

## Torch of Reason

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THURSDAY, FEB. 8, E. M. 300.

### BLESSED ARE WE.

Often times men become great, or at least noted, not because of their wide scope of knowledge or clear understanding of everything in general, but because of their deep insight into some special department of human thought. This shows the utter folly of putting our trust in any one man or set of men, and the nonsense of hero worship.

We can learn to adore the truths that men utter, and base our lives' work thereon, but we must only love, respect and help the men themselves, pitying them for their weaknesses, but never copying their faults. What the world needs is originality, but originality in harmony with the great truths which the great specialists have discovered, and which have been put together by the great broad-minded men who have not only done valuable work along special lines, but have made a speciality of generalities. Such a man is our own Thaddeus Burr Wakeman, who can not be duplicated in the world. His knowledge of political as well as natural laws, his great, unselfish love for his fellow men, his knowledge of human nature, his familiarity with ancient and modern languages and history, and his free, genial mind, unhampered by any creed or dogma, make him a peerless giant among men.

Darwin was a great scientist, and gave the world that for which it will ever be indebted, but this is his limit, and we neither see nor hear of him in any other capacity.

John Ruskin was a great writer and social reformer and made himself noted by his great depth of political insight, but what mistakes he made on other lines may be seen by the following quotation in regard to the Darwinian theory, which is believed and taught by every great scientist of our day:

"It is mischievous, not only in looking to the past germ instead of the present creature—but looking also in the creature itself—to the growth of the flesh instead of the breath of the spirit. The loss in mere happiness in such modes of thought is incalculable. When I see a girl dance, I thank heaven that made her cheerful as well as graceful; and envy neither the Science nor sentiment of my Darwinian friend, who sees in her only a cross between a Dodo and a Daddy-long-legs."

Some men have had great ideas, but have been morally corrupt. Some, like Mr. Gladstone, have been great statesmen, and yet clung to the decaying religions of past ignorance. Some have been great iconoclasts, but have lacked altogether in constructive ideas or philanthropy.

But the one man in the world who has all of these good qualities and none of the weaknesses, who has labored for years on the far Atlantic coast, now comes to spend the rich legacy of learning and love that has been given him both by inheritance and environment, on the far Pacific Coast in the Liberal University. Our friends afar can scarcely imagine what joy we feel that such a one as this honored and beloved co-worker has given his all to our Freethought educational work.

It has been said by them of old time: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth," but Freethought friends, we say unto you: Blessed are we who have faith in Humanity, and who have stick-to-it-ive-ness, for we shall receive help in making the earth a fit place to inherit.

### SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES OF SCIENCE.

The only thing, if it could be called a thing, in the human being that might be called a soul is the mind, and it seems to us that the whole edifice of Christianity rests upon the lack of knowledge people have of the nature of this brain action we call the mind. And the whole truth of the matter is so simple and easily understood that it seems very strange that we have been deceived so long.

There is no thinker who will for a moment deny that reason is a part of the mind, and that our power of reasoning depends upon the nature and growth of our brain cells. A child's mind, under proper conditions, thus grows every day.

As he is able to reason better today than he was yesterday, his brain is thus made stronger and his mind (brain action) is proportionately strengthened in exactly the same way that his muscular tissues are strengthened, and their strength increased by physical exercise. Judgment, imagination, memory, sight, touch, hearing, etc., are all parts of the mind according to all psychologists. Now these are names given to the actions of the brain. I see a friend today; remember him tomorrow; reason regarding his doings; have feelings of respect and love (emotions) for him and decide (will) to go and visit him next week. All this is brain action and the only mind or soul that any one possesses. It has an effect on our brains, and through us on the world; but when the brain is destroyed these actions cease, the same as when the arm decays its actions cease. "But how do you know?" says a Christian skeptic. How do we know a man can't see when his eyes are put out? How do we know that some lose their memory by their brains being injured? How do we know the brain and its function is a matter of evolution; that the story of a god injecting wind into a dirt baby-man's nostrils, making him a living soul, is unscientific? How do we know? Search the scriptures of Science, for in them ye have more abundant life, and they are they which testify of the truth.

### FOR WHAT ARE WE LABORING?

When God pronounced his curse upon man because Adam took the advice of his rib-wife, he did not figure on the peculiar dispositions of the latter day Infidels. Those life-forms which have the greatest power of adapting themselves to the conditions are those which survive and progress, and it must be understood that this curse of labor is now becoming a great blessing, for we have discovered for what object to labor in order to enjoy it. When men are selfishly laboring for their own special, exclusive benefit and glory, as they did in God's time, labor is a curse, and under this condition if one can secure what he wants by plunder, he generally does so, or at least there is a great premium placed on avoiding the curse. But as soon as our labors become really "labors of love" and we are working for the broader idea of making thousands and millions of human brothers happier and better, then the curse becomes a blessing, and poor old God is beaten at his own game.

It is not right to suppose that we advocate the advisability of men and women dropping the work for which they are best adapted, and for all to go to preaching, writing, teaching and organizing for the cause of Humanity. To be sure it

would be a great thing for our cause if some who are adapted for this work and now trying to do something else, could only "come over into Macedonia and help us". All can not, however, but the general purpose of every one's life work can and by right ought to be lifted out of the old curse-work of selfishness and made to serve the general good. It makes a great difference how and for what purpose men and women are struggling to succeed educationally, politically, socially or financially. If one's labor itself is a blessing to humanity, i. e., if he is producing or distributing some article of use, advancing knowledge so that others may be better able to serve, or if in any way the outcome of his labors advance the totality of progress, it is all very good as far as it goes, but the great scramble for wealth and power has educated men and women for centuries into the idea of one kind of prosperity, and they as a rule, only do that which they think produces good results for themselves, and when they reach the climax of success it is a catastrophe excepting for them and theirs. If knowledge is gained, it is used to overcome those who have less knowledge; if political preferment, class legislation is the result; if wealth, the amount in circulation is that much less, or the surplus above self-gratification is used to extract still more from the toilers.

But how all this is changed when men and women have consecrated their life-work to Humanity! Do they gain knowledge, the whole world is blessed; political preferment, the country has wise and reformatory laws; if wealth, science, art, invention, and everything that makes for progress takes a leap forward and brings us nearer the time when there shall reign universal peace and love. For what are we laboring?

### Y. P. S. S. C.

When our Y. P. S. S. C. started there was only a little handful of students and teachers present, but see into what a noble company it has developed. Last Friday evening, in addition to the full school, there was a large audience of citizens and friends present. After a well received program of speeches, farces, songs, poems, etc., an hour was devoted to a social dance.

The young people thus had a chance to cultivate their intellectual, physical, moral and social natures in a very enjoyable way, and went home at eleven o'clock in the happy, developing state of mind that young people always have under proper conditions. A stranger from South Dakota who chanced to drop in, came to us after the literary part was over, and said that he was very much surprised to find such a society and school under the auspices of Freethinkers. "Why," said he, "I didn't know that any where in the United States such a thing could be carried on. I am very much pleased for that is my belief."

We had a fine chat with the gentleman and find that he is one out of the many thousands who only need to know about us to help us push this good work along. "Spread the joyful news wherever man is found!"