

Torch of Reason

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Natural Selection of Man.

The discovery of the law of the survival of the fittest in the propagation of species is far more important than all the supernatural religions of the world, and there is higher intellectual pleasure than the comparison of the two ways for accounting for Nature's phenomena—the old, superstitious, bible way and the modern, civilized, scientific way. What a great field for happy thought and investigation there is in the comparison of the Genesis creation theory and the modern idea of the highest form of life having passed through the embryonic state, the babyhood, the youth, to the present manhood of our race. How different they are, and what foolish traps people get into when they try to harmonize them! We have the painful feeling of sorrow when we think of the trouble we once had and the many conscientious young men and young women who are fighting this battle of the gods against their own reason and the conclusions of the philosophers.

To be sure, there are some who are born with minds too lazy to fight, and they live and die happy, perhaps, but their happiness seems to us like the happiness of a swine. They just grunt around—eat, sleep and work like a machine, but never really think. For them, error is as good as the truth. The words that stir to quick pulsations the brains of thinkers, fall dead upon their dull ears and excite no emotions of patriotism, of fraternity, or of paternal affection. But sad as the thought is, it is overcome and con-

quered by the happy one that the law—the great law of the survival of the fittest—will at last solve the problem, and future generations will have eliminated the meek and the weak, and the brave and strong will inherit the earth.

If the tendencies of advancement in the human family continue uninterrupted for a long enough time, the common mind of today will be supplanted by the higher, and the higher by one beyond our comprehension in its strength of intellect and will and its control of the emotions.

It is thought that if black bears were introduced into the Arctic regions they would in time become white, for the lighter ones would escape the notice of their enemies better than the blackest ones, and the lightest offspring of the lighter ones the same, until only white bears remained. The human family is going through the same process; not in color alone, but in the characteristics of both body and mind which fit our race for the position which it occupies.

We must always remember, however, that if the position which we occupy demands no use of eyes, out they go, and like the fish in subterranean rivers and lakes we will become blind. O, that men would with one accord leave the dark waters of superstition and turn to the great sun of truth whence cometh our help!

Local Sunday Law.

Among the business men of Silverton very few Christians can be found. In spite of this a majority of them have desired to close their places of business on Sunday, not through piety, but in order to have a day for rest and recreation. A few of the principal places of business refused to close, and the others did not do so on account of losing customers, since Silverton, through custom, had grown to be quite a lively business place on Sunday.

A short time ago a petition, signed by the citizens and business men of the city, was presented to the council, asking that an ordinance be passed closing the houses of business and amusement on Sunday. The council acted accordingly, and Sunday, September 25, was the first day affected. It was rather a novelty for Silverton, and the result was watched with interest. Some prophesied that the unwilling ones would oppose the law, but no opposition was noticeable, and all merchants seemed to be satisfied and willing to rest for a change. The clerks in the stores mounted their bicycles and struck for the country, or passed the day as best suited them, few, if any, attending church. In fact the law will tend to lessen church attendance in the summer time, if it has

any effect upon it at all.

By provisions of the ordinance, the butcher and barber shops are allowed to be open certain hours, and merchants are allowed to sell goods in case of emergency, and some of the merchants were on hand watching for one of those emergencies, but none came along and the doors remained closed.

So far as the Torch of Reason is concerned, it is none of our business. We are glad to see the merchants and clerks (the writer was once a clerk) rest all they can, but if they want to work on Sunday or sell goods on that day, we see no reason why they should not be allowed to. We are glad of one thing, and that is that this ordinance does not appear to be an orthodox invention, and no one is prevented from doing all the work he wants to. Now that the start has been made, the church may try to carry it farther and prevent work and play on Sunday, but we have little fear of their doing anything of the kind in Silverton, where the people are so fond of work, and especially play, on Sunday or any other day.

A person can rest on Sunday without losing much, but the merchant in Silverton who would have closed his doors on Sunday before the passage of this ordinance would have lost trade. That is what prompted the law. We feel that there is no cause for fear. The church is not in power in this city and the question of religion does not figure in municipal and school elections or affairs. We will venture the assertion, however, that the law is unconstitutional and would not stand a test, but there is no occasion for its being tried if those affected are all willing to have it as it is.

Gone but Not Forgotten.

Our editor has gone again, has taken his wife with him, and the business manager is left alone in his glory, to wield the editorial pen at the office and attend to the pig pen at home. This is the second time we (the pigs and the writer) have been left in this predicament, and we will try and pull through in as good shape as we did before.

Yes, the editor is away, but the best part of it is, he will soon return. He and his wife started Friday morning with their backs toward the rising sun, and it is supposed they continued to travel until they reached the great Pacific. They will mingle business with pleasure, and let us hope that their trip will be pleasant for themselves and profitable to the cause they represent. When they return we will welcome them, for we do not like to be alone, and we hope they will bring us plenty of fish with which to feed our tired brain.

At Home and Abroad.

Last week I promised a change of scenery. Here it is. Upon my arrival home I began the regular routine of work answering letters, running the printing press, getting out the mail, and other things too numerous to mention. This kind of work may have kept me busy, but it became monotonous, so I took the bicycle and struck for the famous Waldo Hills. Arrived at the home of my uncle, Phil Bowers, just before bedtime. I have a failing of arriving in the night nearly every time I visit that home, but a welcome awaits me at any hour, and Aunt Mant always has a bed ready for me.

Next morning while we were seated at the breakfast table, word came that the neighbor boys had an old coon and three baby coons up a fir tree. Harry shouldered the gun and away we went over the hill a mile away, where we found three men, two dogs, two guns and a dead coon at the foot of the tree. The young coons were perched on a limb one hundred feet above. They were not "Mammy's little pumpkin colored coons," but real-for-sure coons, grinning at us as much as to ask what we wanted. What we really wanted was the chickens they had stolen, but as we could not get them we had come after Mr. Coon. Two of them were sitting on a limb together. The first two shots missed, but a well aimed shot by Mr. Jones hit one in the head, and he immediately descended to the ground without excusing himself from the others' company. It was my turn next and I took the gun. I didn't aim at any certain hair on the coon, but was satisfied with any vital part of his anatomy. I aimed at the whole coon, and I hit what I aimed at. I hit him in the biggest part and down he came. There was but one left and Harry brought him down.

We all gathered at the base of the tree and spent a few moments telling coon and bear stories and then started home. Harry and I each took a coon. I decided to send mine to the Liberal University to have it mounted and placed in the museum. A team was passing on its way to Silverton, so I sent the coon, with directions to leave it at the Torch of Reason office. The fate of the coon and the blasting of my hopes will be told later.

I am the owner of one of the neatest little farms on earth; not because it is mine, nor because my grandfather gave it to me, but simply because Nature and grandfather's energy made it so. It was on this place that I spent the remainder of the day, gathering fruit and storing it away in the old farm house. I never saw such fruit. My grandfather settled here in the early 40s, and continued his residence in the same place as long as