

Torch of Reason

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Pity, a Factor in Christianity.

It is natural for people to sympathize with those who suffer, and this fact has been seized upon by religion-makers to catch those who could not be threatened or bribed into accepting their saviors. How often we have heard the old, old story of Jesus' sufferings! How vividly do the young have forced upon their tender mental screens the great drops of blood, the nail prints, the pierced side, the revilings and the awful cry to the father.

It is right that we should sympathize with those who suffer. Children should early have that part of their natures cultivated, and be taught to relieve suffering whenever possible and to prevent all the pain and anguish of body and mind in their power; but they should also be taught to have minds of their own and not be led astray by stories made up for the very purpose of "leading them to Jesus" or to other useless imaginations.

If Jesus sweat great drops of blood, we certainly feel sorry that God's plan of salvation demanded that his son should take such a sweat for the whole human family, but, honestly, we believe that we should be more concerned with the great drops of sweat of the overworked men and women in our great cities and the burning, fever-filled blood of the little children who, even as we write, and as you, dear reader, read, are dying for want of proper clothing, nourishment and fresh air.

The suffering of a god, or the son of a god, when the nails were driv-

en through his hands and feet, must have been very hard for a god, or the son of a god, to have borne; and although he "run the nail" into his foot some nineteen hundred years ago, it almost makes one cry to think of it, but, really, we feel more sorrow and concern for the little modern bare-foot boy "with cheek of tan" who ran a rusty nail through his foot yesterday. But then we forget that we are nothing but unfeeling Infidels.

When the spear was run into Jesus' side, if the story is true, it must have been very painful for quite a while, but the women of these later days who are obliged to work over the washtub, and in the factory, and on the mortgaged farm, until their sides ache and ache and ache, seem to look us in the face with their sad eyes, as we write, and beg us not to waste our mental force feeling bad about a wandering Jew who is said to have been the innocent victim of his sire's blunders years ago, but to sympathize with and pity them and do something to help redeem them, and those who are to take their places, from the awful sufferings of the modern white slaves in our priest-governed world.

The revilings of modern thieves over their victims who have been torn from their homes by modern ways of robbery, under polite and popular names, the sneer at honest poverty and the wink at dishonest greed, demand our attention far more than the revilings of the thieves who, according to the old tale, died with Jesus that we (i. e., Christians) might live.

Nowadays when a child is being flogged by its father, who has not yet learned a better way of making his children good, it sometimes cries, and most always, unless the parent is very brutal, after the little one cries "right smart" the old gent "lets up", but how sad the story of divine wrath! The father curses the first man and woman and their seed by making them work and sweat and have other troubles; he then drowns them all, excepting a choice few, and finally finishes the job by letting his son suffer for the whole crowd; and when the boy is thus being flogged for something he never did, and cries to his father, his father keeps right on till the poor boy dies. Sad, sad indeed is the story of poor Jesus' cry to his father, but that is over, "thank God"! Let us turn our attention to cries that are now making the atmosphere reverberate from continent to continent with the piteous wail of anguish from broken hearts—from the victims of ignorance, of superstition, of greed.

But ours is not a religion of sympathy altogether; it is a religion of REASON and of WORK, and if there are now a few who are fully converted, in a short time, as time is

counted by some, all the universities will be Liberal universities, and all religions merged into one—Secularism, the Religion of Humanity.

Save Humanity Now.

There have been volumes written on the importance of the present, but we are of the opinion that not one in a hundred realizes how much might be accomplished if people would use the present time in GOING AT THINGS instead of waiting for THINGS TO GO AT THEM.

There are probably enough honest, well meaning people who would like to help along our work but they don't really know just what to do. They probably spend minutes, hours and days in "putting in time" that could be happily used for the benefit of our great cause, but they wait. The whole secret of doing good work in a good cause is to DO SOMETHING NOW and to KEEP DOING SOMETHING NOW.

After your work is over in the evening, perhaps you read. If you do, have the shears handy and send us the real GOOD THINGS you find, or if you do not wish to help us, send them to some paper you do wish to help. Don't put off writing. You wish to help, of course you do. Then don't forget that a kind letter from you is a GREAT HELP. Never mind whether you spell correctly or not. If an editor can catch your thought, it is what he wants. Yes, write, and write again and again, and keep writing. It will help all concerned.

There are many minutes that are not full. Some sit down and do nothing for hours, waiting for something to turn up. These "nows" are precious. Do something. Just think what might be accomplished along lines in which you are really interested, if all who are thus interested would do something. Propaganda work is part of the Religion of Humanity. Mail your paper to a friend, or write a letter telling about the work. DO SOMETHING NOW AND KEEP DOING SOMETHING NOW.

It is just as much your duty to do something while you live as it was for Paine or Jefferson or Darwin. We all ought to do all we can to advance what we conceive to be the saving principles of truth. To work just for oneself or one's family is narrow. What does wealth amount to if it is gained without doing any good as one goes along? The good we do cannot be taken from us, but wealth is liable to be lost, and at best is a source of worry unless it be freely used in doing good. If a man or woman is smart enough to get rich and do much good at the same time, it is a happy combination of mental powers and conditions, but getting rich at the expense of doing good is a sad loss.

One may think he will get rich and then do good, and perhaps some have done this, but there is danger of failing in both if one tries this plan. It is much better to do good anyway and get rich if you can, honorably. If a business man could have all the money he handles he would be rich indeed; he only has what he saves, but in doing good one saves all he handles and it seems to increase in his hands at compound interest. Now happiness does not depend on wealth, but rather on the good we are able to do or think we do, therefore the sooner we begin to do good the happier will we be, money or no money. Of course money may be used to do good, but that is all it is good for, and many people can do much good without it. Listen to the conclusion of the whole matter: Love humanity and help save it from ignorance now, for that is the sole duty of man.

Bright Prospects.

Our many friends will be pleased to learn that we have at last succeeded in getting the lumber started again toward the University grounds. This week great loads of fifteen and sixteen hundred feet of fine, fir lumber came and was piled up around the basement until the grounds look like a great lumber yard. If we had the confidence that plenty of money gives an enterprise we could almost if not quite open school in the new building yet, but whether we do or not there have been arrangements made in regard to the school work that will please all concerned and everything now looks as if our labor has not been in vain.

The second story of the large dining hall is being fitted up for a study room and the other building that was at first intended for a barn will be moved up to it and finished as part of the same. In this way we will have plenty of room for our boarders and roomers and not be obliged to pay rent. It seems wonderful how we succeed in our work in spite of scarcity of funds and the opposition of saints, but we begin to think that every thing is possible with Infidels. Every stroke brings us nearer and nearer to a grand success, and now as we are on our own grounds and in our own buildings we can say with the ancient Romans, "Labor ipse voluptas."

If a thing is true, let us all believe it, rich and poor, men, women and children. If a thing is untrue, let us all disbelieve it, rich and poor, men, women and children. Truth is a thing to be shouted from the housetops.—Prof. W. K. Clifford.