

# TORCH OF REASON.



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## Progress.

[Revised for the Torch of Reason.]

Morning dawns in regal grandeur—  
Mother earth with beauty teems;  
Hoary mists of superstition  
Melt before the genial beams;  
While the car of day mounts upward,  
Glowing, sparkling on her course;  
Winning by her gentle influence—  
Hers no conquest born of force.

Principles sublime and mighty,  
Are evolved in ambient air;  
All the atmosphere is radiant—  
For the truth now do and dare!  
This the age demanding action!  
Gird your armor firmly on!  
Noble workers, ceasing never,  
Human prejudice is strong.

Toiling with a noble purpose,  
When the early morn appears,  
Glorious shall be the noonday  
Of the swift revolving years.  
Errors old must be combated,  
Priest and people must advance,  
Musty parchments cannot longer  
Chain the mind in ignorance.

For the present time is brilliant  
With the promise of the age;  
They who run may read the lesson;  
Bravely turn each glowing page.  
And the goal is human freedom!  
Who shall dare the race impede?  
'Tis your birthright, man and woman!  
Bow to neither sect nor creed!

## The Holy City.

BY DANIEL K. TENNEY.

We were greatly surprised to find that Jerusalem lies, practically, at the summit of a mountain range twenty-five hundred feet above the Mediterranean. There is no level land within or about it. Ravines and declivities everywhere abound. There are, indeed, some small mountain peaks overtopping the city itself, but only a few hundred. Barrenness is everywhere apparent. A few old olive trees and wild flowers alone relieve the gaze as one rides about the country. There are no forests, all having been cut down and consumed. The city itself, within the old walls, is noted chiefly for rubbish and rotteness, religion and ruins, piety and poverty. The general architecture is cheap and uninteresting. One or two story buildings of cement or stone mostly prevail. Little or no wood enters into their construction. Rough arches overtop the rooms, and many are entirely without floor. Most of the windows are without glass, and few houses have chimneys. The first floors of dwelling houses are commonly used as stables for camels and donkeys. Whitewash seems to be freely used on the buildings, giving about the only appearance of cleanliness visible in the city. The streets are absolutely abominable. They vary in width from mere lanes, five or six feet wide, arched over from side to side, dark and dingy, to others ten or twelve feet wide. Most of them are poorly and roughly paved. Some are

upon the original rock, into which stairs have been cut to facilitate the upward or downward climb, and are very steep in places. All are filthy. The ordure of men, women and children is as offensively and publicly deposited in the streets as is that of camels, donkeys, dogs and cats. The stenches are unspeakably horrible. It was shrewdly suggested that the peculiar corpse-like odors prevailing in these holy streets are attributable to the bodies of the saints who came out of their graves at the time of the resurrection and "went into the Holy City and appeared unto many," and who, perhaps, never returned to their graves again. As there is no record that they ever did return, and surely they would not wish to, there would seem a deal of plausibility, especially to those who have scented these unearthly stenches, that the corpses of those old saints, though no longer visible, are still stalking about the city, shedding their pious odors for the benefit of whom it may concern. Surely such a phenomenon would be appropriate in Jerusalem, if anywhere. All things are possible with God.

The city is said to contain about 80,000 people, of whom eight thousand are Turks and Arabs—Mahometans—two thousand Roman Catholics, four thousand Orthodox Greeks, one thousand Armenians, a few hundred Copts, Ethiopians and Syrians, and about three hundred Protestants. Of the remainder, sixty thousand are Jew, at least half of whom were expelled from Russia a few years ago, and have wandered here because they knew nowhere else to go. These are for the most part supported by the charity of Baron Hirsch, and some other wealthy people in England and elsewhere. The Turks are in political control and heartily despise both Jews and Christians. All of these unanimously reciprocate the sentiment. So the people of the Holy City do not dwell together as brethren in unity. Most of them, of whatever age or sex, are the most filthy in appearance and conduct, ragged, unkempt, bare-headed, bare-footed, beggarly specimens of the race possible to imagine. Large numbers are afflicted with sore eyes. The only business carried on, outside of the hotels and hospices, is the manufacture and sale of rosaries, crosses and crucifixes of olive wood or mother of pearl; wooden saints, pious photographs, olive-covered Bibles, pressed flowers of the Holy Land, and fuel from camel dung. Of course, there

are market places for the sale camel and goat meat, mutton and vegetables. Of the latter, the cauliflowers are the largest and best I have ever seen. Numerous camels and donkeys come to town daily laden with them. Other vegetables do not flourish, potatoes being not much larger than chestnuts. The common people do not often indulge in meat, but live principally on olives, olive oil, and a quality of bread, black and unsightly. There is no water in Jerusalem save that caught in cisterns, and this in dry seasons becomes both scarce and foul. Babies and children up to two or three years of age are carried by their mothers astride of one shoulder, being held in place by the arm or leg. It is a novel sight.

From all that has been said it is plain that Jerusalem as a place of residence is not attractive. Yet, outside of the walls, or city proper, there are many handsome residences, missions, monasteries, convents, hospices and the like, on which millions have been expended. The Jews have about a hundred synagogues, the Greeks about twenty monasteries, nunneries and religious schools, and the Roman Catholics about as many more. The Armenians and Copts also have a considerable number of chapels and other holy edifices. The Mahometans are well supplied with magnificent mosques. The Protestants also have a number of structures devoted to religious uses. The principal source of popular revenue consists in preying upon the fifty to seventy-five thousand pilgrims, whose credulity or curiosity annually leads them to visit these weird and weary scenes. Beggars are even more abundant than ruins.

Why should we, however, especially care for the present appearance of this wonderful country and city, or for the material occupations of its present inhabitants? Evidences of the holy past are in demand, and are visible on every hand. There were, of course, some scoffing sinners in our party who challenged the divinity of the scriptures and insisted that the many tales of marvelous things alleged to have occurred here are mere fictions devised by priests to deceive an ignorant people. How strange!—[Holy Smoke in the Holy Land.

If people would do the good today that they talk of doing tomorrow, the church people would not have to drag the millennium in by the years.

## The Eddas and their Contents.

Iceland was settled from Norway in the ninth century. A remarkable social life grew up there, which preserved the ideas, manners, and religion of the Teutonic people in their purity for many hundred years, and whose Eddas and Sagas are the chief source of our knowledge of the race. In this ultimate and barren region of the earth, where seas of ice make thousands of square miles desolate and impenetrable, where icy masses, elsewhere glaciers, are here mountains, where volcanoes with terrible eruptions destroy whole regions of inhabited country in a few days by lava, volcanic sand, and boiling water, was developed to its highest degree the purest form of Scandinavian life.

The religion of the Scandinavians is contained in the Eddas, which are two,—the poetic, or elder Edda, consisting of thirty-seven poems, and the younger, or prose Edda. The first poem in the first part of the poetic Edda is the Voluspa, or Wisdom of Vala, a prophetess, possessing vast supernatural knowledge. It begins thus, Vala speaking:

I command the devout attention of all noble souls,  
Of all the high and the low of the race of Heindall;  
I tell the doings of the All-Father,  
In the most ancient Sagas which come to my mind.

There was an age in which Ymer lived,  
When was no sea, nor shore, nor salt waves,  
Nor earth below, nor heaven above,  
No yawning abyss and no grassy land.

Till the sons of Bors lifted the dome of heaven,  
And created the vast Midgard (earth) below;  
Then the sun of the south rose above the mountains,  
And the green grasses made the ground verdant.

The sun of the south, companion of the moon,  
Held the horses of heaven with his right hand;  
The sun knew not what its course should be,  
The moon knew not what her power should be,  
The stars knew not where their places were.

Then the counsellors went into the hall of judgment,  
And the all-holy gods held a council.  
They gave names to the night and new moon;  
They called to the morning and to mid-day,  
To the afternoon and evening, arranging the times.

Then Vala narrates how the three gods, Odin, Honir and Lodur, "the mighty and mild Aser," found Ask and Embla, the Adam and Eve of the Northern legends, lying without soul, sense, motion or color. Odin gave them their souls, Honir their intellects, Lodur their blood and colored flesh. Then comes a description of the end and renewal of the world, and how, at last, one being mightier than all shall arrive. —[Ten Great Religions.