

TORCH OF



REASON.

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

SILVERTON, OREGON, THURSDAY, JUNE 7, E. M. 300 (A. D. 1900.)

NO. 22.

Ode to Superstition.

SOURCE and tyrant of the land,
Kindler of dissension's brand,
Drop from out thy palsied hand,
Th' sceptre of thy sway!

We have burst thy hated chain—
We disown thy blighting reign,
Ne'er will we be slaves again,
Reason points our way.

Rouse thee for the coming hour!
Gather all thy motley power,
'Scetic, stern, fanatic, sour—
Mussulman and Jew.

Pride, thy banner for the field;
Ignorance thy strongest shield!
Th' sword of falsehood will ye wield—
Faith your war cry true.

Take the field, with all your force,
Stem Enquiry at its source,
Stop triumphant Reason's course,
Weld thy links again!

Hush! thy bloody reign is o'er!
Lies shall blind our eyes no more;
Fly to Lapland's wizard shore—
There revive thy reign!

Hide thee from the blaze of day;
Hide thyself from Truth's bright ray—
Through the valley wend thy way,
Den or gloomy cave?

There, in mystic garb arrayed,
Beat thy drum, the moon to aid;
Give the wand'ring sons of trade
Charms to rule the wave!

Superstition bows her head—
Falsehood sleeps among the dead,
Bigotry's exulting tread,
Now cannot condemn.

Sal'ried sons may mourn her fall—
Pastors to their flocks may call;
They no more our minds intrall;
Reason cries—AMEN.

—Selected.

Jesus Christ a Demigod.

BY KERSEY GRAVES.

It is truly surprising to observe the damaging concessions of some of the early Christian writers, ruinous to the dogmas of their own faith, with respect to the divinity of Jesus Christ, placing him, as they do, on an exact level with the heathen demigods, proving that the belief in his divinity originated in the same manner as the belief in theirs did, by which it is clearly shown to be a pagan-derived doctrine. Several Christian writers admit the belief in earth-born gods, called the sons of God, and their coming into the world by human birth, was prevalent among the heathen long prior to the time of Christ. Hear the proof.

We will first quote St. Justin relative to the prevalence of the belief among the ancient Greeks and Romans. Addressing them he says: "The title of Son of God [as applied to Jesus Christ] is very justifiable upon the account of his wisdom, considering you have your Mercury in your worship, under the title of Word or Messenger of God." Here is the proof that the tradition of

the son of God coming into the world, and "the Word becoming flesh", was established among the ancient Greeks and Romans long prior to the era of Christianity or the birth of Jesus Christ. And yet more than a hundred millions of Christian professors can, now be found who, in their historic ignorance, suppose St. John was the first writer who taught the doctrine of "the Word becoming flesh", and that Jesus Christ was "the first and only begotten Son of God" who ever made his appearance on earth. How true it is that "ignorance is the mother of devotion" to creeds.

How "the man Christ Jesus" came to be worshipped as a god, is pretty clearly indicated by Bishop Horne, who shows that the doctrine of the incarnation was of universal prevalence long before Jesus Christ came in the flesh. He says: "That God should, in some extraordinary manner, visit and dwell with man, is an idea which, as we read the writings of the ancient heathen, meets us in a thousand different forms." If, then, the tradition of God being born into the world was so thoroughly established in heathen countries before the Christian era, as here shown, why should not and why will not our good Christian brethren dismiss their prejudices and tear the scales from their eyes, so as to see that this universal belief would as naturally lead to the deification and worship of "the man Christ Jesus" as water flows down a descending plane? And, certainly, a thousand times more reasonable is the assumption that his deification originated in this way, than that, with all his frailties and foibles, he was entitled to the appellation of a god—a conclusion strongly corroborated by that able Christian writer, Mr. Norton, who tells us that "many of the first Christians being converts from Gentileism, their imaginations were familiar with the reputed incarnation of heathen deities". How natural it would be for such converts to worship "the man Christ Jesus" as a god on account of his superior manhood!

Again that ancient pillar of the Christian church, St. Justin, concedes that the ancient Oriental heathen held all the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith relating to the incarnation long prior to the introduction and establishment of Christianity. Hear him. Addressing the pagans, he says: "For by declaring the Logos the first begotten son of God, our master, Jesus Christ,

to be born of a virgin without any human mixture, and to be crucified, and dead, and to have risen again into heaven, we say no more in this than what you say of those whom you style the sons of Jove." Now, Christian reader, mark the several important admissions which are made here:

1. Here is traced to ancient heathen tradition the belief in an incarnate son of God.
2. The doctrine of a "first begotten son of God".
3. Of his being born of a virgin.
4. Of his crucifixion.
5. Of his resurrection.
6. Of his final ascension into heaven.

All these cardinal doctrines of Christianity are here shown to have been in existence, and to have been preached by pagan priests, long anterior to the Christian era, thus entirely oversetting the common belief of Christendom that these doctrines were never known or preached in the world until heralded by the first disciples of the Christian religion. A fatal mistake, truly! This suicidal admission of St. Justin (a standard Christian writer) thus entirely uptrips all pretensions to originality in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, and shows it to be a mere travesty of the more ancient heathen systems. And we have still other testimony to corroborate this conclusion. The French writer Bazain says, "The most ancient histories are those of Gods becoming incarnate in order to govern mankind." Again he says, "The idea sprang up everywhere from confused ideas of God, which prevailed everywhere among mankind that Gods formerly descended upon earth. The fertile imagination of the people of various nations converted men into Gods." And to the same effect is the declaration of Mr. Higgins, that "there were incarnate Gods in all religions." Sadly beclouded and warped indeed must be that mind which cannot see that here is set in as plain view as the cloudless sun at noonday, the origin of the deification of "the man Christ Jesus." No unbiased mind can possibly stave off the conclusion that such a universal prevalence of the practice of God-making throughout the religious world would cause such a man as Jesus Christ to be worshipped as a God—especially when we look at the various motives which promoted men to Gods.—[The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors.

SCIENCE THE ONLY BASIS OF WISDOM AND CULTURE.

An Address Delivered at the Close of the Fourth Year's Work of the Liberal University, Oregon [L. U. O.], E. M. 300, A. D. 1900.

BY PROF. T. B. WAKEMAN.

MR. PRESIDENT; Fellow Teachers and Student; Ladies and Gentlemen, Visitors—and, may I hope, Friends of our New and Liberal University:

You have assembled this morning to realize, and congratulate us upon, the completion of the present year's course of study, and the Commencement of a new University year. You will have noticed that the proceedings of the day have opened with music and the statement by our President of our progress, but with the omission of the prayer, which is the general initiative upon occasions of this kind. This omission is intended and inevitable.

By such fact and form of prayer the educational institutions of our country are accustomed to signify and to manifest their adherence to Theology as the real and ultimate foundation of the knowledge, culture, life-object, and aspirations they are founded and conducted to inculcate. That their main purpose may never be mistaken, they thus declare, "that the fear of the Lord," a supernatural being, before, beyond and above Nature, "is the beginning of wisdom." They thus declare, and act upon the declaration that true wisdom is by revelation and deduction from that supernatural source, and not from contact with and experience of our knowable world, and the inductive discovery of its facts, laws and processes.

The fact then that this morning has opened with no prayer and the reading of no revelation-Bible marks the beginning of the transition of education in our country from the divine, supernatural, "religious," and unknowable foundation, "past finding out" (unless by prayer), to the scientific, natural, human, knowable and practical foundation of the facts and laws of the world—physical and human as they actually are. Thus our beginning of wisdom is not the fear of any Lord, but the love of knowledge of the world and of mankind; for all wisdom is thus founded upon what we do and can know, instead of what we don't and can't. Our