

TORCH OF REASON.



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

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Ring In The New.

BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times,
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

The Plea of the Animal Ego.

BY DR. PAUL TOPINARD.

LET us put ourselves in the point of view of the individual actuated by this animal Ego.

"I have a limited time to live upon this planet," he will say to himself; "of the beyond I am ignorant, or rather I know it only too well; the thing is to steer my bark as skillfully as I can, and to be happy; not to suffer myself to become a prey to illusions, or to be overpowered by sentiment, when no profit can be expected from it; not to accept as the truth what reason has demonstrated to be false; to see things as they are; in a word, never to commit, from routine and naivete, acts whose outcome will not correspond with my intentions. My body, my health, my physical and psychical satisfactions, the sufferings that are to be avoided—such are the things I have to consider. The non-ego has value only through and because of the good which it can bestow upon me, because of the profit which I draw from it, of the happiness which it procures for me. I have had experience with men; I know that if some are good the majority are selfish, are not prone to give something for nothing, and have a solicitude for me only insofar as they believe I can be of service to them. The first thing is to wrest from the world my independ-

ence, not to have need of any one, and to create for myself a safe and enviable position. The esteem in which people shall hold me, the number of my friends, my credit, my power, will be proportional to that independence and that position. The less that I have need of others, and the more that they have need of me, the more will I be sought after. What I love most of all in the world I must confess is myself. Next come my wife and my children. I love them, protect them because they belong to me, because they do me honor, and because they render back to me the affection which I render them, and because they will take care of me in their turn when I have grown sick or aged. So true is this, that if they do not give me the satisfaction which I expect from them, that if they cause me more sorrow than happiness, I shall stifle my sentiments, cast them aside, arrange my life differently, and disinherit them. I love my neighbor because I am rewarded in some way by him; he listens to me, he comprehends me, his conversation is agreeable to me, he is indulgent to me. I am willing even to make certain sacrifices for him on condition that I do not run too great a risk myself. I love the country and society in which I have been born, because they procure for me numerous advantages, although I am quite capable of infringing their laws when they annoy me and when their non-observance will bring on me no inconvenience or penalty. I shall be honest for numerous motives, one of them being because I wish others to be honest with me. I shall be charitable if I am rewarded for it by public opinion and if my sacrifice does not exceed the pleasure I can derive from it. I shall profess the most exalted and most generous principles: stoicism, justice, liberty, solidarity, equality for all, first, because I myself am included among the "all"; then because this may just happen to be my favorite idea or a useful thesis; in a word, I shall make it a point to have incarnate in myself all these virtues, for the reason that they are to my best interest. As to going to the bottom of my conscience, as to analyzing my motives in all cases, that is all very well, but it is useless. I prefer to have a high opinion of myself and to be convinced that I am good and disinterested. Of what use would it be to confess to myself a truth which would lower me to the level of the animal?"

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Childhood's Festival of Joy.

Ag Address delivered at a Liberal Christmas Celebration at Liberal Hall, Silverton, Oregon, Christmas Eve, Era of Man, 299, (A. D. 1899.)

BY THADDEUS B. WAKEMAN,
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TEXTS.

Ihr Gläubigen! rühmet nur nicht Euren Glauben
Als einzigen: Wir glauben auch wie ihr;
Der Forscher läst sich keineswegs berauben
Des Erbtheils, aller Welt gegönt—und mir!

—[Goethe.

Ye believers, boast not your faiths
As if the only: We believe as well as you.
The Truth Seeker in no wise lets himself be robbed
Of the inheritance to all the world granted—and to me!

Gibbon in his account of the origin of Christianity says:—
"The ROMAN Christians, ignorant of the real date of his [Christ's] birth, fixed the solemn festival of the 25th of December, the BRUMALIA, or Winter Solstice, when the Pagan annually celebrated the birth of Sol"—the Sun.

MR. PRESIDENT, YOUNG PEOPLE OF SILVERTON, AND ALSO, THOSE NO LONGER YOUNG:

This is "Christmas Eve"—the last of the century—and this is a Liberal assembly. And the first question is, Why should LIBERALS, that is the people who are LIBERATED from the superstitions of the past, pay any regard to this old holyday, now holiday, claimed to be Christian?

The answer is, that it should be observed because it is the oldest of all human festivals, of astronomic and purely human origin, dating many thousands of years before Christianity was ever dreamt of. It is the principal beginning of the New Year, and recognition of the birth and continuity of the Human Race since, and even before, civilization began on the banks of the Nile more than seven thousand years ago.

In a word it is and has EVER been the Yule Festival, the common festival of all of the peoples of the Northern Hemisphere of the earth. The perennial festival of the WINTER SOLSTICE and of the YOUTH OF HUMANITY. Lockyer's Astronomy says:

"SOLSTICES: (Latin—SOL, the sun; and STARE, to stand still), the points in the sun's path at which the extreme north and south declinations are reached, and at which the motion is APPARENTLY arrested before

the direction of motion is changed, viz., Dec 21-5 and June 21. (See Index, and §§ 164-181.)

The EQUINOXES are the points at which the sun crosses the equator and gives us equal days and nights, viz., March 21 and September 21.

It has been said that civilization was the gift of the Nile; we may well say yes, PLUS the Solstices and Equinoxes. For all of its deep foundations were laid for us by the great Priesthoods of the great periods of ASTROLATRY in Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria, Medea and Persia, from whence, through the Aryan peoples, civilization passed, by help of their own native observations of course, over the whole Northern Hemisphere, "from Greenland's icy mountains to Afric's golden sands."

The sun's course through the Zodiac was pictured in upper Egypt, at Dendera on the Nile, 5000 years "before Christ," and in China it is far older than the memory of man. Our almanack and our years, months and days are based upon it, and so its results are heard in every one of the schools and homes on earth today—from China's shores or the Pacific of the East, around and through all of the peoples of the earth, until finally to us on our shores of the Pacific on the west.

These corners of the year came to be marked by social assemblies, feasts and festivals—two of them notably—the Winter sun-turn, or Solstice, and the Spring Equinox, or sun-return, the birth of Spring. For the Winter's cold and darkness compelled people to give up outside work and come together in homes and villages. But when the cold "began to strengthen," there was the priest to show that "the days began to lengthen." The shortest day was December 21, which the Christians made into St. Thomas' Day—that is, the day of the "doubting Thomas," because there are three or four days when the sun STANDS so that the days seem of equal length. But on December 25, "Christmas," the doubt was solved, the day was longer, the new year was surely born. Then the priests, like the modern Muezzin, made the call to prayer, praise and joy, and the mighty YELL of the people went up, that the sun was coming to give them another lease of life, and to deliver them from the cold and dark, and make for them the new seasons of Spring, Summer and Harvest. It is not possible for us to realize how our old Fetichistic, fire and sun astrolaters and polytheists felt, for to them the great