

## Torch of Reason

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### A FUNDAMENTAL FALLACY.

The anthropomorphic god idea has left in the minds of many a bad impression, which, like the bad taste a nauseating substance leaves in the mouth, spoils many an intellectual feast. That human beings are something separate from nature, and that it (nature) is good, wise or otherwise, is one of the worst of these bad impressions.

Nature has no object in view. In fact, nature is neither a he nor a she and does nothing like knowing, feeling and willing, excepting, of course, that part of nature we call the brain. The outcome of the effects produced by the attractive and repellent forces inherent in the matter of the universe is the present condition of the universe. Because we find food, shelter, clothing, friends and the other items in our environment, is no sign that nature is good, but we have been made by our environments, both pre-natal and post-natal, and would not have existed at all if conditions had not been as they have been. That the sun gives us light is not good of the sun nor is it good of a son or of a son's father, but we have been evolved by the influences of the sun's rays with the influences of all the other things in the universe, and we are thus a part of the whole great Cosmos and as essential to the other parts as they are to us.

Many students of Science are well versed in some of the laws and have learned long lists of scientific terms, yet lack an under-

standing of the great underlying principles on which a true knowledge of this great boundless, constantly changing, cosmic sea is based. That the planets revolve in regular order, that there is a harmony and a regularity in all celestial phenomena, is no proof of nature's wisdom. Only thinking beings can be said to be wise. The order of the planets, that is, the equilibrium which is the resultant of all acting forces, is harmonious to us because we have been evolved along with it and can only exist with these conditions which have produced us, into which we have grown and of which we are a part.

Ingersoll said that nature is neither merciful nor cruel, and we wish to add that it is neither good nor bad, wise nor unwise. Man alone, who has evolved to an upright position of character, is capable of being good and wise, and this is not a matter of his will excepting as his will, which is a process, proceeds, as it must proceed, along the path of the least resistance.

Some of the more intelligent Christians think that their God made the world as a skilled inventor would make a wonderful machine, but after setting the completed machinery in motion, he lets it run without interfering with its workings, excepting on special occasions called "divine interventions." And this is no worse a fallacy than some of the less intelligent scientists, so called, fall into when they attribute to all nature the attributes of that part of it which we call great, good and wise men and women.

When man has ascended the ladder of Science until he is free from the blinding smoke which has arisen from his burnt offerings to anthropomorphic gods, his emotions, his intellect and his will will do homage only to the intellect, emotions and will of man, and this only for man's benefit, not for his vain glory, and, like the people in Bulwer Lytton's story of "The Coming Race," he will manifest but little surprise at anything, for he will understand that in the realm of nature the thunderbolt is as sure to follow its causes as is the gentle zephyr, "that a cancer is as beautiful in its development as a rose," that health and sickness, happiness and sorrow, that poverty and riches, that good and evil, that life and death are as they are because they are, and that a knowledge of this will be a factor in making him as he is not.

And what will be the effect of the discovery of this great truth that outside of man there is nothing worthy of the expenditure of our mental force in real adoration, love and worship? Why, man's attention will be directed to man. Yes, we will learn to love each other better "when the mists have cleared away." We will adore the

wisdom of man; we will love and cultivate his goodness; we will reverence and classify his knowledge; and, that the prophecy of that greatest of all prophets, the serpent, may be fulfilled, let us eat of the "blessed" tree of knowledge; be ashamed to longer remain in our naked, ignorant condition; have our eyes opened to the truth and be as the gods were supposed to be, knowing good and evil.

### THE BOXERS AND THE BOXED.

It is a very difficult thing for an American or a European to fully comprehend the conditions that have produced the Chinese society known to us as the Boxers and urged them on to kill the foreigners and even their Christian countrymen. But the more we learn about the missionaries and the civilized nations' policy in forcing a religion upon a people who utterly despise and abhor it, the less we blame the Chinese and the more we condemn our law-makers and law-breakers. We have a good opportunity to talk with some of the most intelligent Chinese people, and their story exactly corroborates what many of our own travelers have stated, and that is to the effect that the missionaries force the false religion of Jesus Christ upon the people of China in a very mean and underhanded way; and whenever these people protest, no attention is ever paid to it unless it be done to the missionaries hurt, and then our government interferes. Of course, the Boxers may do wrong, but who can blame them, when one of the very fundamental principles on which their government, religion and social life is based is respect for their ancestors and to travel in their "trodden paths"? Justice cries that they should only be led up to higher things, but never forced. What if our Christian friends were forced to give up their traditions? What if missionaries from a heathen country would come here and bribe our Y. M. C. A.'s to pretend to be converted to the heathen religion? What if swarms of these heathen would pour in and actually endanger all our institutions of government, religion and education?

The foreign emigration into this country is nothing to be compared to it, for the foreigners who come to our shores are somewhat modest about forcing their ideas upon us and tearing down our "sacred customs;" but of all the bigots that ever lived on "God's footstool," the greatest are God's own meek and lowly propagandists who so emphatically sing: "Would He devote that sacred head for such a worm as I." Worm! Well, we should think so; and the codling moth is nothing in its persistent destruction

of the fruits of others in comparison with this worm of God.

It is safe to say that this crime of murder and wanton destruction of the products of labor, and the awful nightmare of individual and national crimes that will probably follow, can justly be laid at the feet of that discord-breeding busy-body known as Christianity. The Chinese people could have been wooed by lovers of Science into a union with progress, and what has already been done to make that great multitude of hard-working and enduring people free from their conservatism and superstitions, has been done through the gentle, loving, enlightening and unifying influences of the Religion of Science and Humanity. But Christian fanaticism is not content with blocking the wheels of progress; she must wreck the whole train!

Jesus Christ (real or fabulous) is one of the greatest murderers that the world has ever seen, and wherever this chieftain's followers have gone, there have been spilled rivers of blood. "Think not that I come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword," says Jesus. And again, "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Think not, dear Christian (if there should chance to be one who dare read this wicked paper), that Science will send a sword on earth. Science will not bring a sword, but peace. And every scientist knows that if men LOVE not their fathers, and mothers, and wives, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and their own lives also, they cannot be true disciples of Humanity.

### WEALTH WORTH HAVING.

Young people should learn as soon as possible the great difference between a life spent in intellectual and humanitarian pursuits and a life wasted in the race for wealth or pleasure. Under present conditions the gaining of wealth as a means of securing our own and our fellows' intellectual and moral advancement is not to be discouraged, nor is the pleasure received from comfortable and harmonious surroundings; but wealth and pleasure, as an end, is degrading, stultifying and finally come to nothing. Life is worth living if the object for which we live is worth having. Wealth in itself is not worth having; it is only an instrument that may be used to secure something that is worth having, and that something is not mere pleasure, for pleasure is not worth having, excepting as it is properly used to strengthen. A morphine fiend