



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

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For the Torch of Reason.

Ingersoll Is Dead.

BY ISAAC A. POOL.

So sang the Christian bard:—"Great Pan is dead!"
When from the silence Jesus raised his head;
For changeful men, in these long vanished days,
Ignored the old and gave the new their praise.
But still, when through the forest glens stray,
Old Pan upon his pipe of reeds will play,
Till field and wood and mountain peak will sing
Their peans joyous to old Pan their king.
No chant, Newtonian, can their rapture drown,
Nor fear of hell, nor hope for golden crown.
Men, true to Nature, still adore the Right,
And shun the creeds for her celestial light.
She, true to Reason, holds the scales a'beam,
Where flashes from the Sword of Justice gleam;
The Truth and Right shall still their lustre shed,
Through coming time, though Ingersoll be dead.

When Meditation through the woodland walks,
Where robin-redbreast to the daisy talks,
Where nodding bluebells ring their passing chime,
For Him whose ashes mark the shores of Time;
Through ev'ry fibre she shall feel the thrill
That this dead Ingersoll is living still!
His tender words, his truths shall still be read,
Immortal they, though Ingersoll be dead.
Nay, that is life. The pulse of brilliant thought
Can never to the silent grave be brought.
These are the Christs whose fame immortal springs.
(While only "angels" may assume the wings
To speed away to realms we never knew.)
With earth contented, unto Manhood true:
This, consolation for bereavement gives:
Though Ingersoll be dead, yet Ingersoll still lives!
Aug. 7, 1899.

Origin of Religion.

BY R. G. INGERSOLL.

MAN, in his ignorance, supposed that all phenomena were produced by some intelligent powers, and with direct reference to him. To preserve friendly relations with these powers was, and still is, the object of all religions. Man knelt through fear and to implore assistance, or through gratitude for some favor which he supposed had been rendered. He endeavored by supplication to oppose some being who, for some reason, had, as he believed, become enraged. The lightning and thunder terrified him. In the presence of the volcano he sank upon his knees. The great forests filled with wild and ferocious beasts, the monstrous serpents crawling in mysterious depths, the boundless sea, the flaming comets, the sinis-

ter eclipses, the awful calmness of the stars, and, more than all, the perpetual presence of death, convinced him that he was the sport and prey of unseen and malignant powers. The strange and frightful diseases to which he was subject, the freezings and burnings of fever, the contortions of epilepsy, the sudden palsies, the darkness of night and the wild, terrible and fantastic dreams that filled his brain, satisfied him that he was haunted and pursued by countless spirits of evil. For some reason he supposed that these spirits differed in power—that they were not all alike malevolent—that the higher controlled the lower, and that his very existence depended upon gaining the assistance of the more powerful. For this purpose he resorted to prayer, to flattery, to worship and to sacrifice.

To pacify these spirits was considered of infinite importance. The poor barbarian, knowing that men could be softened by gifts, gave to these spirits that which to him seemed of the most value. With bursting heart he would offer the blood of his dearest child. It was impossible for him to conceive of a god utterly unlike himself, and he naturally supposed that these powers of the air would be affected a little at the sight of so great and so deep a sorrow. It was with the barbarian then as with the civilized now—one class lived upon and made merchandise of the fears of another. Certain persons took it upon themselves to appease the gods and to instruct the people in their duties to these unseen powers. This was the origin of the priesthood. The priest pretended to stand between the wrath of the gods and the helplessness of man. He was man's attorney at the court of heaven. He carried to the invisible world a flag of truce, a protest and a request. He came back with a command, with authority and with power. Man fell upon his knees before his own servant, and the priest, taking advantage of the awe inspired by his supposed influence with the gods, made of his fellow man a cringing slave and hypocrite.—[Prose-Poems and Selections.]

I think it is wise sometimes to shut up shop and walk in the twilight, and look up at the stars or down upon the sea. The end and object of science is, not to print calicoes, but to brighten up the faces of men.—[Sel.]

Religious Prejudice in the Way of Science.

BY CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.

WHY, it may be asked, until recently did nearly all the most eminent living naturalists and geologists disbelieve in the mutability of species? It cannot be asserted that organic beings in a state of nature are subject to no variation; it cannot be proved that the amount of variation in the course of long ages is a limited quantity; no clear distinction has been, or can be, drawn between species and well-marked varieties. It cannot be maintained that species when intercrossed are invariably sterile and varieties invariably fertile; or that sterility is a special endowment and sign of creation. The belief that species were immutable productions was almost unavoidable as long as the history of the world was thought to be of short duration; and now that we have acquired some idea of the lapse of time, we are too apt to assume, without proof, that the geological record is so perfect that it would have afforded us plain evidence of the mutation of species, if they had undergone mutation.

But the chief cause of our natural unwillingness to admit that one species has given birth to other and distinct species, is that we are always slow in admitting great changes of which we do not see the steps. The difficulty is the same as that felt by so many geologists, when Lyell first insisted that long lines of inland cliffs had been formed, and great valleys excavated, by the agencies which we still see at work. The mind cannot possibly grasp the full meaning of the term of even a million years; it cannot add up and perceive the full effects of many slight variations, accumulated during an almost infinite number of generations.

Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given in this volume [Origin of Species] under the form of an abstract, I by no means expect to convince experienced naturalists whose minds are stocked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly opposite to mine. It is so easy to hide our ignorance under such expressions as the "plan of creation", "unity of design", etc., and to think we give an explanation when we only restate a fact. Any one whose disposition leads him to attach more weight to unexplained diffi-

culties than the explanation of a certain number of facts will certainly reject the theory. A few naturalists, endowed with much flexibility of mind, and who have already begun to doubt the immutability of species, may be influenced by this volume; but I look with confidence to the future, to young and rising naturalists, who will be able to view both sides of the question with impartiality. Whoever is led to believe that species are mutable will do good service by conscientiously expressing his conviction; for thus only can the load of prejudice by which this subject is overwhelmed be removed.

Several eminent naturalists have of late published their belief that a multitude of reputed species in each genus are not real species; but that other species are real, that is, have been independently created. This seems to me a strange conclusion to arrive at. They admit that a multitude of forms, which till lately they themselves thought were special creations, and which are still thus looked at by the majority of naturalists, and which consequently have all the external characteristic features of true species—they admit that these have been produced by variation, but they refuse to extend the same view to other and slightly different forms. Nevertheless they do not pretend that they can define, or even conjecture, which are the created forms of life, and which are those produced by secondary laws. They admit that variation is a 'vera causa' in one case, they arbitrarily reject it in another, without assigning any distinction in the two cases. The day will come when this will be given as a curious illustration of the blindness of preconceived opinion. These authors seem no more startled at a miraculous act of creation than at an ordinary birth. But do they really believe that at innumerable periods in the earth's history certain elemental atoms have been commanded suddenly to flash into living tissues? Do they believe that at each supposed act of creation one individual or many were produced? Were all the infinitely numerous kinds of animals and plants created as eggs or seed, or as full grown? and in the case of mammals, were they created bearing the false marks of nourishment from the mother's womb? Undoubtedly some of these same questions can not be answered by those who believe in the appearance or creation of only a few forms of life,

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