



The Aims of Secularism.

By E. King.

Let superstition be destroyed,
And falsehood cast away,
That liberty may be enjoyed,
And truth hold sov'reign sway.

Let thought be free to all mankind,
And reason's light illumine
The long benighted realms of mind,
Dispelling clouds of gloom.

Let conscience rule us every day,
That we may honor truth,
And her supreme commands obey
Through life from early youth.

Let kindness fill the human heart
With sympathy for all,
And bid us knowledge to impart
The mind to disenthral.

Let love prevail o'er every breast,
And happiness abound;
May all mankind be truly blest,
Humanity be crowned.

Science and Sentiment in Marriage.

By R. G. Ingersoll.

Do I believe that science will do away with sentiment as a basis of love and marriage? It was thought at one time by many that science would do away with poetry—that it was the enemy of the imagination. We know now that is not true. We know that science goes hand in hand with the imagination. We know that it is in the highest degree poetic, and that the old ideas, once considered so beautiful, are flat and stale. Compare Kepler's laws with the old Greek idea that the planets were boosted or pushed by angels. The more we know, the more beauty, the more poetry we find. Ignorance is not the mother of the poetic or artistic.

So some people imagine that science will do away with sentiment. In my judgment, science will not only increase sentiment, but sense.

A person will be attracted to another for a thousand reasons, and what person is attracted to another may, and in some degree will, depend upon the intellectual, artistic, and ethical development of each.

The handsomest girl in Zululand might not be attractive to Herbert Spencer, and the fairest girl in England might not be able to hasten the pulse of a Choctaw brave. This does not prove that there is any lack of sentiment. Men are influenced according to their capacity, their temperament, their knowledge.

Some men fall in love with a small waist, an arched instep, or curly hair without the slightest regard to mind or muscle. This we call sentiment.

Now, educate such men, develop

their brains, enlarge their intellectual horizon, teach them something of the laws of health, and then they may fall in love with women because they are developed grandly in body and mind. The sentiment is still there—still controls; but back of the sentiment is science.

Sentiment can never be destroyed and love will forever rule the human race.

Thousands, millions of people fear that science will destroy not only poetry, not only sentiment, but religion. This fear is idiotic. Science will destroy superstition, but it will not injure true religion. Science is the foundation of real religion. Science teaches us the consequences of actions, the rights and duties of all. Without science there can be no real religion.

Only those who live on the labor of the ignorant are the enemies of science. Real love and real religion are in no danger from science. The more we know the safer all good things are.

Do I think that marriage of the sickly and diseased ought to be prevented by law? I have not much confidence in law—in law that I know cannot be carried out. The poor, the sickly, the diseased, as long as they are ignorant, will marry and help fill the world with wretchedness and want. We must rely on education instead of legislation. We must teach the consequences of actions. We must show the sickly and diseased what their children must be. We must preach the gospel of the body. I believe the time will come when the public thought will be so great and grand that it will be looked upon as infamous to perpetuate disease—to leave a legacy of agony.

I believe the time will come when men will refuse to fill the future with consumption and insanity. Yes, we will study ourselves. We will understand the conditions of health, and then we will say: "We are under obligation to put the flags of health in the cheeks of our children."

Even if I should get to heaven and have a harp, I know that I could not bear to see my descendants still on the earth, diseased, deformed, crazed—all suffering the penalties of my ignorance. Let us have more science and more sentiment—more knowledge and more conscience—more liberty and more love.

Defense of Materialism.

By Andrew Hogg.

In Mr. Allen's reply to Mr. Wettstein, in a recent issue of the TORCH OF REASON I notice that he states, in effect, that a code of conduct can neither be formulated nor carried out with Materialism as a philosophy. I would not, probably, have taken up this question had I not seen that Mr. Allen has before taken this position. I had thought that time would eradicate this, as I conceive it an erroneous idea, but apparently it has not done so, and I am moved to call attention to the looseness of thinking and lack of facts displayed in advancing this idea. Mr. Allen is a pessimist. "Happiness is but a dream, and only pain is real," says Schopenhauer, and our friend as well. Life is not worth living, and if death ends all, or if we believe death ends all, then take the shortest road to nothingness, is Mr. Allen's advice. But in spite of this the Materialists cling to life with what must be to Mr. A—a surprising tenacity. In fact, they are unanimous upon this question. "Ah!" says our friend, "but that does not effect my argument; they may not have discovered how bare and barren life is." But this is throwing the case away, and is the critical point in the whole argument between the pessimist and the optimist. Happiness cannot be measured, weighed nor counted. What is happiness to one may be indifference or even dislike to another and vice versa. If we could measure what constitutes happiness or pleasure then we might be able to settle the disputes between optimists and pessimists. But we cannot, and optimism and pessimism remain only names for our different conceptions of how existence seems to each of us. The "will to live" cannot be overcome, Schopenhauer, Von Hartman or Mr. Allen to the contrary, notwithstanding. We therefore come to the question of a code of ethics. The principles of conduct can have no connection, do not come in contact with, either Materialism or Agnosticism. The first is a negative attitude about something beyond this life: the second is an attitude neither positive nor negative about the same thing. Seeing that conduct must deal with life which we nearly all seem determined to live, it is readily seen that it touches neither upon Materialism nor Agnosticism. It is Secularism, which only antagonizes theology or any dogmatic assertions about other

lives of which we know nothing, and to have any effective science of ethics, must care nothing. To see a Freethinker preaching Mr. Allen's doctrine that Materialism is "cold" raises the suspicion that the Secular churchmen of this type are not far removed from Protestantism, if their's is minus Christianity. At least, they are helping orthodoxy, by what I consider a lack of thought.

Ignorance and Devotion.

By Horace Seaver.

The old proverb, "Ignorance is the mother of devotion," is conclusively proven by the well-known fact, that among an ignorant and superstitious people there is little or no free inquiry, doubt and scepticism. These qualities indicate intelligence, knowledge, progress; and hence it is that we find them prevailing in countries which are the most intellectual, which have made the greatest improvement in the knowledge of themselves and the world they inhabit. Among these nations, England, France, Germany and America stand preeminent. Accordingly we witness that in these nations the doubts and disbelief of the prevailing system of religion have kept pace with the gradual extension of knowledge. The deep-rooted prejudices of a long succession of ages are daily giving way to the truths of reason and philosophy, and the rays of science are steadily dispelling the mists of superstition.

In the Bible, the standard of their religion, the Christians have long seen something radically defective, or at least not as it should be; but, never once doubting its divine origin, a thought concerning which they have been taught to believe a heinous sin, they have attributed its incomprehensibilities to misinterpretation, and forthwith proceeded to adopt constructions of their own on indistinct and incoherent passages, as if an emanation from the Deity would not have been so plain that he who ran might not only read but comprehend! Hence have arisen the variety of sects in the Christian religion, a variety that is unknown in any other religious system; and a convincing proof to the unprejudiced, that if a perfect Deity found it necessary, after endowing man with the inherent power of distinguishing between good and evil, to furnish him with written instructions, the Bible does not contain them.