

Torch of Reason

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Character vs Talent.

There are many people who have much ability along certain lines who are very detrimental to society on account of this ability being coupled with a low moral character. A young man who has a commanding appearance, musical ability, and pleasing manners may completely capture a young lady's affections and at the same time he may be her worst enemy. And so it is in social circles. Many people who are talented are the very worst enemies that society has, for by their talent they become leaders and then gradually lead their captives to the poisoned fountain from which they draw their own noxious draught.

Talent is necessary and without ability any work cannot succeed but the first test of ability should be character, for without this as a foundation no work can be built as it should be built; and the individual or organization that starts out with a low moral standard expecting to move rapidly toward success with talent alone, is like a wild engine on the wrong track. Sooner or later there will be a crash. Let us learn a lesson from our past experiences as individuals and as an organization.

We must know that success will never be reached in accomplishing the grand objects for which we are organized until we have a large, well organized, determined army of men and women of high moral character and we can never have this until our first concern is in regard to the moral status of our members.

Liberal friend, the past is past—gone with its victories and defeats. Let us now for the sake of our fellow men, for the sake of the boys and girls who will be very much like the pattern we make for them, and for the sake of coming generations hasten to correct our own mistakes and set the moral standard of our beloved union so high that all may see our good works and glorify humanity which is on earth.

Save the Derelict of Christianity.

When parents are cruel, exacting, and tyrannical with their children, the children are apt to go to the bad when they are once out from under the galling yoke, and even while their parents think they have full control, the children may be rebelling against their harsh treatment and doing the very things that the poor mistaken parents wished them to avoid.

The same thing is true of tyrannical governments, and, once having lost confidence in the governing ability of their rulers, the people are very apt to break away, and, not having been trained in self government, they are quite sure to make many mistakes; and, as was the case in the French Revolution, the pent up feelings of the people may find vent in unreasonable riots and bloodshed.

Now in every age there are good results and bad results coming from their respective causes, the roots of which may reach way down into the past epochs of history. We believe that this age is one in which great changes are taking place in regard to the old forms of worship and that the pendulum of popular thought is rapidly swinging away from the superstitions and dead religions of past centuries, and as the people begin to realize the wrong that has been done by men who have pretended to be in communication with an omnipotent and loving father, when they begin to understand the fraud that has been perpetrated upon us in the name of a mythical savior, they are apt, very apt to go to extremes. The pendulum will, without a doubt, swing too far for the best interests of humanity. The yoke once broken men and women who have been good only because of fear, are sure to make many mistakes that are neither to their advantage nor a remedy for the evils of the past.

Secularists, before it is too late to prevent much of the mischief that may come from the breaking up of the old rack-heap of orthodoxy, let us drill a life-saving crew that will rescue the perishing and care for the dying.

There are many who are breaking away from the old teachings, and it is of paramount importance that we build an organization that will prevent the evils which may come from these derelict products of christianity. For if they are set adrift in their weak, undeveloped state without guide or compass, they will hinder the great onward movement of perfecting the human race instead of becoming what they may become, promoters of happiness and champions of the rights of man.

How Our Work Progresses.

If we thought that the teachings of Secularism were no better than

the teachings of the bible we would not work for their propagation, but we honestly believe that Secularism is right and that on account of its being right, it will, as soon as properly presented to thinking people, be hailed with great delight as the true savior of men.

There are a few determined men and women who understand the great beauty and power of this religion of humanity and what far reaching benefits it will confer upon our race when once it is universally accepted and with an energy that knows no failure and a determination that nothing can conquer they are planning a campaign against the world—a campaign that will win a victory that men and women, yet unborn, will honor as the greatest triumph of our race.

These determined forerunners may be found in different parts of the world, but thanks to infidel philosophy they can communicate with each other and their duties and privileges are becoming better understood every day.

One of their plans is about to be completed. The fortification known as the Liberal University will soon be erected. The grounds are selected. The plan of the building is drawn and soon will be thrown on the screen of the astonished world by the searchlight known as the TORCH OF REASON. Other workers will reproduce the picture and soon all the friends of humanity will know of our progress and then with their help we will soon be throwing the wonderful bombs of truth into the ranks of ignorance, but instead of destroying our enemies, they will prove missiles of love that will convert them to the only true religion, the religion of doing good.

The Good Done by Christianity.

It is a wise thing to try to find as much good in everything as possible, and although many things are more evil than good, yet we know of no religion that has no good in it whatever, and we believe in always giving credit where credit is due. The christian church has done much good because it has had all along a secular part connected with its superstitious part and, although hindered and often times entirely destroyed by its evil teachings, the good part has at times been a great help to the world and some of the advocates of christianity have been brave and good men and women.

The churches and Sunday schools have done a great deal in the way of education for, no matter if their work has been bad in many respects, yet we can not deny that wherever men, woman and children meet regularly for the study of any subject, much good must come from it in the way of learning to read, becoming interested in history

and in many ways cultivating the intellectual faculties and gaining social ideas that make us civilized and happy.

Yes, we must, if we are just, give the christian church credit for all the good it has done and we do not wish any one to think that we advocate that the mistakes of christians are any worse than the mistakes of Freethinkers. If a christian is honest, and is trying to do the world good, he should not be condemned, and we believe that there are many who claim to be Secularists who would do well to study the principles of Secularism from some sincere, earnest christian.

The good part of christianity, that part which teaches the golden rule, that part that teaches our duties to our fellow men, that part that embraces the great principles and truths that have been taught by the great philanthropists of all ages, whether Christians, Buddhists, Pagans, Jews or Freethinkers, the secular part is not to be condemned and if a christian can not leave his church and bring with him the good that is in it, if he cannot be better than he has been in the christian church—a better citizen, a better father, a better brother, a better friend, then he had better stay, for the world has enough evil in it already.

We condemn evil wherever found and the evil in the Freethought ranks should be condemned as severely as that in the christian churches. A Freethinker who goes home drunk and beats his wife and who cares nothing about making others happy or leaving the world better is doing the world more harm perhaps than one who, although he has much superstition, is trying to do something for his fellowmen.

Until we, who are strong in the belief that Secularism is the salvation of the world, furnish a better home for christians who have become disgusted with the mythical part of their religion, we must expect them to stand aloof, but let us once show conscientious christians that we have something better, something that contains all the good part of christianity and none of its many evils and they will leave their poor old stranded wreck and pull for the shore of reason and common sense. This is our grand and glorious work then, full fledged Secularists, to build up a pure, clean society that will appeal to those who have become disgusted with evil in all its forms and who wish to save the world for humanity.

We understand perfectly well that for every effect there is an efficient cause, and so we condemn no one no matter how bad he is, but we do condemn and will work for the discontinuance of the causes that bring about such conditions, and we sincerely believe that the surest way to do this is to build up a society that will be free from the great social corruption and mental slavery that is ruining every good and beautiful thing in this, what may become a beautiful dwelling place for the children of men.