

wisdom. Many men think that digging up the dry bones of the heroes of the past and rattling them in the faces of the people is true patriotism, and many are satisfied with singing the praises of such men as Washington, Patrick Henry and Lincoln, but could never think of imitating them by introducing reforms as they did. Washington was not true to the government of his time, but what a howl goes up from these false patriots when, in imitation of that great man, one dares criticize the present tyrannies of our government. It is easy to sing, sweetly sing, of other heroes, but it is not so easy to face the music of opposition as they did and inaugurate new reforms.

It is well to praise the deeds and applaud the bravery of the heroes of the past, but it is far more heroic — far more patriotic to take up the work where they were obliged to leave it and like them, in spite of the cowardly cries of the unthinking, misled masses, bring about the reforms that are as much needed now as were those of the past. To only hurrah for our country and our flag till one is hoarse, is "fragrance(?) wasted on the desert air," but to so love liberty and peace that one is willing to live and work and fight and even die for them, as the great heroes who are now worshipped as such have in the past, is true patriotism.

False ideas of clinging to one's country, religion or family is the cause of many of the evils existing in them. Not for trifling causes should one rebel against his father and mother and set up his will in opposition to theirs, but when to submit to any rule of action or to silently or otherwise accept a belief, is a wrong to one's own conscience and to all humanity, the lesser evil of disobedience must be chosen. There are many wives who through false ideas of being true to their marriage vows and their children suffer on in silence the abuse and neglect of drunken and dissolute husbands. It is not being true to thus suffer. To demand one's rights and go to the utmost extremes in securing them in extreme cases is being true to self and friends; and brutes will respect their companions more if they know and are able to secure their rights. We could not respect as we now do the patient companion of our life, if her patience went beyond reason. A wrong, a crime is as bad for one as for another, and an accessory to a crime is as wrong in principle as the principal.

The blind clinging to church relations among members of all churches also comes from this false idea of patriotism which has been so well taught by the priests of politics, social life and religion. Many who would scorn the idea of boldly coming out of their church;

even if their reason does contradict the creed, still admire those who in the past did that very thing. Luther did not believe. He was honest and withdrew, even in the face of danger to reputation and life, but how many Protestants who know that their church creed is a lie will do as he did? It takes bravery to be truly patriotic, but surrounded as we are by teachers who teach false loyalty to family, church and political government, rather than true loyalty to principles, many have never learned the difference between genuine patriotism and the counterfeit which often passes current as such in the markets of the thoughtless.

Ethical Basis.

The step taken at a former convention of the O. S. S. U. and unanimously sanctioned at the last one is calling forth much discussion. This is a good condition of affairs, for it shows that Freethinkers are thinking freely, and we believe that something will be done when we are a little better classified.

Several able articles on the subject appeared in the Freethought Magazine this month, and although there were some gross mistakes made, and even some misstatements, yet we have no fear that the truth will not take care of itself and at last conquer. To us, our ideal of a strongly organized body of strictly moral Freethinkers means the salvation of our cause and the country, and we have no time, labor nor money to waste on any other. We have no objections to associate with others who have different ideas, but we believe that all attempts to organize all calling themselves Freethinkers without a test of membership will result in failure. To allow everything that is not Christian to join our ranks, teach, lecture and represent us to the world, is to destroy us entirely. It always has and always will work in the same manner. We would join the Christian church, work for morality and smother our hatred for superstition and the false foundation the church has built for morality, rather than try to build up an organization of everything and anything; for what is it after we have it organized? It cannot work. It is no good. One class is sure to run out the other in time, and down goes the compromise platform and up goes the creed. We would rather have an organization of ten harmonious, Secular workers than ten thousand who could do nothing.

Let us organize, but let us keep on the right track, even if we move slowly at first. There is a glorious future for Freethought. It only waits for us to purify ourselves, and this can only be done by a working, progressive, converting, Secular, Freethought organization.

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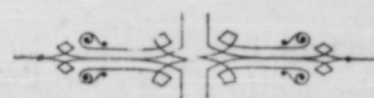
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