

# TORCH OF



# REASON.

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

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Revised for the Torch of Reason.

## Duty.

**T**HOU, whose name is blazoned forth  
On our banner's gleaming fold,  
Freedom! thou whose sacred worth  
Never yet has half been told,  
Often have we sung of thee,  
Dear to us as dear can be.

But today we sing of one  
Older, graver far, than thou;  
With the seal of time begun  
Stamped upon her awful brow;  
Freedom, latest born of time,  
Knowest thou her form sublime?

She is Duty: in her hand  
Is a sceptre, reason-brought;  
Hers the accent of command,  
Hers the ever present ought;  
Hers upon us all to lay  
Heavier burdens every day.

But her bondage is so sweet!  
And her burdens make us strong;  
Wings they seem to weary feet,  
Laughter to our lips and song:  
Freedom, make us free to speed  
Wheresoever she may lead.

## Spirit (Mind) Dependent on Matter.

BY PROF. LUDWIG BUCHNER, M. D.

**T**HE opinion that spirit has created matter," says the anonymous author of the *Elements of Social Science*, "is an utterly groundless hypothesis, founded on no shadow of proof. There is not the smallest analogy in its favor, and it would appear as if human reason were yet in its childhood. In how much is it the least more conceivable that spirit should be infinite than that matter should be? It is indeed much more, infinitely more inconceivable; for while we can find no possible reason why matter should not be infinite, but are forced to that conclusion by the study of nature, we can, on the other hand, find no possible reason in nature why spirit should be infinite, but are forced to the conclusion that it is not infinite. Spirit is a manifestation of life, and all life, by the law of its being, is subject to change and therefore to death. Spirit is perishable, for it is absolutely indivisible from the perishable forms of matter, and it is a wholly natural force, not foreign to other natural forces, but indivisibly bound up with all other in mutual interdependence. The spirit which designs in man is indissolubly bound up with a living organized brain. To maintain that the designer of the cosmical plan is a pure spirit, is to argue against all analogy. According to our experience, spirit is, without exception, found in conjunction with a brain, and never creates matter. To separate matter from spirit, bodies from souls, is to destroy the truth of nature; to

place one above the other is a monstrous presumption which destroys the unity of the universe."—[Force and Matter.

## Evolution vs. Special Creation.

BY HEBBERT SPENCER.

**T**HE belief in special creations of organisms, is a belief that arose among men during the era of profoundest darkness; and it belongs to a family of beliefs which have nearly all died out as enlightenment has increased. It is with out a solitary established fact on which to stand; and when the attempt is made to put it into definite shape in the mind, it turns out to be only a pseud-idea. This mere verbal hypothesis, which men idly accept as a real or thinkable hypothesis, is of the same nature as would be one, based on a day's observation of human life, that each man and woman was specially created—an hypothesis not suggested by evidence, but by lack of evidence—an hypothesis which formulates absolute ignorance into a semblance of positive knowledge. Further, we see that this hypothesis, wholly without support, essentially inconceivable, and thus failing to satisfy men's intellectual need of an interpretation, fails also to satisfy their moral sentiment. It is quite inconsistent with those conceptions of the divine nature which they profess to entertain. If infinite power was to be demonstrated, then, either by the special creation of every individual, or by the production of species after a method akin to that in which individuals are produced, it would be better demonstrated than by the use of the two methods which the hypothesis assumes to be necessary. And if infinite goodness was to be demonstrated, then, not only do the provisions of organic structure, if they are especially devised, fail to demonstrate it; but there is an enormous mass of them which imply malevolence rather than benevolence.

Thus, however regarded, the hypothesis of special creations turns out to be worthless—worthless by its derivation; worthless in its intrinsic incoherence; worthless as absolutely without evidence; worthless as not supplying an intellectual need; worthless as not satisfying a moral want. We must therefore consider it as counting for nothing, in opposition to any other hypothe-

sis respecting the origin of organic beings.

The hypothesis of evolution has the support of some evidence, instead of being absolutely unsupported by evidence. Though the facts at present assignable in direct proof that by progressive modifications, races of organisms that are apparently distinct may result from antecedent races, are not sufficient; yet there are numerous facts of the order required. It has been shown beyond all question that unlike- nesses of structure gradually arise among descendants from the same stock. We find that there is going on a modifying process of the kind alleged as the source of specific differences; a process which, though slow in its action, does, in time, if the circumstances demand it, produce conspicuous changes—a process which, to all appearance, would produce in the millions of years, and under the great varieties of conditions which geological records imply, any amount of change.

Although comparatively little attention has been paid to the matter until recent times, the evidence already collected shows that there take place in successive generations, alterations of structure quite as marked as those which, in successive short intervals, arise in a developing embryo—nay, often much more marked; since, besides differences due to changes in the relative sizes of parts, there sometimes arise differences due to additions and suppressions of parts. The structural modification proved to have taken place since organisms have been observed, is not less than the hypothesis demands—bears as great a ratio to this brief period, as the total amount of structural change seen in the evolution of a complex organism out of a simple germ, bears to that vast period during which living forms have existed on the Earth.

We have, indeed, much the same kind and quantity of direct evidence that all organic beings have gradually arisen through the actions of natural causes, which we have that all the structural complexities of the Earth's crust have arisen through the actions of natural causes. It may, I think, be fairly said that between the known modifications undergone by organisms, and the totality of modifications displayed in their structures, there is no greater disproportion than between the geological changes which have been witnessed, and the totality of geological changes supposed to be sim-

ilarly caused. Here and there are pointed out sedimentary deposits now slowly taking place. At this place, it is proved that a shore has been encroached on by the sea to a considerable extent within recorded times; and at another place, an estuary is known to have become shallower within the space of some generations. In one region a general upheaval is going on at the rate of a few feet in a century; while in another region occasional earthquakes are shown to cause slight variations of level.

Appreciable amounts of denudation by water are visible in some localities; and in other localities glaciers are detected in the act of grinding down the rocky surfaces over which they glide. But the changes thus instanced, are infinitesimal compared with the aggregate of changes to which the Earth's crust testifies, even in its still extant systems of strata. If, then, from the small changes now being wrought on the Earth's crust by natural agencies, we may legitimately conclude that by such natural agencies acting through vast epochs, all the structural complexities of the Earth's crust have been produced; may we not from the small known modifications produced in races of organisms by natural agencies, similarly infer that from natural agencies have slowly arisen all those structural complexities which we see in them?

The hypothesis of Evolution then, has direct support from facts which, though small in amount, are of the kind required; and the proportion which these facts bear to the conclusion drawn, seems as great as is the proportion between facts and conclusion which, in another case, produces acceptance of the conclusion.—[Synthetic Philosophy.

## The Music of the Future.

BY R. G. INGERSOLL.

**I**NFIDELS have opposed the Bible not on account of the good things in it, but on account of the bad, and Christians have upheld it not on account of the bad, but on account of the good. And, unfortunately, these Christians have imagined that the doctrine of inspiration must be upheld in order that the good things in the Bible might be preserved. In this way they have only succeeded in sanctifying the infamous. Throw away this doctrine of inspiration, and the Bible will be more powerful for good and far less for evil.