

TORCH OF REASON.



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

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The Phantom Ship.

BY EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON.

WE touch Life's shore as swimmer's
from a wreck
Who shudder at the cheerless
land they reach,
And find their comrades gathered on
the beach
Watching a fading sail, a small white
speck—
The Phantom Ship, upon whose ample
deck
There seemed awhile a homeward
place for each;
The crowd still wring their hands and
still beseech.
But see, it fades, in spite of prayer and
beck.
Let those who hope for brighter shores
no more
Not mourn, but turning inland, brave-
ly seek
What hidden wealth redeems the shape-
less shore.
The strong must build stout cabins for
the weak;
Must plan and stint; must sow and reap
and store;
For grain takes root though all seems
bare and bleak.

The Nature of Ego or Soul Life.

BY DR. PAUL CARUS.

PROFESSOR HÆCKEL says:
"The Siphonophores or
colonial sea-nettles are found
floating on the smooth surface of
the tropical seas, yet only at cer-
tain seasons and not in great num-
bers. They belong to the most
gorgeous formations of nature's
inexhaustible wealth, and whoever
has been fortunate enough to wit-
ness the sight of living siphono-
phores, will never forget the glori-
ous spectacle of their wonderful
forms and motions. These siphon-
ophores are best compared to a
floating flower-bush, the leaves,
blossoms, and fruits of which look
like polished crystal-glass of the
most graceful forms and delicate
colors.

"Each single appendage of the
floating bush is a separate Medusa,
an individual in itself. But all the
different Medusæ of the community
through division of labor have as-
sumed different specialized forms.
One part of the Medusa-community
controls simply the natatory func-
tion, another the reception of food
and digestion, a third sense-percep-
tion, a fourth defense and aggres-
sion, a fifth the production of eggs,
etc. All the different functions
which a single Medusa performs,
are in the present case thus distri-
buted among the different citizens
of the sea-nettle colony; and all the
individuals have transformed their
bodies to accord with their respect-
ive duties.

"As in a community of ants, so
in the Siphonophore-republic, a
number of differently formed ani-

mals have combined into a kind of
higher social organization. But,
while in the republic of ants, which
is of a much higher order, the ideal
bond of social interests and that of
a political sense of duty unites all
the individuals as free and independ-
ent citizens, in the Siphonophore-
republic the members of the com-
munity are by bodily connection
riveted like slaves directly to the
yoke of their communal unity.
Still, even in this close coherence
each person is endowed with an in-
dividual soul of its own. If sever-
ed from the common stem, it can
move about and live and have an
independent being. The entire sea-
nettle, as a whole, also possesses a
will of its own—a central will, on
which the single individual de-
pends. It possesses a common sen-
sation which at once communicates
the perceptions of the single in-
dividuals to all the others. Thus,
each of the Medusa-citizens might
well exclaim with Faust:

"Two souls, alas! do dwell within my
breast."

"The egoistic soul of the individ-
ual lives in compromise with the
social soul of the community.

"Woe to any Medusa, that in the
infatuation of egotism would break
away from the communal stock in
order to lead an independent life!
Unable to perform all the particu-
lar functions that are indispensable
to its self-preservation, most of
which were performed by its sever-
al fellow-citizens, it needs must
soon perish, if it be detached from
its old companions. For one Me-
dusa of the Siphonophore can only
float, another only feel, a third only
feed, a fourth only catch prey and
repel enemies, etc. Only the har-
monious co-operation and the recip-
rocal support of all its members,
only the communal consciousness,
only the central soul, linking all
together in bonds of faithful love,
can impart a lasting stability to
the existence of both the individ-
uals and their totality. In the
same manner also in human affairs,
only the faithful fulfilment of polit-
ical and social duties by the citizens
of a country ensures the permanent
existence of civilized states."

[So far Prof. Hæckel. Then Dr.
Carus comments thus:]

Man no less than the colonial
sea-nettle possesses a double soul.
The peripheral soul of man consists
of the many different activities of
such cells as do not stand in a di-
rect relation to the central soul-life
of his organism. And by central
soul we understand that part of our

mind which makes up the sphere of
consciousness.

The spheres of the peripheral
and the central soul are not distin-
ctly separated by a definite
boundary. The transition from the
one to the other is almost imper-
ceptible, and although there is an
enormous amount of peripheral
soul-activity that is never illumina-
ted by, and apparently can never
be accompanied with, conscious-
ness (let me only mention the nerv-
ous activity of all the details of
digestion, the work done by the
kidneys, the liver, etc.,) there is
also a vast neutral territory which
is now conscious, now unconscious.
The main tracts of this neutral ter-
ritory, which, according to our
wants, may not be or may be con-
nected with consciousness, might
fairly be included in the term cen-
tral soul.

There are innumerable nerve-
ganglions in our body, whose work
is steadily performed without our
being conscious of it. Indeed, it is
the smallest part of the psychical
processes going on within us, of
which we become conscious. This
fact by no means proves that un-
conscious activity proceeds without
any feeling. It proves only that
the feeling of these peripheral gan-
glions stands in no direct connection
with the conscious life of our cen-
tral soul. The feeling of periph-
eral ganglions must be of a lower
kind, it is extremely vague and
dim in comparison with that of
central soul-life, where, by a spe-
cialization, it has become extraor-
dinarily strong. Sometimes, how-
ever, in abnormal conditions of
things, caused by disease, the feel-
ing of the peripheral ganglions may
be so intensified that we do become
conscious of it in the form of pains
and the various kinds of aches.

The peripheral and central soul-
life continually intertwine. The
labors of conscious activity that
may have been performed with the
intensest attention, will sink down
into the night of unconsciousness,
and vice versa, unconscious memo-
ries of the past, that seem irredeem-
ably lost to our recollection, con-
tinue to live; they sometimes com-
bine with other, kindred or antago-
nistic, ideas, and then their logical
results only, the product of their
combination, unexpectedly and sud-
denly flash up on the surface of our
conscious being. And we—i. e., in
this case, our central soul—do not
know whence they come. They
haunt us like voices of spirits from
a distant beyond.

Our conscious ego covers a very
narrow space. Only one or two
and certainly no more than a few
ideas can at one and the same time
be accompanied with consciousness.
How poor would we be, if our men-
tal existence were limited to that.
Happily, we can constantly derive
new vigor and recreation from the
spheres of our unconscious soul-life.
—[The Soul of Man.

Darwin's Methods.

BY FREDERIC MAY HOLLAND.

THE tolerant method of thought
has gained greatly in popu-
larity since Darwin proved
its capacity to solve the problem of
the origin of man. The possibility
that all forms of life, even the high-
est, are results of a natural process
of gradual development has often
been suggested by poets and phil-
osophers. The probability was
much discussed by men of science
early in the nineteenth century;
but it was not until 1858 that suffi-
cient evidence was presented to
justify acceptance of evolution as
anything better than merely a
theory. Twenty-one years had then
elapsed since Darwin began a long
series of investigations. In the
first place, he collected an irresisti-
ble number of cases of the influence
of environment in causing varia-
tions in structure, and of the ten-
dency of such variations to be in-
herited. Most men who accepted
these propositions admitted their
insufficiency to account for the
multiplicity of species; but the ex-
planation became complete when
Darwin discovered that any plant
or animal which is peculiarly fit for
survival in the continual struggle
for existence is likely to become
largely represented in the next gen-
eration. A spontaneous variation
which prolongs the life of its pos-
sessor may thus become not only
more common but more firmly
fixed in successive generations,
until a new species is established.

To this tendency Darwin gave
the name "natural selection;" but
this term naturally implies a deli-
berate choice by some superhuman
power. Herbert Spencer proposed
the phrase, "survival of the fittest;"
but it must be remembered that
the fitness is not necessarily that of
greater moral worth.—[Liberty in
the Nineteenth Century.

Religion and morality may live
under the same roof, and yet not be
blood relations.—[Ex.