

# TORCH OF REASON.



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For the Torch of Reason.

## The Dignity of Labor.

BY JOHN P. GUILD.

The dignity of labor is in the intelligence of the laborer.

"It is not the work that we do which degrades or ennobles us; it is the mind which we bring to the work."

Not him who digs because he must,  
When driven to exertion,  
Can gather from the rising dust  
An honor for his person.  
The slave is mean when he is slow  
Of wit, lacking self-approval,  
And there is nothing sinks so low  
As working worms who grovel.

There is no bravery in brass,  
No moral sense in marble,  
No grandeur in the ox nor ass—  
They can but tug and garble.  
But man can think as well as work,  
Assign himself a mission;  
In increased strength his fondest hope  
Shall find o'erflowed fruition.

There's culture learned in classic art,  
And discipline in labor,  
When hands obey an ardent heart,  
To help oneself or neighbor.  
He is a governor of men  
Who makes aught which can raise  
them,  
And they are greatest, also, when  
Their works the roundest praise them.

A man both works and also thinks,  
To virtue may be votive:  
The world unto himself he links  
By toil from wisest motive.  
So he who labors for his love,  
Has most of might's benignity,  
And drinks the glory from above  
That flows to honest dignity.

## What Have the Worldly Done?

A few years ago a few men became wicked enough to use their senses. They began to look and listen. They began to really see and then they began to reason. They forgot heaven and hell long enough to take some interest in this world. They began to examine soils and rocks. They noticed what had been done by rivers and seas. They found out something about the crust of the earth. They found that most of the rocks had been deposited and stratified in the water. Rocks 70,000 feet in thickness. They found that coal was once vegetable matter. They made the best calculations they could of the time it required to make the coal, and concluded that it must have taken six or seven millions of years. They examined the chalk cliffs, found that they were composed of the microscopic shells of minute organisms, that is to say, the dust of these shells. This dust settled over areas as large as Europe and in some places the chalk is a mile in depth. This must have required many millions of years.

Lyell, the highest authority on the subject, says that it must have required to cause the changes that we know, at least two hundred million years. Think of these vast deposits caused by the slow falling of infinitesimal atoms of impalpable dust through the silent depths of ancient seas! Think of the microscopical forms of life, constructing their minute houses of lime, giving life to others, leaving their mansions beneath the waves, and so through countless generations building the foundations of continents and islands.

Go back of all life that we now know—back of all the flying lizards, the armored monsters, the hissing serpents, the winged and fanged horrors—back to the Laurentian rocks—to the eozoon, the first of living things that we have found—back to the first incrustation of the molten world—back of the wave of fire and the robe of flame—back to the time when all the substance of the earth blazed in the glowing sun with all the stars that wheel about the central fire. Think of the days and nights that lie between!—think of the centuries, the withered leaves of time, that strew the desert of the past!

Nature does not hurry. Time cannot be wasted—cannot be lost. The future remains eternal and all the past is as though it had not been—as though it were to be. The infinite knows neither loss nor gain.

We know something of the history of the world—something of the human race; and we know that man has lived and struggled through want and war, through pestilence and famine, through ignorance and crime, through fear and hope on the old earth for millions and millions of years. At last we know that infallible popes and countless priests and clergymen, who had been "called," filled with the Holy Ghost, and presidents of colleges, kings, emperors and executives of nations had mistaken the blundering guesses of ignorant savages for the wisdom of an infinite god. At last we know that the story of creation, the beginning of things, as told in the "sacred book," is not only untrue, but utterly absurd and idiotic. Now we know that the inspired writers did not know and that the god who inspired them did not know. We are no longer misled by myths and legends. We rely upon facts. The world is our witness and the stars testify for us.—[Ingersoll.

## Development of Higher Races Improbable.

By Dr. L. Buchner

It is clear that man's independence of the determining influences of external nature increases in proportion to the advance of civilization, and that therefore the transforming effects of climate, soil, food, locality, &c., which make themselves felt so unrestrainedly by the world of animals and plants, must remain more or less without action upon the civilized man. And in fact we see how the civilized European or American by means of his improved arrangements and knowledge is enabled to maintain his existence under all latitudes and circumstances, and even to compete successfully in their own countries with the aboriginal tribes who may be regarded as best adapted to the localities and climate. All backward branches of the great human family will by degrees disappear with but few exceptions under the pressure of civilized man, and we can even now easily foresee the time when a certain uniformity of culture and material conditions or a true cosmopolitanism of civilized man will be diffused over the greater part of the inhabited and habitable part of our planet. Even those natural influences which act most determinately upon our race in the natural state, such as climate, nature of the soil, distribution of land and water, etc., have become to a certain and not inconsiderable extent serviceable to civilized man; whilst he has found such efficacious means of protection against those actions of nature which he cannot directly govern, that they are incapable of troubling him except in a very diminished degree. It need scarcely be added that the dominion of man over the organic world of animals and plants is now so great and permanent that we may foresee a time when there will only be cultivated plants and animals, and when human selection will have replaced natural selection everywhere except in the sea.

From these points of view we must also answer the question which, since the promulgation of the Darwinian theory, has so frequently been raised, whether it is possible that in the future, other and higher races or branches of the great human family will be developed from those now existing, as might be expected from the example of the past. In the various attempts that have been made to

answer this interesting question, which is of such importance in connection with the future of the human race, there has been ample room for fancy and the rage for hypotheses to make themselves felt, although as yet they have produced nothing tenable. If the question be conceived merely from the standpoint of the theory of evolution, this being accepted as an uncontested natural law we can scarcely find any but an affirmative answer for it. But, on the other hand, when we recognize the fact that the activity of man himself has introduced an entirely new order into the world of living beings and, partially at least, substituted rational spontaneity for the blind force of nature, we shall be inclined to doubt whether man in his present condition can be regarded as unconditionally governed by the above-mentioned law or condition of things. The causes which in early times of the human race drove certain tribes or branches to quit their dwelling places for distant religions, where they sometimes subjugated the people living there and sometimes intermingled with them, in conjunction with their greater rudeness and the stronger influences of the forces of nature, may in those days have given many opportunities for the breaking off of new races or varieties of man, even though we can scarcely believe in the primitive unity of the human race or assume that the many and great diversities of the human type are all mere ramifications of a fundamental stock, produced by the struggle for existence. On the contrary there are many important reasons in favor of the opinion that, even at his first development from the world of animals, man made his appearance as a number of different species. These species may certainly have subsequently become extraordinarily multiplied and increased and may sometimes also have intermixed, but nevertheless we must not suppose that this process will continue without limit when opposed by the mighty and equalizing influences of civilization. It seems rather to be probable that under the influence of this momentum a reducing movement will be opposed to the differentiating one, thus tending to superinduce a greater uniformity or similarity of mankind in all parts of the earth, and this by the destruction of the weaker and a constant increase of the stronger or more intelligent races.—[Man in the Past, Present, and Future.