

If any of our emancipated brethren in Ohio can find such a man as Marshall O. Waggoner, we hope they will write to us at once and give us a true history of his wonderful case, not neglecting to find out which he is, a fraud or a lunatic.

We Must Grow to Live.

The first page of this Torch shows how to learn and grow in order to live.

Our healthy growth is the condition of life. There is no such thing as rest in nature. The inorganic or active matter that has been called "dead" is known to us only as a constant process of change. In the organic world of living matter, that is the world of protoplasmic bodies, the plant or animal that does not assimilate new material and grow is soon dead. So it is with human individuals and societies—when they cease growing, they are beginning to die—physically, emotionally and intellectually.

It is this relation of the fact and law of growth to progress, and even to life, that condemns all forms of Theology and Metaphysics. Their "Gods" and "Principles" are eternal and unchangeable. Their adherents have their hopes and faces turned to some past Eden or Golden Age, or to a sky Heaven Eternal above, for which our present world and life is only a "state of probation". The view of man's lot and fate thus inculcated is one of stagnation, and that has been and is the principal cause of the miserable and unprogressive past and present of the human race.

All of the progress there ever was in the past was the result of the evolution of Nature with its "natural selection" and "survival of the fittest." Even the progressive results of this natural law the old religions did all they could to defeat. The idea of progress is not three hundred years old. Nature went on growing and developing, but the priests went on swearing the people to their unchangeable revelations and creeds. The idea of law as the "order of change" was unthinkable to them. Instead of law, as an observed order of events or of continual changes in nature or in human conduct, they believed that law was the command of some god, or had some power to govern things by or of itself as a "Principle", or unaccountable Principium, or Beginning of things. Science has raised us above all of their old ideas about the word World and its origin, and the word Law; to both it has given new and true meanings, as above intimated.

Law should never be spoken of as "governing" anything, or as being imposed by a god or any power before, outside of, or beyond Nature; it is simply the order that we discover in the changes of the objective world around us. In Sociology or Morals, it is the order of

conduct prescribed by society or the individual for their common benefit. The necessary order of our human or objective world.

The progress of the race is largely measured by the enlargement of the meanings of words. Unless we learn and use these newer meanings, as in the case of the words World and Law, we are sure to get left and have to live in an old, played-out world—absurdly behind the times. Thus this word World—that which is objective with Man—his Nor I,—how immensely has the meaning of it grown since the old "Bible times", when it only described a bit of country around the Mediterranean Sea; and the firmament of sun and stars over it,—and only a short distance above the clouds! Their world-map was about as large as your hand; and thus, being very small, was conceived of as created and governed by a Man-God, or personal God. We have a world in which the whole Earth is a vast rotating planet, a Sun with an orbit 186 millions of miles in diameter and 353 millions of miles in orbit, which it circles every year. And this, our Sun, and its solar system, is moving through space at the rate of ten miles a second, or 300 millions of miles a year, towards the constellation Lyra, which is composed of similar suns and worlds!—and such suns and worlds are shown by the telescope and photograph to be beyond our power to estimate or comprehend in number! So says our great astronomer, Prof. Newcomb (McClure's Magazine, July, 1899). How ridiculously absurd is it to think of applying the old "tuppenny" Bible conceptions about the world to the Universe or Cosmos as Science reveals it to us? How childish to talk, as those children of our race did, about its being created or governed by a man-like god for the benefit of a bit of protoplasm on the surface of our little planet called the human race? Equally absurd is the story of the origin, lot and fate of our race:—the Creation, Flood, Vicarious Atonement, all for the benefit of a few in a sky Heaven utterly impossible, as now astronomy shows it to be; and the damnation of a vast majority of the race in an equally impossible Hell! Shall we laugh or cry over their old world story as compared with the new? The immensity of the difference between this old, silly, childlike myth and the Infinity of the new World of Science may well excite a smile of contrast; but when we consider the millions of human beings who are imposed upon, robbed and degraded by this old-world Bible story and its consequences, the smile passes away before thoughts too deep for laughter or tears.

The remedy is to be found in the new scientific meanings of old words. Look out for such meanings in the Torch hereafter.

T. B. W.

"LUO"

("I SET FREE.")

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