

TORCH OF



REASON.

"TRUTH HOLDS THE TORCH IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH."—*Lucretius.*

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Robert G. Ingersoll.

BY RICHARD CONWAY.

THE end has come, and over all
Has fallen death's eternal pall;
No more, while countless cycles run,
While shines the fierce, relentless sun,
And starlit skies through midnight hour
The sleeping world with soft light shower,
Will those dear lips be moved again
In matchless, rhythmic, sublime strain;
To thrill mankind as none hath done
Within our scope of life's mad run.
In speechless sorrow falls the tear
For one so great he knew no fear,
So just, that malice sought in vain
To spot his page with just one stain;
But, towering grand, serenely brave,
The noblest man that nature gave,
He looked with pity on their spleen,
And answered sneer with smile serene.
Where savage creeds held savage sway,
Dethroning reason day by day,
With noble impulse, Freedom's child,
He fought her battles fierce and wild;
Above the shattered, cruel creeds
He stood, a monument to noble deeds;
And, pointing toward the morning gray,
The golden dawning of a grander day,
He wearied of this world of strife,
And sank to rest at the end of life.

Carroll, Iowa, July 23, 1899.

Origin of Man.

BY DR. L. BUCHNER.

THE first step in the production of man, the immediate transitional form from the most man-like apes to man and the common stock-form of all the species of man, was, according to Haeckel, the supposititious (and long since extinct) creatures which he names the primitive or ape-man (*Homo primigenius*, *Pithecanthropus*, *Alalus*). This was produced from the Anthropoid apes by complete habituation to an erect gait, and the stronger differentiation thus caused between the extremities by the development of the fore-limb into the true hand, and of the hind-limb into the true foot. He was still destitute of the essential characteristic of the true man, namely, articulate speech, and the conscious thought which is associated with it. There are many reasons, according to Haeckel, which justify us in supposing that this primitive man must have been a woolly-haired, prognathous, long-headed being, of a dark brown or blackish color. The hairy covering of his body may have been stronger and thicker than in any other species of man; his arms were probably longer and stronger in proportion, and his legs shorter and thinner, with undeveloped calves. His gait would be half erect, with inbent knees. His home may have been southern Asia or eastern Africa, or perhaps a continent now submerged.

From this primitive man, by natural selection in the struggle for existence, there was developed as a

last and topmost branch, the true or speaking Man (*Homo*), distinguished from his predecessor, by many advantages, but chiefly by the greater differentiation or better development of the limbs, the larynx and the cerebrum, and by the possession of articulate speech. It is probable, however, that the corporeal changes were completed long before the production of an articulate language, "and that the human species with its erect gait, and the peculiar form of body superinduced thereby, existed before the true development of human speech, therewith the second and more important part of the production of man, was completed."

This last process, the production of articulate language, in combination with the higher development or perfection of the larynx, which again must have been accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the brain, probably did not take place until a period when the speechless primitive man had already become divided or sub-divided into a number of species or sub-species. For, according to Haeckel, the various languages show so great a difference among themselves that it is impossible to believe that they could have had a common origin, and we must therefore assume the existence of as many primitive languages as there are families of languages. Hence the sub-division of the primitive man into the various species of man must have occurred before the time of the origin of language. "Nevertheless, even these must converge at their origin at a higher or lower point, and therefore all must finally be derivable from a common primitive stock."

In all probability, according to Haeckel, this process of the formation of species of man from the primitive stock took place in the following manner. In the first place, there were developed from the speechless primitive man a number of different species long since extinct and quite unknown to us, of which the two most divergent prevailed over the rest in the struggle for existence, and in their turn became the stock-forms of all other human species. These contained a woolly-haired and a smooth-haired species. The woolly-haired species spread especially to the south of the equator, whilst the smooth-haired branch turned towards the north, and in the first place peopled Asia. A portion of it may have been driven towards Australia. Perhaps the existing Papuans and

Hottentots are remains of the first, and the Alfurus and a part of the Malays of the second stock. However, the descendants of the woolly-haired stock (the Papuans or Negritos, the Hottentots, the Negroes, Tasmanians, etc.) have remained at a much lower stage than most of the descendants of the smooth-haired stock, to which, according to Haeckel, we must refer the Australians, the Malays, the Mongols, the Americans, etc., but above all the white or Caucasian race of man. "This species," he says, "has become more highly and beautifully developed than any other, chiefly by adaptation to the favorable conditions of existence presented by Europe, with its temperate climate and exceedingly advantageous geographical conformation." In Haeckel's opinion this species was produced in southern Asia from a branch of the Malayan and Polynesian species, or perhaps from a ramification of the Mongolian. From southern Asia the white man has spread westwards and become diffused over western Asia, northern Africa and the whole of Europe. His skull is most frequently of an oval form and holds a middle place between long and short-headed types—the two extremes and rudest forms of cranial structure. This species, however, is considered to have divided at a very early period into two divergent branches—namely, the Semitic stock, which spread in the south, and from which originated the Jews, Arabs, Phœnicians, Abyssinians, etc.; and the Indo-Germanic stock, which migrated more towards the west and north and gave origin to the most highly developed civilized races, the Hindoos, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Germans, Slaves, etc.—[Man in the Past, Present and Future.

Ingersoll's Creed.

TO LOVE justice, to long for right, to love mercy, to assist the weak, to forget wrongs and remember benefits, to love the truth, to be sincere, to utter honest words, to love liberty, to wage relentless war against slavery in all its forms, to love wife, children and friends, to make a happy home, to love the beautiful in art, in nature, to cultivate the mind, to be familiar with the mighty thoughts that genius has expressed, the noble deeds of all the world, to cultivate courage and cheerfulness, to make others happy, to fill life with the splendor of generous acts, the warmth of loving words, to discard error, to destroy prejudice, to receive new truths with gladness, to cultivate hope, to see the calm beyond the storm, the dawn beyond the night, to do the best that can be done, and then be resigned."

Infidelity.

BY HORACE SEEVER.

As much as Infidelity is scouted and opposed, it is a curious fact that every great revolution strengthens Infidelity and weakens the church. Every circumstance that sets men to thinking, creates Infidels; and every attempt to improve the condition of any large class of the community, whether they are borne down by vice or by oppression, is sure to meet with such opposition from the church, that reformers in fighting for these good works are obliged to fight the church into the bargain. The temperance reformers have been obliged to fight the church in carrying on their good work; other social reformers are obliged to do the same. All genuine philanthropists, all genuine reformers, therefore, are obliged to fight the church, while contending for their good works; and Infidelity gains new ground by being always on the side of reform. But whatever is proscriptive and intolerant the church defends.

This is the state of things, and it shows that so intimately connected is religion with all established laws, customs, and institutions, that no innovation can be attempted for the removal of any social evil, without giving more offence to the church than to any other body of men. At the same time the church claims to be the great moral and social physician, whose spiritual panacea is the only remedy for the ills and woes of life. Yet it is notorious that when any practical reform is to be commenced, it has to be undertaken outside of the church and by men whom the church condemns as Infidels, everybody being considered as an Infidel by the church who steps out of her old and beaten track.

In short, it is self-evident to every observer that the church and priesthood have always been the greatest obstacles in existence to all moral and intellectual progress; and we may set it down as certain, that only in proportion as they are deprived of power and influence, can the condition of mankind be ameliorated. We consider all Infidels, therefore, as pioneers in the important work of universal redemption, for they are engaged in the task of removing the chief obstacle to political and moral improvement.—[Occasional Thoughts.