character a puzzle, its authorship unknown, and its statements of facts incredible; yet they cannot let it alone, as one might suppose would be the best thing they could do. It has a natural attraction for sober investigation. Thoughtful minds, knowing that so much has grown out of it, feel that there must be something in it, and are puzzled with the question—What? Every church in the land, every religious institution recognized by modern civilization, rests upon faith in the truth of the story for which the Jews sought to take Paul's life—the story, namely, (as stated by Festus to Agrippa), "of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." For ages, faith in the fact embodied in that declaration has been the source of the only hope of a future life that shed its radiance around the death-bed of departing millions.

Who shall successfully impeach the veracity of Paul? That he was human, and therefore fallible, none will deny; what man is not? But his iteration to the death of that basic fact of his faith and his philosophy is not to be set aside by writers who flippantly place the popular notion of a miracle upon the pinnacle of an assumption that it is contrary to the laws of Nature, and then knock it down. That is child's play, let him who will indulge in it. Not by these can the sober declarations of that witness, in a question of fact, be ruled out. We find only in history the great men whose names we reverence; while at the same time, these modern commentators and their disciples virtually assume that they only, the self-

elect great men of to-day, are possessed of sound eyes and a clear judgment. Their theory that a thing cannot be so, is assumed to outweigh the testimony of half the world that it is so. Their case is hopeless.

But who shall so establish the rationality of the story (which is all that the process can do for the truth of any ancient statement) as to render it more easy of belief than of doubt? Surely, none but those who are familiar with facts similar to those in question.

I need not name who these are. It is this similarity in the facts of ancient and modern Spiritualism that binds them together with a chain of mutual uses. I pray that no modern disciple may try to sever it. They reflect a common light upon the darkness of the grave. The ancient facts place the modern among the normal experiences of mankind, while the modern reserve the ancient from the grasp of materialism; at the same time they enable us to benefit the so-called religious world without necessarily offending its prejudices. We need not ask a churchman to disbelieve his Bible; we have only to beg him to understand it. We hold many things in common. He believes in a future life. So do we. It is the vagueness of his conceptions concerning it, that we are able in a good degree to eliminate; we agree as to the fact itself. He believes in a resurrection. So do we. Let him change the phraseology so that his creed shall read: the resurrection from the body instead of the resurrection of the body, and we are harmonized. Nothing but a preposition separates us in this matter. He believes in a preparation here and now for that future life. So do we. We differ only in the mode. He thinks the necessary work consists mainly in the arduous task of believing very strongly that Jesus of Nazareth will carry him to where all such as have believed as he does have gone, and it will be done. He deems Abraham's bosom to be open only for such. We have to assure him that Jesus never promised to carry him there at all; or to get him there on any such terms. We can assure him that it would be not only extremely disagreeable, or Abraham, but somewhat distressing to all earthly souls, to be cooped up with people whose only change in character and thought resultant from certain practices of daily life not necessary to mention, is a death-bed profession of that aforesaid belief. We can assure him that the ancient odor of a character thus formed inheres somewhat, and that it smells of the earth earth.

We can help him to untie many knotty points in his reading of the Word—"points where his knowledge of 'the original tongues' is however profound, affords him no satisfactory aid. Take, for example, the 14th chapter of St. Mark, from the 14th verse to the 18th inclusive. His belief in what is there stated can yield him nothing but perplexity and trouble as often as he seriously reflects upon it. Ours, as we can explain to him, is a source of rational satisfaction. Here, as we read, is a command from 'the risen Lord' to his disciples to go every where and preach the gospel to everybody, with salvation by way of reward for belief, and damnation as the consequences of unbelief. But this charge to these ancient missionaries is coupled with the assurance that, certain signs should follow them that believe. Just here, his principal quandary begins. Where are the signs? His condition is analogous to that of Captain Cuttle when Biler had given him a mysterious envelope purporting to contain the last will and testament of his friend Sol Gills. Here is the will, said the astute captain, all correct; but addressing Biler with the natural severity of conscious wrong, here is the will; now, where is the testament? 'Here is the belief,' naturally reasons the modern churchman; but where, oh, where are the attesting signs?

It is a work of charity to analyze his trouble. It is felt by every intelligent reader who believes in the infallibility of Scripture, and interprets it by the popular standard. He 'believeth,' he says, Granted. But he believeth what? The gospel, is his reply. What is the gospel? It is very necessary, it will be conceded, that one should believe the true thing, and, in the midst of these fragmentary utterances, the bottom part, to be clearly seen, requires a better and stronger light than the wax luminaries of the church afford. Only withdraw the veil that scholasticism has thrown around the narrative, and it will be seen that Jesus, after the crucifixion, and in presence of the eleven, upbraided them 'because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.' Immediately following this upbraiding comes the charge to preach, and the condemnation for unbelief in the message. This the disciples were to spread with all diligence everywhere, because it was a joyful message. It was glad tidings of a new revelation of facts in the career of mankind. Here was a man, whom they knew to have been crucified, alive as before! and this fact, with its natural illustrations, was 'the gospel' they were to preach. Were it not true, reasoned Paul, who felt the full force of its gladness and its uses, then are we, of all men, most miserable, for there was no hope for the nearly ascertained of what to-day is a common fact—no hope for them in this world.

But the churchman does not believe the gospel; he believes the creed which teaches, by way of binder to the metaphysical bundle of scholastic absurdities, that it was not a man whom the Jews killed and the eleven saw alive again as they sat at meat, but God! and because of his unbelief in the fact, pure and simple, he is 'damned' by the pains of perpetual mystification. Again, it appears to be quite as necessary to be baptized as it is to believe. But here he follows the creed which immerses him in water, or sprinkles it upon his face, instead of following 'The Word,' which testifies that this is not at all the kind of baptism that was to accompany the gospel. The symbol of the baptism of Jesus was fire; not water—the sign of a power that should not simply moisten the surface of the understanding with a verbal assent, but which should penetrate to the very

centre of consciousness and there become a perpetual source of light and heat.

The difficulty with churchmen, then, is that they have mistaken the creed for gospel, and a plunge into the river for Christian baptism. It is a very shallow blunder, but it has led to very serious results. There is nothing in the church creed that can be justly called glad tidings, or gospel, to the heart or to the understanding. To the former it is a source of fear; to the latter it is a metaphysical puzzle. Nor is there any power of regeneration in water. It may help a dirty garment, but a dirty character must needs have other washing. What wonder, then, that churchmen see none of the prescribed signs following the belief of such a gospel, and the application of such a baptism as they profess and practice? They ought not to follow. Nature does not, nor should she, endorse a falsehood. But if they would only look about them with eyes unobscured by scholasticism, if they would but remember that the word 'damned' has other significance beside that of being roasted in a fire which the church gives us to understand, 'neither consumes nor purifies,' they might know that Jesus, in his charge to preach the gospel, in the conditions affixed to its reception, the signs that should follow it, and the consequences of its rejection, uttered a living truth. When a new discovery of fact or principle is made in any department of Nature, it points to a better way. It is a new gospel addressed to us, whatever may be the nature of its uses. There is saving power in it always, whether it be a discovery in the realm of physics or in the nature of man. Consequently, whoever rejects it suffers loss; loses the benefit of it; if you please, is damned. Both history and observation are in proof of this.

Now every such discovery, so soon as men hear of it and are baptized by a sense of its utility, not only becomes a saviour, in its specific way, but certain signs—appropriate tests of its genuineness—always occur, and the reward of the baptized believer in it is sure. The sign, for example, that the believer in the magnetic telegraph has set his faith upon a solid foundation with respect to that, is not in a voice from heaven, but, like its peculiar use, is in the messages which he sends or receives through it.

The new discovery we are especially concerned with, was that man is essentially a spiritual being; that the chemistry which is called death, could only disintegrate the body; that there were laws appropriate to his spiritual nature, and at his command, that so far exceeded popular knowledge as to seem to the multitude to be in utter opposition to law; that in the spiritual arcanum—"the kingdom of heaven" in Scripture phrase—was the source of power, the fountain of inspiration, the wisdom of knowledge. No prophet had made proclamation of this. To Job, the question whether if a man died he should live again, was an unsolved problem. Ecclesiastes did not know what became of anybody or of anything. History and tradition, Jewish or other, afforded nothing better than hints, hopes and speculation concerning the future of man. His spiritual identity was manifest as a solid fact for the first time (in history) then and there.

The appearance of Jesus after his crucifixion was the natural complement to his life before it. It was not merely a verification of his promise; it was also a demonstration of the source of his power. He had done many wonderful things while in the body, the ability to do which, he had always claimed, was derived from the spiritual world; and when he appeared himself as a spirit, who could doubt it?

Now the signs that should follow the belief in the reality of that fact would naturally be (in kind); that is to say, those who had a genuine faith in the source of the power which he manifested, would be able to apply it as he did; just as faith in the telegraph gives the ability to use it in common with its original discoverer; while those who are without the faith that is born of knowledge, would be very likely to tell us, as they invariably do with respect to the things of Jesus, that to annihilate time and space in this manner, is contrary to the laws of Nature.

The newest, therefore, of all the newness revealed by Jesus, was the reality of the spiritual world, and that it had an open door of communication with the physical world, which, under certain conditions, could be kept open to the conscious realization of every human soul. The signs which followed were the proof of this. But what is the proof that they did follow? It is not, as certain writers suppose, in identifying the records with the names they bore; those names, to look for it, were it possible to do so, which it is not. The best evidence that these signs did occur under the conditions named, is that they do occur. Jesus, like Moses, simply revealed a law and established a fact that humanity might use throughout all its generations and be blessed in the using forever. We are not come here, I take it, to reduce in the physical uses of the one great world-benefactor, and to destroy the spiritual uses of the other and infinitely greater.

We are not come to destroy any truth or fact, whether of ancient or of modern discovery; whether belonging to the realm of matter or of spirit—the outer, or the inner world. Why then should we be the butt of ridicule for the men of popular science, and the subjects of horrors in the estimation of the devotees of popular religion? We are not here to disturb the truth that is in either science or religion. Our endeavor is to make the truths of the church more true to the consciousness by clearing them from the misconception of scholasticism and tradition, and by pointing out as well as we may what is true both in fact and history with respect to man. The Protestant Church honors Luther for freeing it from the errors of the Roman Church; but unless it is prepared to issue a bull of infallibility, it should not denounce us as in league with the evil one, because of our sober protest against its own errors. We make this protest in earnestness, but not in

anger. Error is not necessarily a sin, but it is always an injury, and the eradication of it from the opinions and practices of mankind is the work that science and religion are set to do; and the progress of civilization is in exact ratio to their success.

Now, we Spiritualists may not, technically, belong to the church; but we do belong to this present epoch of civilization, and therefore have a vital interest in observing the influence which modern science and popular religion are exerting upon it. We know that this influence is not unmingled with injury; but we do not impeach the motives, or the sincerity of either. We are put without the pale of honorable recognition by both these popular institutions, though we are intimately related to both, and hold to much in common. The discoveries we have made have a direct bearing upon the religious ideas of the age, inasmuch as they relate to the primary significance of religion, while the method by which they are established is purely scientific; that is to say, we have observed a fact, and reasoned from it—not from an assumed fact, but from a creed laid down for us before-hand, as churchmen reason, not yet before a fact, as too many professed scientists reason; but from facts of personal knowledge—facts which any man may see who really desires to see, and will honestly comply with the conditions or laws of their appearance. I emphasize the phrase "really desires to see," because, notwithstanding the often expressed wish or willingness of many scientists and others to be converted to a belief in Spiritualism, a little attention to the symptoms of their mental state will reveal the fact that it is a mere patronizing condescension to personal friendship, or respect for the public character of the individual to whom the declaration is made; or else it is done in confidence of their being, on the part of those willing minds (?), no possibility of any such conversion. "If you will show me," say these sweet-voiced exponents of philosophical candor—"If you will show me the fastest of which you speak, I too will believe." Now, the very hypothesis and profound conviction of those who make this demand of us is, that we, and not the spirits, do show all the facts we narrate; and it is precisely this foregoing conclusion which prevents them from looking for themselves as they should do, or of seeing anything when they pretend to look. This is a fashionable and cheap way of manifesting one's hospitality to truth; but it is made in the conviction that she has nothing to show us. But to return.

By virtue of these discoveries, we know that there is, in the popular religion of the age, far more of error than of truth. The heart of it is sound; no doubt that is to say, it means well; but its theology is false in its essentials. The church of the first century, with all its blunders, had a basis that was sound. Its apostles had seen and handled the facts they believed in. The church of the nineteenth has, for foundation the history only of what the original church knew of fact, and that greatly weakened by what it did not know of reason, and made utterly unsound by the scholasticism which, subsequently undertook to settle matters without fact or reason. And yet, how "it exalteth its horn"; how it parades its superiority; with what an air of conscious security it asks us if we have "an interest in Christ." It never troubles itself with the question as to whether Christ has an interest in it, but sets itself gorgeously down upon the corners of the fashionable streets, and takes that for granted. But, with all its superiority of aspect and assumption of superiority, it cannot live another half-century unless the Spiritualism of to-day can clear it from its errors. And if modern Spiritualism be not true, then neither is ancient Spiritualism; for their facts are identical in kind. So that, if the falsity of the latter can be demonstrated, then has the church no foundation whatever; then has man no basis of demonstrable fact from which to infer his individual existence beyond the grave; and humanity, all and singular, its hopes crushed out, its faith fallacious, its morality dwindled to expediency, its honesty merely *best policy* (for everybody but a politician or a millionaire), must look to the philosophy alone for the laws of living, and, in *artificial merits*, must glean what comfort we can from the purely scientific inference, namely: that if (as is supposed to be proved) the race began with an ape, it will end like one.

Darwinism—whether designedly or not, is of no consequence—is probably, thus early in the history of the assumed discovery of its founder, making more converts from among the more educated nations to the faith of that sublime conclusion than are being made at present by Romanism and Protestantism combined. It is not possible for a religion that rests upon history, and has not the means whereby to test history, to withstand the onslaughts of modern science. As history recedes in the march of time, it naturally grows weaker, and science, as it advances along the line of demonstration, stronger. The church will do well to look the situation in the face; for, unless she changes her mode of defense, it needs no prophet to foretell her doom. She has no weapons wherewith to repel the attacks of her persistent foe. You persecuted to the death all your ancestors, says Science, and have but recently laid the grave to be ashamed of it. You issued a bull against a comet, and nothing came of it. You set the canon of Scripture against the facts of observation; but the facts stand, and your canon had to adjust itself to them as it best might. Your founder is a myth; his miracles, *hoax*; the precepts you ascribe to him, *stale*. The careful eye may read this impeachment of church faith and church authority between the lines which announce the successive discoveries of science for the last fifty years. When Renan writes, "Medical science can name the malady which made the fortune of Mahomet," he means that the church shall distinctly understand the unwritten inference of the declaration to be, that medical science

SINGULAR INSTANCE OF SOMNAMBULISM.
Some friends visited La Fontaine one evening and found him asleep. While talking with his wife, La Fontaine entered in his nightcap, without shoes or stockings, just as he had risen from his bed. His eyes were half-open, he had evidently saw no object. He crossed the dining-room where the party were sitting, went into a little closet or cabinet that served him for a study and shut himself up in the dark. Some time after he came out, rubbing his hands and testifying much satisfaction, but still asleep. He then sat down at the table, and, in the consciousness of the presence of any one, and retired to bed. His wife and friends were very curious to know what he had been about in the dark. They all went to his study, and found there a fable newly written, the link being still wet, which brought to their minds the story of the man who wrote a fable in his dream. The admission of this most original author may wish to know which fable was composed under these extraordinary circumstances. I quote that is replete with the most natural and touching language—it is that which unites the utmost grace of expression with the greatest simplicity. It is an celebrated fable of "The Two Pigeons," by *Mrs. and Mrs. Saur, Reuerer.*

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—The Children's Progressive Lyceum meets every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock in Capital Hall, southwest corner Fifth and Adams streets. W. H. Plauack, secretary; Mrs. E. G. Plauack, Guardian.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—Spiritualists and other Liberal thinkers meet at conference and discussion every Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock, in Pioneer Hall, on Post street.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—Spiritualists hold meetings every Sunday at 7 o'clock, in Pioneer Hall, Fifth street; Mrs. P. W. Stephens, speaker.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—The Children's Progressive Lyceum meets every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock in Capital Hall, southwest corner Fifth and Adams streets. W. H. Plauack, secretary; Mrs. E. G. Plauack, Guardian.

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