

Torch of Reason

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THURSDAY, AUG. 3, E. M. 299.

MEN, WOMEN AND SUCKERS.

In reading our various exchanges and viewing from the many different standpoints the phases of thought along the different lines in the vast field of human mentality, we are much impressed and pleased with the occupation of trying to discover the motives of the labors of the world's many workers and writers. We think we have become quite expert at this pleasing, mental detective work, and thinking so makes it really so to us. Men and women, as well as other objects of nature, can be classified in several different ways. The classification which strikes us as very significant is shown by the heading of this article: "Men, Women, and Suckers." Some men and women are real men and women. They work; their work makes the world better, or, at least, they are not living entirely off of others without trying to give something in return. Farmers, teachers, merchants, printers, doctors, lawyers, mechanics, and common laborers, all are giving something in exchange for their board and clothes, and the surplus cash some of them are putting by for a rainy day. But the suckers, who are they? Are they not those of whom it may be said, "they toil not, neither do they spin?"

Some of them call themselves God's servants, and they believe in the doctrine that his "yoke is easy and his burden light." They make the poor workers, who scarcely have time to get at the truth of things, believe that their god needs representatives here on earth, and so they gather the people together one

day in seven, tell them about it, and teach them what pleases their master. It seems strange that men can be so bold, but they have become used to deception. Two things which only apply to others are very pleasing to him: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with all thy might," is one, and "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," is another. The sum and substance of the whole doctrine of Christianity is for us poor, short-sighted sinners to labor six days in the week, and Sundays to give liberally to the support of the Church, to the support of the long-sighted preachers, Christian writers, and other suckers under their various Christian names. Christianity has become such a good cloak for rascals that nearly every one who wishes to MAKE BELIEVE that they are above ordinary mortals, hasten to put it on, and show it off like some church-going women do their new bonnets. But what will be the result of all this? Is it not probable that, in accordance with the great law of natural selection, these lower forms will sometime drop their little supernatural claws and organs of locomotion, secure their food by honest labor of brain and muscle, and become men and women in the true sense?

The ideas of the ancient forms of worship are becoming rudimentary, and we believe they will be entirely dropped, and the pious, human suckers be found no more excepting in the slimy, fossil deposits of religious history.

OUR PROGRESS.

Some of our friends paid for their stock in advance, and this made it possible for us to start work on the building a little earlier than we anticipated. The hammers and saws have begun their music in earnest, and although we have not yet put on as large a force as we would like, the work is progressing nicely. At the present writing, Mr. Geer is still east of the Rockies, getting subscribers for stock, and everything points to a speedy consummation of our plan of incorporation.

There is much dependent on the completion of our building this year, and its completion is being much hindered right now for the want of a little money to hire more carpenters, and buy the necessary material. It is taking more time to get the necessary stock subscribed in order to incorporate, than we can well afford, but it can't be helped, and we hope that "the Lord will provide" some way for us to go on with our work, without any damaging delays. As we write, we look out of our window and see one story more of the frame-work up. The big joists are being hoisted to their place by a powerful derrick. The big center girders, with their fine turned posts and massive caps,

are in position under what is to be the hall. People going by make some odd remarks, and the Christians still pray, but the timbers of the Liberal University are being swung into place as fast as strong hands and willing minds of interested workers can overcome the resisting forces. Let us all lift together! Now!

A CHRISTIAN DODGER.

In the July number of Appleton's Popular Science Monthly is an article, entitled "Scientific Method and its Application to the Bible." The article, in some respects, is well written, but the closing words of the writer, Rev. David Sprague, shows the whole thing to be one of those modern Christian semi-scientific attempts to be scientific and Christian at the same time, which we call a Christian dodger. His last sentence reads thus: "And yet it is a blessed thought that every brave, fearless effort which men make toward finding out the truth, with every help that they can get from reason and a knowledge of the past, is an effort after God."

There never was a more unscientific thought in the world than the thought of a god. The most unscientific book is the Bible, and the higher criticism in which Mr. Sprague seems to have so much faith, is forcing ALL supernaturalism to the wall. We realize, however, that as long as there is a demand for such jugglery men will try to "carry water on both shoulders." But we should be satisfied that the world is progressing as rapidly as it is, and that even Christians are trying to use more reason and less faith.

Too Bad for Ministers.

BY DANIEL K. TENNEY.

Our Christian friends, especially the ministers, are becoming badly demoralized. They are entitled to our sympathy in their affliction. They have discovered that faith must give way to science and common sense. To them it seems very grievous. By this means they have lost their barbarian God Jehovah, the image of themselves, their virgin-born Savior, their Holy Ghost and their revealed word of God. No one remains to listen to prayers or to answer them. All is now myth and mystery. The Bible is not holy, but full of holes. The creation story in Genesis is a chimera. The Lord God did not create the first pair, nor make coats of skins to clothe them. Nor did he walk in the garden with them in the cool of the day. There was no fall of man. Noah did not have a flood. There were bulrushes in Egypt, but no Moses. No two million Israelites ever lived in the land of Goshen, nor spent forty years in exodusting,

a hundred and fifty miles to the land of Canaan. The Red Sea did not open a passage for them to march through on dry land. Jehovah did not, with his finger, engrave the ten commandments on stone, and deliver them to Moses, nor did he and God talk face to face on Mount Sinai. The astronomical feat of Joshua with the sun and moon, on Gibeon and Ajalon, is abolished. Rams' horns did not destroy the walls of Jericho. Lot's wife was not pilloried in salt. The whale did not swallow Jonah. When Elisha cursed the children, in the name of the Lord, for mocking him as a bald-head, two she-bears did not "come forth out of the wood and tear forty-and-two children of them." The Lord was not in that line of business. Nor did Elijah go up to heaven in a fiery chariot. Neither Jehovah nor the Holy Ghost ever fathered a child. No one was ever resurrected after death. Wine was never made of water. Five loaves and two little fishes never fed a multitude. Devils enough were never cast out of one man to fill a drove of two thousand hogs. Miracles are purely imaginary. All stories concerning them are relics and romances of pre-historic imagination. The cherubims and seraphims have stopped crying. The communion of saints has ceased, and even the bones of a saint smell no better than those of a sinner, and will cure no more diseases. The kingdom of heaven no longer exists. Astronomy has consigned it to oblivion. God does not sit on a great white throne there, with the books open, judging the dead according to their works as written in those books, and consigning most of them to hell. This ancient realm for eternal torture of the damned, formerly so dear to the Christian heart, has lapsed into innocuous desuetude by common consent. Strange assertions, in whatever book found, or by whomsoever spoken, must not be believed upon authority, but only upon proof. Nothing supernatural ever occurred. Human reason is the only criterion of truth for human beings. Human experience is the best guide to conduct. These, and many others of like import, are the conclusions of honest clerical thought. Even our Unitarian friends, who started out in the joyful companionship of the one God Jehovah, rejecting his two trinitarian companions, have now rejected him also, and are affiliating with a better specimen, "The power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness."—[Freethought Magazine.

Every time you strike a child you admit your incapacity to govern yourself or others.

Every violation of truth is not only a sort of suicide in the liar, but is a stab at the health of human society.