

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER

Progress, the Universal Law of Nature; Thought, the Solvent of Her Problems.

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NO. 99

AN EXPLANATION.

What Is the American Secular Union?

This request has been asked of the Secretary by a number of the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and she gladly takes this opportunity of replying.

The American Secular Union is an organization which works to effect a total separation of Church and State, so that religious liberty may be secured to all. As the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER well know, a partial union of Church and State today exists in this country, which, if not checked before long, cannot but pave the way for a religious persecution beside which that of the Inquisition will sink into insignificance. The "nine demands" which we make in our constitution are:

1. The equitable taxation of church property in common with other property.
2. The total discontinuance of religious instruction and worship in the public schools, and especially the reading of any Bible.
3. The repeal of all laws enforcing the observance of Sunday as a religious institution, rather than an economic one, justified by physiological and other secular reasons.
4. The cessation of all appropriations of the public funds for educational and charitable institutions of a sectarian character.
5. The abolition of ecclesiastical chaplains paid out of the public treasury.
6. The discontinuance of the practice of the appointment by the President of the United States and the Governors of the several States of religious festivals and fairs.
7. The substitution of a solemn affirmation, under the pains and penalties of perjury, in the courts, and in all other departments of the government, in place of the common forms of judicial oath.
8. The defense through the courts of any American citizen whose equal religious and political rights are denied, or who is oppressed on account of his opinion, or who has held or expressed on the subject of religion.
9. The promulgation, by all peaceable and orderly means, of the great principles of religious liberty and equal rights, devotion to truth for its own sake, and of the brotherhood on the ground of a common humanity; and the protection of the State from the encroachments of the Church.

The American Secular Union is strictly non-sectarian in religious matters. As individuals, we, of course, are apt to work along the line of our religious preferences, whether these be Christian or non-Christian, Quaker, Unitarian, Spiritualist, Materialist, Atheist, Agnostic or any other not herein included. As a society, however, and in the work of the society, we confine ourselves strictly to non-partisan and non-sectarian advocacy of our "nine demands" for separating the State and we heartily welcome to our ranks all who, like ourselves, believe in religious liberty, in the right of every human being to freedom of thought, and in the total separation of Church and State.

It is the cherished dream of all true Liberals to some day effect an organization which shall do for the world what the Church does for Christianity:

1. Present an organized resistance to those who would encroach upon its rights.
2. Spread its gospel in a systematic manner among those who have not yet heard of that gospel.

But the realization of this dream has long been interdicted with the fact that not only do the isms of Liberals differ more widely than do the isms of Christians, but even the individuals in those isms too frequently are at variance with one another to a greater extent than are the individuals in any given church denomination. The churches, too, have a creed, the belief in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, which holds them together in one well-organized and well-equipped army; while among Liberals—to instance only one difference—the variance between the creed of the Spiritualist and the creed of the Materialist is so immense that it has hitherto seemed hopeless to attempt to organize these two camps into one army under one banner.

And yet there is a universal creed to be found among Liberals of all isms, if we will but ignore their intense individuality, and dig down to basic principles.

One and all, we contend for religious liberty and the right to freedom of thought; one and all, we assert perpetually that we oppose in toto the union of Church and State. Here, then, is outlined the creed which is joyfully welcomed by us as FREE THOUGHT.

And here, too, is indicated the means by which we shall obtain that desired freedom of thought by organizing to protect at all times and in all ways against the union of Church and State. This work the American Secular Union was called into being, and for this work it cordially invites the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER to lend a helping hand, by becoming members or contributors; and by circulating its pamphlets, and where opportunity offers to a well-organized social society, it suggests that some attempt be made to influence local legislation in this direction, and to also reach the public by judicious articles in the local press. In a hundred and one ways the opportunities for advancing the cause dear to us all will open up, as fast as we become sufficiently well organized to meet daily issues. Meanwhile, let us remember the old motto of the early anti-slavery people—"Agitate, agitate, agitate." Contributions, letters of inquiry, etc., may be sent to:

IDA C. CLARNDON,
Corresponding Secy., A. S. U.,
Broad and Columbia Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.

The Rev. W. P. Bacon of Davenport, who resigned his pulpit rather than give up his horse trotting business, has the courage of his opinions, but he will find it harder to gather in the stakes at a country fair than it was to take up a collection for the heathen.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER gladdens many homes of Spiritualists who are unable to pay its full price. The paper is sometimes the best of God's children, and THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER gladdens and brightens their homes. Spiritualists, you who are blessed with ample means, remember the philanthropic work we are doing and extend our circulation. No other Spiritualist paper makes any pretension of doing this philanthropic work. Call the attention of your neighbor to the paper. It is sent 16 weeks for 25 cents.

THE OLD WORLD.

From Our Own Artist.

He Is in the Land of the "Holy Coat."

He Witnesses the Great Ignorance and Superstition of the People.



ON the steamship Spaarndam, which sailed August 14th from New York for Rotterdam, I had the good fortune to be one of the passengers; not for service we received, as it is a very cheap Trans-Atlantic line, but for the purpose of studying human religious natures and human ignorance.

I was one of twenty-seven second-class passengers, and the youngest, excepting a young mulatto lad, of whom I will speak later. Of these passengers five were seeing and worshipping the Holy Coat now at Treves, while several others acknowledged their intention of visiting Treves and viewing the ancient remnant, but claim they did not come across the ocean solely for that reason.

An old fellow, who occupied the same state-room with me, was, in my estimation, to be pitied, as a more ignorant and fanatical character cannot be found at every street corner. He was seventy-two years of age and a native of the Mexican war, where he reached the rank of Captain, and now receives a pension of \$25 a month, which enabled him to make such a trip to Treves. This old fellow, named Casper Trot, would insist upon teaching me "the only true faith," the Catholic religion. "Young man," said he to me, "I have seen this world for more than seventy years, and know what disbelief in the 'holy church' results in. Follow in the footsteps that I follow and be saved. I go to see the Holy Coat and pray, so that it may help me, which I am certain it will, as it has done miracles before. I know it has cleansed children of long and nasty diseases of the skin, which could not have been removed had not their mother washed the diseased parts with a sponge that had been in contact



with the Holy Coat, and left them as clean and as white as alabaster. It has cured the sick, straightened distorted limbs; yes, it has done miracles, which it certainly could not do were it not the only true and Holy Coat." I listened with feigned deep interest, and thus gained the trust of the old man, so that he gradually unwound the thread of his life, and told me he had never received any education, nor could he read or write anything whatever but his name; and I believe no one else could do that but he.

Another strange incident took place during a more strange love affair on board the steamer. A young man became infatuated with the handsome stewardess; reciprocity on her part was plainly visible, when it was suddenly learned that the young lady was a Catholic, while the gentleman, of a spiritualistic turn of mind, said he would marry her only if she gave up the Catholic church. This state of affairs, as can be imagined, looked sad for the lovers; yet still he insisted on his ideas, while the Miss was stubbornly resolute. At this juncture a woman from the City of Buffalo told the young lady that she could settle all favorably; only to let her have a few hairs of her head, which was at once done. My inquisitive nature would not rest until I found out of what purpose the lock of hair could be. She said: "I shall take them to Treves and touch the Holy Coat with them, and I am certain the young man will give up his ungodly ideas and become a true believer in the glorious Catholic religion."

A German woman from a small Iowa town, also bound for Treves, had in her care the mulatto boy before mentioned. She said that she was the housekeeper of a priest, and that she was taking the boy with her to see the Holy Coat and receive the benediction which all got who come in contact with it. This boy and woman (whom he called Auntie) were great Catholics. Agnes Deke and rosary were almost parts of them, while one word against their religion would make them furious. One day

while on deck talking to the lad, he espied a man on the foredeck and exclaimed: "See! he looks just like St. Francis." "Who was St. Francis?" said I, indignant at the folly taught him. At this he left me, went straightway to his aunt and recited the occurrence, after which I was despised in the eyes of both lad and his foolish aunt. Among such people as these I spent thirteen days, and could tell more, but have only made mention of a few of the many strange things they said and of the folly they exhibited.

ON THE MARCH TO TREVES.

As I was journeying along the Rhine, a few miles south of Dusseldorf in Germany, my attention was attracted by a long line of people along the roadside, who were rapidly approaching me. As they were quite chilly and the heavens threatened rain, I felt certain that it was not a picnic party; that they were not soldiers, as I at first thought, since



soldiers are seen almost everywhere in Germany, was corroborated by there being more than half as many women as

either happy or contented. I do not know any details of his treatment, but most likely he deserved and received punishment, for he soon ran away. He was never heard of again; but the incident was so marked that the children born many years after often heard it alluded to by their parents. There was nothing very unusual in such an experience, but it proved to be the first chapter in a family history extending through several generations.

Twenty years after the above incident the farmer and his wife became interested in Spiritualism. They formed a family circle. Tests from their own children convinced them so that the mother became full of enthusiasm, and began to seek mediumship for herself by sitting for development. For this purpose she sat alone at any and all hours when she could escape from domestic duties. Here she made a serious mistake. Our spirit friends are not always by our side. They have their own occupations and demands, and they keep an appointment with sacred punctuality. The undeveloped medium, who has no regular hours for sittings, thus easily becomes the prey of spirit visitors, who find a ready acceptance, and then outstay their welcome. There is something so sacred in spirit presence, especially to the trained orthodox mind, that any spirit is likely to be treated as a friend. But it is only those who are very sensitive who discover the danger by painful experience.

Presently this mother became clairaudient, and then she discovered that she was rapidly becoming the slave of those who had claimed to be her guides, but were now apparently working to do her harm rather than good. She realized her peril in time, and for nearly two months fought a silent battle for life, liberty and love of husband and children. She refused to reply to the voices around her, till at last, wearied and disgusted, these spirits left her. She sought her battle to victory, but sacrificed her mediumship to avoid a second contest; thus, through ignorance, losing that which should have proved the greatest blessing of her life. Strangely enough, she continued to encourage mediumship in her children, giving them no warning of any possible danger. Her oldest daughter, though sometimes giving startling tales to her parents, most naturally thought more of this world than any other, and cared little for these family circles. She grew to womanhood, was married, and had a daughter sixteen years old, before she became interested in spirit return. But she was none the less a true sensitive, and at first was much happier in her mediumship than her mother had been. It was orderly, and none but loved friends came to her. Inner life, until untrained and untaught—she ran into greater danger than her mother had experienced. She began to visit public seances, and circles, so dangerous to the undeveloped medium, and then came, very soon, and proofs of her hereditary tendencies and sensitiveness. Like her mother she began to hear voices. She also often saw, or thought she saw, her spirit visitors, and was very much frightened by them. But the old story was soon repeated, for she presently found herself compelled to say cruel and unkind things to her husband and daughter, although really devotedly attached to them. For months she was unable to leave her room, and sometimes her daily, only to be insulted and attacked. Yet in his absence she was so perfectly normal that the doctors and attendants could not realize but that she was only "making believe" to be insane. When she would beg these spirits to leave her, they would reply that it was the only fun they had. At last a spirit sister came to tell her that her husband had succeeded in forming a band with power to protect her; and from that time the obsessing spirits left.

We may mark here, as perhaps of importance in its influence, that although her husband was bitterly opposed to

SPIRIT REVENGE.

It Is Vividly Illustrated.

The Dangers that Surround the Sensitive.

A MOTHER'S TROUBLE—HER EXPERIENCE WITH VOICES—THE MALICIOUS MULLATTO—THE ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE—INCURABLE CASES—HEREDITARY INFLUENCES.

Fifty years ago a young farmer took a lad twelve years of age from the poorhouse. The boy was a mulatto, born lazy, counting every task an imposition. He had such an ungovernable temper, and spiteful, revengeful disposition, that it was hopeless to make him



lady had grown up with no interest in Spiritualism, although when a child, she had once or twice seen and described spirit forms. She was talented and ambitious, and, intending to qualify herself for a profession, seems to have overworked her brain. She became suddenly and violently insane, evincing hatred for her mother, and a desire to do her injury. There was no apparent individual influence in this case. The first attack was brief, and the poor girl remembered all she had said and done. She is of a very affectionate disposition, and the unkindness of the insanity wounded her deeply.

After a time by and then came another attack, rendering removal to an asylum a necessity. And from that time, at irregular periods, attack after attack broke up every attempt at home life by mother and daughter. But what I may perhaps call "spherical influence" has become very marked, for the unfortunate girl is now coarse and repulsive in her language and manner during the attack, using oaths and other expressions foreign to the pure sensitive nature of her normal life. In other words, it seems now as if the mortal brain, in its insane moods, vibrates in harmony with the spheres inhabited by such spirits as obsessed the mother and grandmother. A direct personal control has apparently become impossible for any spirit, and thus we have, as it seems to me, insanity inducing obsession, as distinct from the obsession that induces insanity. It is apparently hopeless. The skilled physician and the magnetic healer have tried to effect a cure, and failed. And from the inner-life comes no whisper of hope other than that she may soon be "the gates ajar." We may call it a hereditary tendency to obsession; and had it been delayed in the last outbreak until the poor girl had married and become a mother, then in the fourth generation, if at all favored on the father's side, we might have seen a very diabolical spirit return. It is obvious that neither man nor spirit can change nature's law, which is, that brain movement—vibration—determines spirit association. Those of us who claim to be sane, know that by thought we can actually change the rate of movement of the brain atom, as I have tried to show in my article on "The Science of Spirit Return." But it is from such experience as that of this family, that we may send down to our children brain movements, that hold them to a spirit level beyond their power to resist, and which therefore becomes insanity. If we could conceive of a brain held to contact with bright spirits by a movement of the nerve, and that contact would be insanity too. The power to move the brain atom by thought, is essential to manhood. The archangel who could do no wrong, if he so desired, would be a slave, and no more a man.

In the case of this mother and daughter, their experience might well be ascribed to their ignorance of the laws governing spirit intercourse. They exposed themselves to dangers that could have been avoided. But the awful sufferings of the granddaughter gave no clue to their cause. No case of insanity can be traced in the family history of the parents and grandparents; and, although evidently inheriting some mediumship, the poor girl had done nothing to develop it; nor had she in her same moments any consciousness of having seen or heard spirits. Whilst at such times her language is that of the class of the parrot and the grand old man, and grandmother, yet if they are really individualized, then they are compelled by the disease to manifest as if they were insane. So much may be inheritance; but for the rest we can only discover an insanity that permits obsession, but offers no hope of cure.

After the poor girl's case had become hopeless, and the mother had returned from placing her in the asylum that must now be her home, there came a most startling explanation of the unhappy experiences that had followed three generations of this family. The spirit control of a lady medium with whom

Spiritualism, as well he might be, yet, acting under the advice of her mother, supported by what she believed to be her spirit father—heard clairaudiently—she secretly visited mediums, hoping for a promised development as a slate-writing medium—a promise not yet fulfilled.

So far, we have marked the effect upon mother and daughter of a sensitiveness which was used to their injury by obsessing spirits; and that knowledge and obedience to law would have saved them such suffering. We have further seen that a low standard of spirituality was either inherent or had been evolved, for the expressed wishes of the daughter's husband had been set at defiance when they secretly but regularly visited mediums, with whom the daughter sat for a development that remained invisible.

After a time the husband died, and then the daughter and the granddaughter moved to a distant city. The young

It is evident that the power of good and bad spirits is alike dependent upon finding a sensitive as the channel into earth-life; and their power over others than the medium used will depend on the susceptibility of the spiritual to spirit hypnotism. The direct power of both good and bad spirits is, undoubtedly, limited to sensitives; and is further shaped by conditions that, taking the world as a whole, has favored the evil rather than the good. Of course danger through ignorance has always existed, but we may now rejoice that the knowledge of spirit return, whilst giving us the key to many a mysterious obsession, may be so used by the intelligent sensitive as to become a blessing instead of a curse.

For several years I have tried to arouse Spiritualists and their platform workers to the importance of this subject; but the craze for phenomena, and the eager hunt for a few ghosts, has seemed to render every attempt useless; yet surely the cases of obsession everywhere around us are calling for study and action. The average Spiritualist has rested content with the thought that if our asylums were once thrown open to the skilled magnetizer, the patients would soon be restored to reason. It will some day be acknowledged that physicians and healers are almost useless, as against laws of heredity ignorantly wielded for curse instead of blessing upon the unborn.

CHARLES DAWBARN.

San Leandro, Cal.

In the Midst of Life We Are in Death.

So says the proverb. At one of the camping grounds this summer the widows of two former politicians of this city made themselves ostentatiously conspicuous. The ladies said they were unduly anxious to get husbands, but eligible single gentlemen do not frequent that camp. Through Miss Maggie Gual one of them was told that a death would soon occur in her family. She became more thoughtful, and seemed to have a premonition of its truth. The Cleveland Press, of Sept. 1, tells the sequel as follows:

"The announcement that Charles Pettengill, son of Mrs. Mary Pettengill, had been killed at Ft. Collins, Colo., created a sensation among his friends in this city. The details of the tragedy as received in this city so far, have been very meagre, the family having nothing but an announcement of the death. Chas. Pettengill was only twenty-two years old, and for the past three or four years has been living on a ranch near Denver, where he had many friends. The first intimation of trouble was a telegram Saturday, announcing that Charles was very ill. This was addressed to Mrs. Pettengill, who was in the East. She hastened to respond, and started for Denver, where she was met at the depot in this city by her father, Mr. Pettengill, who had been killed."

"Information came later that four colored people had been arrested on suspicion of having murdered him, Friday. Mrs. Pettengill then concluded not to go to Denver, but sent a friend to look into the matter, and sift the mystery, if possible. The young man was in the habit of carrying large sums of money with him, and it is thought by his family that his assailants knew of this and murdered him for the purpose of robbery. Charles was a son of Charles Pettengill, now deceased, who was at one time revenue collector at this port. The young man was popular in this city, and had many friends. The body will be brought to Cleveland for interment, and the funeral will be held the latter part of the week, at the family residence, on Prospect, near Sterling Ave."

It is well for us all to remember that our home is not here. Wherever we go the angels go with us, and we know all that we do, and try to help us to so live that we shall be glad to have our motives brought to the light. G. F. LEWIS.

Cleveland, Ohio.

the mother was a guest, told her that mother, grandmother and daughter had each suffered from the revengeful spirit of that mulatto boy whom she called a "threshold imp." The lady had called entirely forgotten that such an incident had ever occurred; but at last she recalled what she had heard of the taking of the lad from the poor-house and his running away at the end of the year. The medium was a stranger, knowing nothing of the family or its history; and if only as a test of spirit knowledge, the statement would have been interesting to that mother of the poor statement, if true, was a lesson that the world would do well to heed.

The subject of "Spirit Revenge" is of tremendous importance to us all, and so far as I remember, has been carefully "let alone" by our teachers on both sides the life line. Indeed, there are Spiritualists of great prominence who deny the power of any evil spirit to return to earth; asserting that progressed spirits have abundant power to hold them in check. But when they go on to assert that every such experience is the workings of the inner nature of the mortal, they but insult many a worthy sensitive, who knows from sad experience that there are both friends and foes on the spirit side of life. There are hundreds of readers of this article who will recognize that this case is only remarkable in its extent, through three generations, and they know that the whole subject of the power of a revengeful spirit must be probed to its lowest depths if we would find safety for our mediumistic sons and daughters, as well as for ourselves. The trouble has been that so large a proportion are without even a conscious impression of spirit source, that they smile at the idea of danger for any.

I have already pointed out that both mother and daughter could have escaped their experience by knowledge and obedience to law. They each sought development, and ran into danger because they sought it ignorantly. The granddaughter, who inherited the same susceptibility, offered an over-worked and exhausted brain to the same malignant influence, which at once took advantage of the opportunity, as shown by the curses and insults to those most near and dear to her. So obedience to physical law would have protected the granddaughter, as obedience to spiritual law would have protected mother and grandmother.

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Cleveland, Ohio.

AN EARNEST APPEAL.

It Is Made to Humanitarian Spiritualists.

One of the Fox Sisters in Sore Need of Assistance.

BROTHER AND SISTER SPIRITUALISTS:—The undersigned are moved to say a word to you about Mrs. Margaret Fox-Kane. As you are aware, she is one of the Fox Sisters through whose mediumship, when little children, the blessing of modern Spiritualism came into the world. It need not be disguised that in their maturer years these sisters have been morally no credit to the cause they were (by spirit agency) selected to represent. Why this is so is idle, at least in this emergency, to speculate about; for, whatever the conclusion, it could not affect our duty towards them as human beings, to say nothing about a reasonable probability that they are more sinned against than sinning. The plain fact now is that while the one sister is in a manner provided for, the other, Mrs. Kane, stands in sore need of assistance. She has been ill for months, unable to earn but the merest pittance, and a few friends, having knowledge of her condition, have stood in the breach and carried her through her trials to the present. But they, like most Spiritualists, possess only moderate means, and now feel that it is time that the task be distributed over a wide area—in fact, so wide as to include Spiritualists everywhere—that is to say, those who are moved by the gracious spirit of forgiveness and charity to do their part.

We feel to ask you to help in giving Maggie Fox-Kane a fresh start. She ought to be in better lodgings than an ordinary tenement house, so that she can receive visitors under proper conditions for sittings; she needs fit clothing; and finally, money is required for rent, for food, and for incidentals.

A few weeks ago Mr. Merritt wrote to THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER regarding Mrs. Kane. To-day a letter is received by him from Mr. M. Ray, of Napoleon, Neb., in which this gentleman says: "From your statement it would appear that the Fox Sisters are very destitute, and greatly in need of help. Now I am not a Spiritualist, but if they separately or collectively have been the means or agents of making one single individual happy, I have one dollar at my command to add a feather to their pillow, which shall be forthcoming as soon as I know where to direct it."

It is in the spirit of this writer, who is not a Spiritualist, that we ask you, brothers and sisters, to give to this object. We have spoken plainly because we believe the time for plain-speaking has come. To further the ends here set forth, we have constituted ourselves a committee to receive your contributions; and we shall from time to time, through the columns of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, give an account of our stewardship, as well as acknowledge through the same channel all sums received by us. Fraternally yours,

FRANKLIN F. COOK.

73 Fourth Ave., New York.

TITUS MERRITT.

323 W. 34th St., New York.

Jesus a Mahatma.

SIR: In the report of Mrs. Annie Besant's address at the Hall of Science, London, occurs the following: "In 1872 I broke with Christianity, and I broke with it once and for all. I have nothing to unsay, nothing to undo, nothing to retract, as regards my position then and now. I broke with Christianity, and I am no nearer to it now than I was when I first joined the ranks of the National Secular Society." Now, if this means anything, it means that Mrs. Besant still repudiates Christianity, and consequently its alleged miracles; especially as she declared in "The Freshwater Test Book" (Part II), which she has not yet disowned, "that the fact of Jesus avoiding publicity in respect to his miracles shows that they never occurred."

In reply to Mr. Gould, as reported in this journal of August 29th, Mrs. Besant mentions as a great historical Mahatma—Jesus! Answering the same gentleman further as to the powers possessed by Mahatmas and Incarnates, she says in reference to H. P. Blavatsky: "I have myself witnessed instances of her control over physical forces, and in relation to cases I have not seen, I have carefully cross-examined numbers of people who did see them. On one occasion, when wearing a diamond ring, she, by force of thought and will, built the necessary materials existing in the atmosphere into a duplicate ring, which she gave to Mrs. Sinnett." When asked if she believed this, Mrs. Besant answered: "Belief is not the proper term; I know she exercised these powers."

Now, what I think all Freethinkers would like to know is, why Mrs. Besant does not believe that Jesus a Mahatma by her own confession) had the power, by his thought and will, to obtain the necessary materials from the atmosphere for the extra loaves and fishes required to feed the multitude of five thousand, when she knows that Madame Blavatsky (an Initiate only) had the power to produce a ring as stated above?

—Agnostic Journal.

Items from Salt Lake City.

John Stubbs, of Salt Lake City, writes: "A few of the advanced Spiritualists here have organized a society, the Progressive Spiritualists. They have rented the Temple of Honor hall, Main St., and are holding forth every Sunday evening at 7 o'clock. Mr. P. Carlisle is President, L. Fisher Vice-President, and John Stubbs Secretary. Last Sunday a lecture was delivered by Mr. John Stubbs, on 'Spiritualism as a Philosophy and a Religion.' Afterwards Mrs. A. E. Downey gave an excellent trance oration. This lady shows every sign of becoming an excellent trance-speaking medium. Mediums and speakers will please communicate with the Secretary, stating terms, etc., on passing through Salt Lake City, should they require engagements."

RELICS.

They Are the Results of Ignorance and Superstition.

From papal authorities we learn that "relics are the dead bodies or bones of saints, and whatever may have belonged to them in mortal life."

The exhibition of the "Holy Coat" at Treves (the seamless robe worn by Jesus of Nazareth more than eighteen centuries ago) was decided on order to give all the faithful as well as curious travelers, the opportunity of visiting this sacred shrine. Many pilgrims from all parts of the world have pressed their way into the ancient city to behold with their own eyes the wonderful "vesture" for which the loving disciples "cast lots." In fulfillment of a prophecy long foretold. It is expected that at least two million pilgrims will attend this exhibition.

The subject has revived in memory the various legends and traditions concerning "relics," especially those of Mary and Jesus. Of the former, the white veil of marriage with Joseph; her wedding ring and slippers and the black veil worn after the death of Jesus, are shown in Italian churches, and the famous "House of Loretto," brought in the thirteenth century from Nazareth, is another wonderful relic of the past. The authenticity of these "holy relics" never troubles the mind of the confiding worshippers. Miller, a good authority for these pious believers, says: "If our devotions are only sincere, it makes no matter whether or not the 'relics' is what it purports to be." So, if one should send for the head of Paul, and receive that of Pilate, it is just as good if the worshiper is only sincere.

The church of St. Peter, at Rome, is exceedingly rich in relics; in consequence it is denominated *Mater et caput ecclesiarum*. Here is shown the table on which the "Lord's Supper" was first instituted, which was conveyed, as was the "House of Loretto," by miracle, an angel bringing these "holy relics" from old Palestine to Rome. Here are also the heads of Paul and Peter, those favorite objects of devotion, shown in various churches throughout Italy, though their bodies, entire, are said to repose beneath the great altar of St. Peter. Other famous relics are there exhibited: A feather from the wing of the Archangel, which he dropped at Mary's feet when giving her the wondrous salutation; also a bottle of Jesus' tears which he shed at the grave; the towel which he used to bind his when scourged, and his picture when twelve years of age, taken by Luke; the pen of the artist, with which he wrote his "Gospel"; the cup and spoon of the infant Jesus, and other objects too numerous to mention, swell the long list of treasures to be found in this temple of worship. Despite the eternal vigilance of the Mother Church, however, in various "churches" among her votaries, there is much dispute regarding the authenticity of "relics." The "chair of St. Peter" was examined more than fifty years ago by two French priests, who discovered upon its seat extracts from the Koran that proved it to have been a product of the fifth century. Other proofs were furnished showing the "chair" having been a mere wooden stool, in support of his assertion. At St. Pietro Vincolo they show the "chain" that bound Peter, which was broken by the Angel who released him from prison. Filings from this "chain" have been sold at exorbitant prices, to be set in rings and breast-pins by the faithful.

In one of Cardinal Wiseman's lectures he bases his chief argument, in reference to Peter's supremacy at Rome, upon the sacred tradition concerning, upon "chain," having been a mere wooden stool, in support of his assertion. At St. Pietro Vincolo they show the "chain" that bound Peter, which was broken by the Angel who released him from prison. Filings from this "chain" have been sold at exorbitant prices, to be set in rings and breast-pins by the faithful.

The keys of this saint were taken from his tomb a few years since, where they had been deposited more than eleven centuries ago by Pope Stephen III, to whom they were given, not by the saint himself, but by Pepin, in return for the "pontifical blessing" that was to insure him and his family the throne of France to the latest generation. This was the origin of the "temporal power of the Pope."

The ring of St. Peter is worn in succession by all the reigning popes. It is of great value, being composed of pearls and diamonds, and estimated as being worth ten thousand dollars. It is said when worn by a pope, the church purchased it, but it must have been subjected to the time when he was compelled to borrow money from his Master, and this obtained by miracle, to pay his taxes.

It is highly probable, if the coming exhibition should be well patronized, it will inaugurate a succession of pilgrimages to other cities of the old world—Milan, Modena, Madrid, Cologne, and the most sacred of all—Rome. "Relics" are so numerous in the various churches of these cities mentioned, they are catalogued for the use of the church, how they pay the price asked for beholding a specified "relic," and this price is proportioned to the value or rarity of the "relic" desired.

In one of the great basilicas at Rome built by Helena, mother of Constantine, which was deposited a third part of the "true cross," discovered by her upon Calvary, and near the chancel are two catalogues hung up for the perusal of strangers. One contains a list of "indulgences," granted to all who worship there, and the other a list of "relics." There are four hundred and thirty-five "relics" belonging to the true cross, though the Latin say there should be only three, and the Greek church contend for four. There are innumerable pieces of the true cross, every bishop, priest and monk wears one as an amulet, and no church however obscure is without a fragment of this holy wood. Father Newman accounts for this miraculous multiplication of the holy cross by referring to the distribution of the "loaves and fishes" when Jesus fed the multitude in the desert! This explanation is all-sufficient to satisfy the doubt, if any should arise, of the faithful devotees who implicitly believe any doctrine or tradition, coming from a source declared to be impossible. When the mind voluntarily submits to the control of a superior intellect, it will soon cease the labor of serious inquiry, and be perfectly content to surrender even the salvation of the soul to the spiritual authority of "relics." These include faith in their efficacy to cure disease, prevent accident, and even to propitiate the favor of the Supreme Deity. To such pious votaries, in hours of affliction, a bone of St. Anthony, or a lock of hair of a prophet, or a piece of "St. Patrick's stick" with which he drove all the snakes out of Ireland, would give more consolation and rest of soul than any spiritual solace. History repeats itself, and one may now expect a revival of the old traditions of the ancient church, whose coffers

need replenishing since "Peter's pence" have decreased from their annual flow of \$2,500,000 to a very sum. The church must have money. MICHAEL.

MAN.

His Physical and Spiritual Organization and Possibilities.

Man is a threefold being: soul, spirit and body. The soul is the inner principle of life, consciousness and intelligence; a spark from the divine energy, and itself divine. The spirit is the counterpart of the body, having the same members and senses, but so sublimated and ethereal as to be invisible and intangible to mortal sight and touch; but nevertheless real and imperishable. The body is a mere instrument formed of physical elements and fitted to the spirit like clothing to a body, for the purpose of enabling it to express itself in the realm of materiality, and learn the lessons and the power of physical life.

In the act of generation all the constituent elements of soul, spirit and body being present in essence, the human being becomes at once an individualized entity; and from that moment the soul, spirit and body start together as co-partners in one personality on the journey of life, each having a destiny in accordance with its inherent durability; that of the body is ordinarily three-score and ten or fourscore years more or less; then the co-partnership expires by limitation and the body is dropped. That is death to it, but the soul and spirit continue to live and maintain their identity in the spiritual realm, and the rising from the dead body, or resurrection. The spirit then performs the same functions to the soul as the body did to both soul and spirit in earth-life; hence it is called the spiritual body, see I Cor., 15:44: "there is a natural (physical) body and there is a spiritual body."

The brain is the connecting link, the telegraphic instrument by which the spirit and soul individually communicates with the outer world.

From time immemorial it has been known that persons possessing certain qualities of brain were inspired by spiritual power to see, hear, speak and write beyond the ordinary compass of mundane intelligence. Such persons were in olden times called prophets or seers (see Sam., ix., and Jer., i.). Now they are called mediums, which simply means instrumentalities through which spirits or spiritual power can communicate with mortals. It is within the power of risen spirits to so manipulate the mediumistic brain as to make it express their own thoughts and words; and here lies the whole mystery of spirit communication, the greatest blessing ever given by God to man, because it is a key to a certainty the conditions of our knowledge, and may no longer be deceived by priestcraft and false theology. This is the direct result of evolution. "The gradual unrolling of the panorama on the stage of time" has brought us to a post-ecological age, and thenceforth are they who can say like Paul: "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly powers." The old childish theological ideas which were formulated in an age of ignorance and superstition, and became the fundamental doctrines of the great ecclesiastical organization known as the Christian Church, are every day becoming more obsolete, and losing power on the human mind, because they are not true, and are being superseded by the new truths of the spirit. Love, Truth, Purity, Justice and Reciprocity, which are the fundamental principles of the coming spiritual church, and will be the religion of the future.

The co-partnership existing between the physical and spiritual makes their interest and happiness mutual. Every enjoyment that is good for the body is consistent with and agreeable to the soul, and every pleasure that is not in accordance with the law of physical enjoyment required by the soul is no less necessary for the comfort and health of the body.

On the other hand: Immoderate physical indulgences, instead of making the body happy, bring to it disease, misery, and often premature decay and death. And the soul, being the source of growth and unfoldment which is the paramount object of its union with the body in earth-life.

How beautifully grand is the life governed by moderation, capable of the highest religious emotion without fanaticism, and the greatest physical, intellectual and spiritual pleasure without violating the law of the spirit.

This is true spiritual life, and what we shall always endeavor to inculcate. The man or the woman who lives such a life will be as happy as this world is calculated to make them; and when they pass away to the next they will find it a happy continuation of the life they have lived in joy and eternal progress will be their portion in the long hereafter. R. NEELY.

The Prayer Gauge.

Late advices from Russia give a deplorable view of that country at this time. Thirteen provinces are represented as scourged by famine, while eight others are reported as bordering on that condition. The fire-flood has joined hands with starvation, and desolation seems to be the inevitable consequence. Instead of seeing like men, and laboring for themselves, says the cablegram: "The devout fell on their knees and prayed the Almighty to extinguish the fires."

Throughout Mohammedan countries fate controls everything. The effect is seen in desolation everywhere. In Christian countries, where the people rest upon the workings of the priests, the practical results are the same. Whether on shipboard when the elements are in angry strife, or land during an earthquake shock, or when cities are on fire, instead of battling manfully for life, fall on their knees and ask the aid of a power which has always been deaf to their appeals, and always will be.

Ex-Mayor Sauer, of Racine, has just put on record, in emphasizing in his own way this position, which churchmen call blasphemy. He has just flooded that city with circulars, headed "A Good Prophecy to Our Town and Gentlemen." The dagger contained the following: "I will become one of your followers, provided you go through a test I prescribe. On some good stormy day I will send out a number of men, and have them take to place themselves on a sea, be taken into the middle of Lake Michigan, and left there without any canoe, rudder or sail, but I want them to have all the bibles and prayer-books they want for the test. The Lord will send the Lord only. No human hand must help them. If they make a success of such a voyage and reach port in safety, I will then join an orthodox church and attend regularly, and many others will join. Pray for the Lord to send them alone, and no human hand. Yours truly, M. M. Sauer."

The Congregationalist gives currency to the statement that the President of the bank through which the Louisiana lottery conducts its business is an active officer of the Young Men's Christian Association in New Orleans.

A PLEA.

It Is for a National Organization.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST ORGANIZATION CONSIDERED.

Over the signature of "Two Worlds" I find the following significant paragraph: "It seems strange in this nineteenth century, when such marked advances have been made in social science and a knowledge of the laws of progress by which the upward march of humanity is achieved, that there should be found any considerable number of persons who are opposing the great work of spiritual advancement, namely, unity of action with liberty of thought. Those who have most faithfully analyzed the characteristics of the human race, however, will acknowledge that far down among the various strata of mentality that stretch away from the most exalted to the lowest depths of human character, by bus motives, namely, unity of action with liberty of thought. 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