

## THEY FORMED A PAIR.

On Saturday last there was published, by request, "Jonathan Wilder's wierd story of the Earth's Insides." It was interesting because of the views still held by many regarding the Symmes Hole and other theories respecting the interior of the planet on which we dwell. It was written by Richard Adams Locke, and next to his article regarding Sir John Herschell's observations on the moon, was one of the most successful hoaxes of the day. It was for a time accepted as true by people generally, and was seriously discussed by scientific men. It was entitled "The Lost Manuscript of Mungo Park," and its fictional character was not recognized till the exposure of the "Moon Hoax."

The latter was revived less than two years ago in the following manner: While tearing down an old building in Brooklyn in October, 1891, the workmen came upon a box that had been under the cornerstone in 1835, and contained, besides a number of old daily papers, two large engravings and a pamphlet. These purported to be an account and illustrations of "Lunar animals and other objects discovered by Sir John Herschell in his observatory at the Cape of Good Hope."

The "Moon Hoax" was probably one of the most successful hoaxes ever perpetrated on an unsuspecting public. Sir John Herschell, the astronomer, had gone down to the Cape of Good Hope to make observations of the moon. This much was authentically known, but of the exact nature of the observations and of the instruments to be used there was not much known, either in England or this country. It was not very difficult, therefore, to make the public believe almost anything as long as it had a certain amount of scientific consistency.

Richard Adams Locke, at that time an editor of the *Sun*, conceived the idea of perpetrating a gigantic hoax, and he set about doing it in a very careful way. He published an article in the *Sun*, entitled, "Great Astronomical Discoveries Lately Made by Sir John Herschell, LL. D., F. R. S., etc., at the Cape of Good Hope." It opened with the following boast:

"In this unusual addition to our journal we have the happiness to make known to the British public, and thence to the whole civilized world, recent discoveries in astronomy which will build an imperishable monument to the age in which we live, and confer upon the present generation of the human race a proud distinction through all future time. It has been poetically said that the stars of heaven are the hereditary regalia of man, as the intellectual sovereign of the animal creation. He may now fold the zodiac around him with a loftier consciousness of his mental supremacy."

Then followed an account of how Sir John's expedition had been organized and a statement of the funds furnished by well-known scientists and even by the heir to the British throne. The telescope was minutely and scientifically described. It consisted of a huge lens, weighing about 14,826 pounds, which cast an image on a canvas from which it was magnified 42,000 times by a microscope. To make the outlines clear artificial light was

transfused through the microscope. The description of this telescope was so good that a number of scientific journals were deceived into believing it to be true. Objects on the moon were said to be brought into a proximity equal to eighty terrestrial yards. When this had been accomplished, the pamphlet went on to state, most wonderful things were seen on the surface of the moon. There were vegetation, animals and things resembling human beings. The latter were thus described:

"They average four feet in height, were covered, except on the face, with short and glossy copper-colored hair, and had wings composed of a thin membrane, without hair, lying snugly upon their backs, from the top of the shoulders to the calves of the legs. The face, which was of a yellowish flesh color, was a slight improvement on that of the orang-outang, being more open and intelligent in its expression, and having a much greater expansion of forehead."

One of the engravings accompanying the pamphlet showed a lunar scene with these wonderful inhabitants flying about. Lunar animals were also to be seen gambolling by the side of a lunar river. The other engraving showed a lunar temple. This was supposed to be "a fane of devotion or of science." "It was an equiangular temple built of polished sapphire or of some resplendent blue stone, which, like it, displayed a myriad points of golden light twinkling and scintillating in the sunbeams. . . . The roof was composed of some yellow metal, and divided into compartments which were not triangular planes inclining to the center, but sub-divided, curved and separated, so as to represent a mass of violently agitated planes."

The account then went on to tell of how the lunar inhabitants "sat around under the trees near the temple, eating red fruit that grew on the lunar trees. These beings were even polite, and offered one another large specimens of the dainties."

It seems preposterous that anyone should have believed this wonderful story, or that the press could have thought that Sir John Herschell had actually written such a letter. But it was printed and reprinted, discussed among scientists and widely believed. It was not until Sir John published an authentic account of his observations that all faith in the hoax was abandoned.

Then the author of the hoax was sought after. Many thought that it was an astronomer named Nicollet who had fled from France in 1830, so likely were the astronomical details of the hoax. But it eventually became known that Richard Adams Locke had written the marvelous tale.

## IN A CYCLONE'S TRACK.

Mrs. Rebecca Tucker, who now lives in the Second Ward of this city, was, until two years ago, a resident of Pleasant Hill, Jasper county, Mississippi. Paulding, the county seat of Jasper, is the postoffice address, and Pleasant Hill, just outside the town, is the name of a plantation of between three and four hundred acres owned by Mrs. Tucker. There were on the place, when she emigrated to Utah, nine houses, besides a large

barn, cotton houses, corn cribs, etc. All of these structures were of wood, the chief building material in that section of country. In the yard of the family dwelling there were quite a number of huge oak and cedar trees that have stood there more than a generation. A short distance from the house was a beautiful grove of large trees. Near by stood a Methodist church. All around the country is heavily timbered, as is generally the case throughout the Southern States. This brief description of the place will enable the reader to obtain a better conception of the occurrence narrated in this article.

For many years past the home of Mrs. Tucker, even before she received the Gospel, afforded a hospitable shelter to the Elders traveling in that part of the South. Hers was the last house the late Alma P. Richards stopped at before he left for Meridian, near which place he was murdered. Mrs. Tucker thought it unsafe for him to start on his journey that day, as there had been a "reunion" in that part, but he believed there was no serious danger. When he was missed, her family offered \$500 reward for the discovery of his murderers and it was to one of her sons that the negro porter at a Meridian hotel said that if he knew who killed the Mormon he would not tell for a thousand dollars. At the same time the negro had on Elder Richards' shirt and had possession of his books. The people there believed that, while the negro may not have had a hand in the murder, he knew all about it and who were the perpetrators.

The only one of Mrs. Tucker's family now at Pleasant Hill is her daughter Fannie, who is a widow. She is not a member of the Church, but is kind and hospitable to the missionaries. The subjoined letter was written by her from Paulding, under date of April 20. Three weeks previous to that time her brother, the last one of the family in the Church remaining at Pleasant Hill, emigrated to Arizona. Three weeks prior to his departure a terrific cyclone swept through the country five miles east of Paulding, and like the later one, its fatal and destructive effects were noted in the disturbances at the time. A devastating storm of like character also swept through last fall, near Meridian, between thirty and forty miles northeast of Paulding, passing in its track directly over the place where Elder Richards was murdered and his body exhumed, and laying everything waste.

The letter written by Mrs. Tucker's daughter, Mrs. Fannie Ives, describing her experience in the cyclone of the 19th ult., is as follows:

It is with great pain that I shall try to write you a letter tonight and tell you of the great destruction that came last night. We had the greatest cyclone that has ever struck this country. Everything on earth that I have is blown to atoms. Not a single house stands on the place, and every tree in the yard is torn to shreds. Not a single tree of any description stands on the place. The mare was killed, and one of the milch cows was blown into one of these large gullies behind the garden and killed. Not a single rail on the plantation lies in its place. There is not a tree standing below the