

TORCH OF REASON.



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

VOL. 4.

SILVERTON, OREGON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, E. M. 300 (A. D. 1900.)

NO. 5.

Contentment.

BY THOMAS PAINE.

O COULD we always live and love
And always be sincere,
I would not wish for heaven above,
My heaven would be here.

Though many countries I have seen,
And more may chance to see,
My little corner of the world
Is half the world to me;

The other half, as you may guess,
America contains;
And thus, between them, I possess
The whole world for my pains.

I'm then contented with my lot,
I can no happier be;
For neither world, I'm sure, has got
So rich a man as me.

Then send no fiery chariot down
To take me off from hence,
But leave me on my heavenly ground—
This prayer is common-sense.

Let others choose another plan,
I mean no fault to find;
The true theology of man
Is happiness of mind.

All Phenomena Facts of Consciousness.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

SOUND, light, heat and all the so-called qualities of material bodies, like fragrance, sweetness, etc., are usually thought of as objective realities. They are conceived as existing per se; as dependent in no way upon consciousness; as affecting all organisms, but remaining the same whether cognized or not. This view is not confined to the ignorant: it is held by many, perhaps by the majority of well-educated people, and by some who are instructed in Science and are accustomed to close observation and careful thinking in their special fields of thought. In some cases it requires years for such persons, even after the correct view has been presented to them, to outgrow the popular conception.

Only those who possess the power of abstract thinking can grasp readily the philosophic idea that we know phenomena only as affections of consciousness. No one who by thinking has reached this conclusion can ever escape from it, for it amounts to a demonstration and is seen to be a logical necessity of philosophic thought. Yet the average mind, which dwells mainly on things concrete and has but little use for abstraction, must think that the external world is absolutely just what it appears to be to eye and ear and sense of touch. Say to such a person that where there is no ear there is no sound, and that where there is no eye there is no light, and he will probably reply triumphantly that there

was light on this planet long before man or any sentient being had appeared, and that cataracts roared thunder reverberated through the heavens long before there was any ear to hear such sounds.

For the benefit of those whose thought is not clear on this subject, a few illustrative statements are submitted with the hope that they may help some readers to free themselves from the slavery of a method of thinking that is as crude as the conclusions to which it leads are superficial and unphilosophic.

Vibrations of air communicated to the sense of hearing (the acoustic nerve) gives rise to a sensation. That sensation is called "sound." Without a nerve of hearing there can be no sound. Of course the air vibrates whether or not there be any living organism present, and the aerial vibrations, too, may blow down trees and buildings as well as co-operate with the soil in causing the growth of vegetation; but sound, being a sensation, requires not only the objective factor, vibrations of air, but the subjective factor also—consciousness,—which is somehow affected by the vibrations through the nerve of hearing.

Just as there is no fragrance in a rose—the word "fragrance" standing only for the sensations produced through the sense of smell by emanations from an object that we know only by the way it affects us—so there is no sound in a ringing bell except as the waves of air, externally produced, excite the auditory nerve and cause the sensation we call "sound." The quality of the sound depends upon the quality, size and shape of the bell, as well as upon the manner of ringing it, because upon these depends the kind of vibrations which through the nerve of hearing cause the sensation of sound.

There is no musical quality in a violin; but one who feels "the concord of sweet sounds" may play on the instrument in a way that will arouse "music in the soul," because he is able to produce those vibrations which, through the sense of hearing, cause agreeable conscious states. So with light (or luminousness)—which is psychical, not physical. This is a sensation produced by the action of waves of ether upon the retina and fibres of the optic nerve. It may also be produced by a blow, or by electricity, which, while it causes luminous phenomena through the eye, when brought in contact with other parts gives rise to quite different sensations—sounds in the ear, taste in

the mouth, tickling in the tactile nerves, etc.

We know that different colors depend upon particular velocities of the waves of ether, gathered together by the optical apparatus of the eye, which impinge upon the retina, affecting the optic nerve and giving rise to sensations or conscious states that appear objectively as colors—blue, green, violet, etc. In some persons, vibrations as different in velocity as those that commonly cause redness and greenness, awaken identical sensations, and they cannot therefore distinguish between them.

As some animals are sensitive to motions of the air that to human ears produce no sound whatever, so do the eyes of some creatures respond to vibrations of ether that are below or above the luminous limits of the human eye. If a creature can see in the dark—i. e., where it is dark to the human eye—the optic nerve of that creature is affected by etheric vibrations to which the human eye does not respond. It is luminous for that creature when it is dark for man, because luminosity is a sensation, not an objective thing.

Heat, too, is a sensation. The word heat indicates how our body, or anything external to the body, feels—how it affects our consciousness. Conceived objectively, it is a mode of motion, which is only one of the factors necessary to produce heat, the other being an organism in which the motion gives rise to the sensation that we distinguish by the term "heat."

Vibrations of air and of ether occurred millions of years before there was eye or ear on this globe, and those vibrations were doubtless external factors in developing these organs. But only as auditory nerve was evolved was there sound: only as the optical apparatus was developed was there light. Pulsations of air do not constitute sound; undulations of ether do not constitute luminousness; emanations of particles from a flower do not constitute fragrance.

Atmospheric vibration is one of the factors in producing sound; etheric vibrations are essential to sight, for in their absence the eye and optic nerve in time become functionless and disappear, as in the cave-fish; and the presence of material particles in the air is necessary to excite the sense of smell.

If all animals were to be destroyed, the vibrations of air and ether would continue to affect vege-

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The Festival of the Republic.

The Birthday of Thomas Paine,
January 29, Era of Man and
Age of Reason 300—
A. D. 1900.

ADDRESS—"QUO VADIS?"

To the Empire or the Republic—
Which?

Delivered Before the Liberals of Silverton,
Oregon, at Liberal Hall.

By T. B. WAKEMAN,
Professor of Sociology in the Liberal
University, Oregon.

MR. PRESIDENT, FRIENDS, AND,
I HOPE, FRIENDS OF THE
REPUBLIC:—

It so happens that the constructive and social people of Silverton seem to be making an era in their growth, and perhaps in the growth of Liberalism generally, by joining in a Liberal and yet general celebration of the great Festivals of the year. Thus we have had such celebrations of Thanksgiving, of the Christmas or Sun Return, and of New Year's Day, and now we may well claim that this, the Birthday of Thomas Paine, should be honored by us, and in time let us hope, by the whole American people, and, indeed by all of the Republicans of the world, as a great day—THE FESTIVAL OF THE REPUBLIC, AND OF REPUBLICANISM?

But it has been well said that, considering the way our public affairs have turned of late, it seems that we are called to determine for ourselves the prior question, whether Republicanism had better continue, or not. Before we begin its celebration, we are even challenged to show cause why Republicanism should not be abandoned. Fortunately, we are free to review that subject this evening. For on last Sunday our Unitarian friend, Rev. Dr. Copeland, of Salem, gave you the details of Paine's life as a great religious reformer; and though I did not hear it, because I was at Salem trying to dispense "the New Dispensation" from his pulpit, I learn that it was an admirable exposition, and hardly left Paine to be considered by us now, unless as the Father of Republics. But that topic, and by that title, I have covered in an address delivered last Decoration Day at the unveiling of Mr. Wilson Macdonald's bust of Paine on his monument at New Rochelle, New York. That address