



CLEAR THE WAY.

Men of thought, be up and stirring night and day:
Sow the seed—withdraw the curtain—clear the way!
Men of action, aid and cheer them; as ye may!
There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to beam,
There's a warmth about to glow,
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing into gray.
Men of thought and men of action, clear the way!
Once the welcome light has broken, who shall say
What the unimagined glories of the day?
What the evil that shall perish in its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper; aid it, type;
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken into play.
Men of thought and men of action, clear the way!
Lo! a cloud's about to vanish from the day;
And a bazen wrong to crumble into clay.
Lo! the right's about to conquer: Clear the way!
With the right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us for their prey.
Men of thought and men of action, clear the way!

Science vs Theology.

The contrast between the theological and the scientific theory of the origin and nature of the moral code is so great as to preclude the idea of any reconciliation. We have already been compelled to arrive at the same conclusion in comparing the principles of theology and science in regard to other branches of knowledge. When the human race was in its infancy it thought as a child and spoke as a child; but as it became more advanced it threw away its childish theories. No one would hesitate for a moment to acknowledge that it would be inconceivable folly for us to cast away all the knowledge that science has given us in astronomy, mechanics, chemistry, anatomy, surgery, and go back to the theories and practices of primitive man. Yet men of great intelligence in regard to other matters try to persuade themselves and others that it is the highest wisdom for us to accept the theories of primitive man concerning the most important subject of all—the science of social conduct. Men who would laugh to scorn the idea of exchanging our ocean steamers for canoes

hollowed by flint flakes, each from a single tree, gravely ask us to "accept" the theories of the infants of our race about ethics as a "revelation from God."—John Wilson.

The Positive Side of Freethought.

When orthodox people object to the position of Freethinkers, those who reject the bible as divinely inspired and Christianity as a divinely revealed system of truth, as a negative position, remind them of the positive side of Freethought. All Freethinkers hold that,

1. Reason is man's highest authority and best guide, and its exercise in religion, as in all other matters, is an inalienable right and duty.

2. Salvation is escape from error of thought and action; it comes from knowledge of truth and the practice of virtue.

3. All may help to save their fellows by wise instruction and the example of an upright life.

4. All truth is sacred; all falsehood is profane.

5. All sacred books so-called, are products of evolution; many of them are valuable as records of past thought and as expressions of religious life; they are all human, fallible, and their teachings are to be accepted only so far as they accord with reason and truth.

6. All religious systems are outgrowths of the human mind, natural in origin and development.

7. All particular religions are special forms, modified by race, climate and character of universal, natural religion.

8. The conception of evolution, of law and continuity in the world, should and must replace the unscientific and erroneous idea of miraculous creation and supernatural interposition.

9. Man has ascended, not fallen.

10. By wise and united effort we can accelerate human progress.

11. The Freethinkers bible is Nature which includes all books, and all objects and their relations.

Entire uniformity of thought is not expected among those who think, and not merely assent to propositions submitted to them. They who "think in herds" do not think at all. A good motto is, "in things that can be demonstrated, unity; in things that admit of doubt, free diversity; in all things, charity."

On some such statements of thought as I have given above Freethinkers can unite on a positive basis broad enough to satisfy

them all and definite enough to be clearly understood.

Critical and destructive work is still needed, opposition to absurd dogmas which dwarf the mind, and to efforts to evangelize the government and public institution, should be more active than it is, for it is as true now as it ever was that despotism steals over a people like a mist and that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Yet every Freethinker should be ready to answer the question "If you take away our religion what do you offer in its place?"—a question with which everyone who ventures to dissent from formulations of past thought called creeds, is often confronted.

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Popular Science.

A foot of newly fallen snow changes into an inch of water when melted.

The colors penetrating deepest are the blues and the greens, the red being cut off first.

Keller has shown in Madagascar that the corals always grow out in the direction of the strongest light.

The Geysers of the Yellowstone National Park are failing. Their forces has fallen off fifty per cent in sixteen years.

The Du Ponts, of Wilmington, Del., have a horseless family carriage, with a seating capacity for eight persons. The motive power is electricity.

The air tight compartment theory of building ships was copied from a provision of nature shown in the case of the nautilus. The shell of this animal has forty or fifty compartments, into which air or water may be admitted, to allow the occupant to sink or float as it pleases.

The making of artificial ears seems to have reached scientific perfection within the last decade. Made of a specially prepared rubber flesh colored in the rough, they are painted by hand in exact imitation of the remaining ear of the unfortunate customer, and as carefully "touched" and marked as an artist's picture. The maker gets a hundred dollars apiece for them.—Advocate of Common Sense.

Jesus of Nazereth.

These controversies in the early ages of the church convulsed all the great capitals of the East. Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria,

Chalcedon and Constantinople were filled with anarchy, riot, outrage, and murder. The cathedral on Ephesus was the theatre of fierce and brutal butchery, and Arius himself, as is stated, was poisoned by Anathasian (see Lecky's History of European morals," Vol. 2 pp. 207-209.)

Professor John Fiske remarks that, while the Jesus of Dogma is the best known, the Jesus of history is the least known of all the eminent names in history. Numerous volumes have been written under the titles of life of Jesus and life of Christ, but they are no more than romantic paraphrases of the gospels, and the gospels as we have shown, are in no sense historical records. These gospels and the stories built upon them that have so many times been repeated, have been the means of preventing the name of Jesus from falling into oblivion. Jesus is not credited with having written a single word of them; he taught no new doctrine, and he never claimed to be the Son of God. Now if it can be shown that this claim of the church in regard to the gospels being the word of God, is false, then it is plain that the Jesus of Dogma must follow the Jesus of history. Bishop Faustus, (Faust Lib. vol. 2) in speaking of these early writers, correctly says: "It is an undoubted fact that the New Testament was not written by Christ himself, nor by his apostles, but a long while after their time by some unknown persons, who, lest they should not be credited when they wrote of affairs they were little acquainted with, affixed to their works the names of apostles, or of such as were supposed to have been their companions and said they were written according to them." According to various authorities there were in the early centuries over two-hundred different gospels and epistles, all claiming to give a true account of this person Jesus. All these various gospels possessed the unsatisfactory characteristic of not giving the authors names, nor dates nor authentication for the improbable stories they narrated. Bishop Middleton in his Essay on the gift of tongues says the scripture Greek is utterly rude and barbarous, and abounds with every fault that can possibly deform language whereas we should naturally expect to find an inspired language. In short we should expect the purity of Plato and the eloquence of Cicero.

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