

will be hereafter shown, is only one of a system of worlds, of which the universal creation is composed.

But before I explain my ideas upon this subject, it is necessary (not for the sake of those that already know, but for those who do not) to show what the system of the universe is. [Here follows a careful description of the Solar System, as far as known when Paine wrote, which we have not space to reprint and which please to supply by reference to Lockyer or some other modern Astronomy. He then proceeds:]

The probability, therefore, is, that each of those fixed stars is also a Sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions, as our system of worlds does round our central Sun. By this easy progression of ideas, the immensity of space will appear to us to be filled with systems of worlds; and that no part of space lies at waste, any more than any part of the globe or earth and water is left unoccupied.

It is an idea I have never lost sight of, that all our knowledge of science is derived from the revolutions (exhibited to our eye and from thence to our understanding) which those several planets or worlds, of which our system is composed, make in their circuit round the Sun.

But in the midst of those reflections, what are we to think of the Christian system of faith, that forms itself upon the idea of only one world, and that of no greater extent, as is before shown, than twenty-five thousand miles? An extent which a man walking at the rate of three miles an hour, for twelve hours in the day, could he keep on in a circular direction, would walk entirely round in less than two years. Alas! what is this to the mighty ocean of space, and the almighty power of the Creator? From whence then could arise the solitary and strange conceit, that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world, because, they say, one man and one woman had eaten an apple! And, on the other hand, are we to suppose that every world in the boundless creation, had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a redeemer? In this case, the person who is irreverently called the Son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarcely a momentary interval of life. It has been by rejecting the evidence, that the word or works of God in the creation afford

to our senses, and the action of our reason upon that evidence, that so many wild and whimsical systems of faith, and of religion, have been fabricated and set up. There may be many systems of religion, that so far from being morally bad, are in many respects morally good; but there can be but ONE that is true; and that one necessarily must, as it ever will, be in all things consistent with the ever existing word of God that we behold in his works. But such is the strange construction of the Christian system of faith, that every evidence the Heavens afford to man, either directly contradicts it, or renders it absurd.

#### Paine, the Constructor.

BY T. B. WAKEMAN.

Should the Romney portrait of Thomas Paine grace the home of every Liberal and of every lover of Liberty, Science and Humanity? Decidedly, Yes! We answer.

Before stating the reasons why, we declare that the Truth Seeker, New York, has done one of its best things in preparing a reprint of the best engraving of this celebrated portrait, now lost, which they send (price 50c) to any order. As his great biographer, Moncure D. Conway, says, and he is the best judge: "This is the English Paine in all his vigor." What Conway has done with his pen, the great artist did with his brush, so that now, at last, the features of the mind and body of Thomas Paine stand out with marvelous clearness. He is resurrected. This Eidolon stands for what the "Author-Hero" of revolutions really felt, thought, said and was. When put in your "Living Room" it will be a notice, indeed a kind of challenge, to all who see it, to consider why you placed it there, and to discover for what Paine, his works and career really stood and STAND.

The large circulation of this portrait-engraving, therefore, has induced many to inquire, What is living and permanent in the message Paine was called by Evolution to deliver to the world? The Message of his Political Writings and career I have explained at some length in An Address on "Thomas Paine, the Father of Republics," which may be had of the Truthseeker (price 10c) which I hope will go out with this portrait.

For, what Paine said and did as the real Originator and Father of our Republic, is now of priceless value. No one can understand the issues of the present political canvass unless he understands how and why republicanism took the place of imperialism in the foundation of our government, and this can only be understood from those who, of all others, made it a Republic—Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. So what he has written

and what has been said about that, are the things now to be read.

But some things remain to be explained about his religious career, which should go with this portrait: The way things turned in the reaction, soon after the Concordat with the Pope by Napoleon, who knew better, and believed that no such person as Jesus Christ ever lived (see Conway's Works of Paine, vol. 4, p. 236); and the war in England against the French Revolution and Napoleon; and the similar Federalist reaction in this country against that Revolution and Genet, PAINE the Theophilanthrope, and all phases of Deism were put in a false position, which they have ever since been forced to occupy. The Deists started out as constructives, and they were turned into Iconolasts and Negativists, and that false position still largely holds in popular estimation. This is the time for truth.

The object of Paine, and of those with him then, was to construct the Religion of Humanity into an active faith, by basing it upon the conception of an Infinite God, the Almighty Creator and the immutable legislator of the solar system under invariable laws. On this ground he sturdily protested against being called an Infidel or hearing Deism styled infidelity. "It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine profanely and abusively calls it; it is the direct reverse of infidelity. It is pure religious belief, founded on the idea of the perfection of the Creator." (Paine's Letter to Erskine; Paine's Writings, vol. 4, p. 230.) The Age of Reason was written against the Atheists, was first circulated against them, and Paine's lecture at the first meeting of the Theo-philanthropes was printed in England against them. (Ibid., p. 238.) The idea and purpose of Paine and the Deists was to reconstruct human life, individual and collective, upon the Solar System and its immutable laws. Those Theo-philanthropes flourished in Paris for six years and were suppressed by Napoleon, who at first was a pretended friend of Paine, and borrowed from him the maxim, "There is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous," which, as a selfish monster, was about the only thing he proved by his sacrifice of millions of lives. The laws in England made the organization of the New Faith impossible there. After Paine's arrival in America, some efforts were made to have meetings of the "Deistic Church," as Paine called it, (Ibid., p. 315), and he wrote to Bishop Moore on the death of General Hamilton [1804], as "A member of the Deistical Church." (Ibid., p. 334.) But the political contests, and Paine's health, and other reasons made "the new religion" non-constructive at that date. But Paine never wavered in his assertion that THAT was the thing to do.

Were the Deists who chiefly made the revolution, including Franklin, Adams and Washington, sincere and consistent in limiting the reign of law to the solar system with its earth and man, and leaving the idea of a Creator and sustainer beyond? And how is the modern Secularist, Liberal and Humanist related to them? Such are the questions.

Examination shows that Paine and the Deists of the Revolutions were entirely sincere and scientific. They took the position explained by Newton in his letters to Bentley, and digested by Paine in his lecture on "The Existence of God." [Writings, vol. 4, p. 236.] The scientific foundation of that position was that "motion was not a property of matter," but "without motion the solar system could not exist," nor proceed with its wonderful power, accuracy, harmony and apparent design and beneficence. In a word, the astronomers and scientists of that day discovered and explored the solar system as a beautiful lone engine, running, as it seemed to them, according to gravity and other laws, as the result of a power and cause beyond it which was then quite inexplicable. The solar system had thus passed out of the domain of Anthropomorphism and Fetichism, i. e., Theology, and into the domain of Law and Science. But the Infinite Universe beyond it became, if possible, more than ever "deified" into a personal Creator, First Cause and Governor, in order to account for the existence of the still standing, isolated solar system, its preservation, laws, motions designs and beneficence. The boiler which furnished the steam to make this beautiful static engine go, they had not discovered; but it seemed to have design and purposes effected by the laws by which all of the changes on our earth and in the solar system took place. Such is the substance of Paine's argument for God, and it may be taken as the ground upon which he designed, and the Republicans of the last century fought out and started the American and the French Democratic Republics. In so doing they were affirmative constructives, working religiously, morally, politically and industrially upon a scientific, human and untheological basis. They had practically banished the will-God from the Earth and solar system, and started the New Life for Man, his present and future interests, summed up in Paine's phrase: "The Religion of Humanity"—[Crisis No. 7.]

This was making Deism an astonishing step in human progress, and we must so understand and appreciate, in order to HOLD it. For there now seems to be an impression, shared by some Liberals, and countenanced by the Papists, Comtists, Imperialists and Positivists, to the