

For the Torch of Reason.

A Voice From Geant.

BY MARIE HARROLD GARRISON,

Quite a number of years ago a scientist of Berlin, Prof. Virchow, made the simple but important statement: "The destiny of science is the service of humanity."

We may say with equal truthfulness and reason the very same words concerning Freethought. In the philosophical field Freethought and Science have the same end in view, viz., freeing the human mind from error, from its great burden of accumulated misconceptions and murderous misstatements that were being accepted as history. Science and Freethought are both trying to discard hearsay and guesswork.

I do not mean to say that Science and Freethought are going to kill out imagination and poetry. There is to be a poetry of the future none the less beautiful because it will be the offspring of Science and Philosophy in some instances and of Science and Love in some other instances.

I must hasten to say, however, that this article is not a treatise on either Love, Philosophy or Science as such but rather a philosophical intoned message of courage to certain almost discouraged fellow Freethinkers who have been complaining to me of the slow advance their labor in Liberal fields is making. They tell me that in certain sections of the country superstition seems so consolidated, stupidity so densely packed and piled up that reason gets no chance at it.

At one time this was my own state of feeling. I was about to throw up all efforts and give my time entirely to the social drift, the strictly "Household Gods" and the pleasures of imagination, when, from an unlooked for source came an admonition to have patience; came a sound that I may truthfully call a voice of encouragement.

You will no doubt smile (or possibly scoff) when I tell you that the said voice came from the famous Glacier du Geant, of rugged Switzerland.

It is true that thousands of workers cannot go to interview the Swiss Glaciers and many would not go if they could, but they can all read about these mighty ice fields and learn how slow is the gradual widening of the fissures that finally cause the glaciers to disappear.

The steadily shining sunlight on a mountain of ice causes it at last to "cry out with a mighty voice" while it is rent from crown to base and the human being who is present at the time turns in astonishment on hearing this sound and fully expects to see the masses of ice rent asunder, but to his utter

confusion he finds only a narrow continuous crack so minute of width as to barely admit the insertion of a piece of note paper or the edge of a visiting card, yet this fissure once started never closes but increases steadily till finally there will be no treacherous ice pile but a wide chasm of rock and earth in which human beings may walk with comfort and pleasure. We believe this of the fissures now starting because it is the record of the other fissures that started away back in the past marking their history as they advanced.

Perhaps you will insist that it requires a decidedly cheerful temperament to gather courage from such an incident, and this is what you should think and help along with—cheerfulness; for that is also an attribute of Science and Freethought, when they begin in youth and have not been shaded by the damnation of the old Orthodoxy.

But I am not going to moralize nor give you a "curtain lecture" on the duty of being cheerful. I am simply going to repeat that in a moment of discouragement I was strengthened by an observation of one of the slowest of nature's processes. From the fairy-land of Switzerland's dangerous ice fields I turned my eyes to the seemingly mysterious, piled-up illusions of superstition on which the sunlight of reason was steadily beating, and I said: "These, too, shall disappear—"

Here, now, is where poetry may be admitted for awhile. Here, now, imagination may guide my pen long enough to state that from Geant came a voice crying: "Behold, even in its slowest movements, nature's inevitable cannot be escaped. The seemingly eternal ice mountain must give way to the steadily penetrating sun. Even so the sunlight of knowledge on the most consolidated glacier of error will cause it to disappear."

Which one of you is willing to declare that only in imagination I may claim to have heard a "voice" from Geant? Many of you may claim so; I anticipate your statement and see that in the future we may quarrel on the subject of imagination and poetry which I hold are as essential in conveying knowledge as ether is essential for the conveyance of light from sun to earth. Had it not been for imagination we Freethinkers would have no Shelley who is surely our poet; we would have no Shakespeare, and, indeed, we should have had no orator, Ingersoll. Through a right use of imagination, of poetry, those men are immortal—not only immortal, but immortal beyond the grave, after death. Is not this self evident? The atoms composing their hearts and brains have been resolved back to a less complicated state of existence but the thoughts that emanated from their

brains, the feelings from their noble human hearts—they live; they are immortal; they live beyond death. This is the immortality that means something to mankind. Whether the vital spark that animated the exquisite brain of Shelley has passed on to other worlds than the earth is a wild conjecture. If imagination chooses to picture other worlds it will be very difficult for Science or ultra utilitarianism to pass a law against it. Imagination is as much a fact in the world as steam is, and not subject to material binding. Inventors of labor saving machinery could not invent without imagination.

Imagination can be directed into certain channels that are either useful or injurious to mankind.

Our well being resolves itself back to the question, "What are we here?" Are we worthy of immortality—of being forever in the memories of our fellow mortals? If so we will continue to live in the great future, to our children's children's children, and how much farther on we do not know. Placing a limit to the future would be a failing undertaking. Our business is to live, not simply exist, nor simply echo, but live, stir, differ, dispute and not be afraid to use fact and imagination, poetry and Science. Thus have I used poetry and Science when declaring that to my ears came a voice from the Glacier du Geant.

The Trouble With China.

BY D. E.

The treaty of 1857 between China and the United States contains this clause: "The principles of the Christian religion, as expressed by the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, are recognized as teaching men to do good, and to do to others as they would have others do to them. Hereafter, those who quietly profess and teach these doctrines shall not be harassed or persecuted on account of their faith." This clause has an important bearing on the present issue in China. The United States consul at Chefoo sent a dispatch to the governor of that province insisting that Christianity cannot be uprooted in China, and urging him to protect all property of Americans in Shangtung. It received this reply: "Chinan, July 11—The protection of missionaries is stipulated by treaty, and I will use every effort." The following, also, was issued with the governor's sanction: "The Boxers have become so numerous, it is impossible to control them. They have their origin in the unlawful and overbearing practices of the Christians, which are carried on to such a degree that it was impossible that trouble should not arise. Those Chinese who have embraced Christianity

were originally simple-minded people, but they were deceived and led astray by foreigners. Now an opportunity is given them to recant. If they do, they will be regarded as good citizens and their houses protected. If not, they shall be regarded as ruffians. The district magistrates must carefully number all the Chinese Christians in their districts and compel them to recant, and take guaranty from them that they will never again enter the church. They are to report all foreign churches and property in order that it may be confiscated, and that speedily. The people must not disturb the recanting Chinese Christians. July 12."

This shows that China has found her mistake made in the treaty of 1857. She thought then that the golden rule of "reciprocity" as taught by Confucius and Christ was the same. She has now found that that rule as practiced by Christians is: "Do unto the other fellow as he would do to you, and do it first."

Ghostly Horses Trot. Chesleigh, a Ghost, Drives Them. Geneva Mystery.

Geneva, N. Y., has a trio of ghosts—a man and a team of horses—and they appear every Tuesday night at 10 o'clock walking across the waters of Chesleigh Pond.

Residents in the neighborhood of the pond and people from Geneva watch from the shore for the phantoms. The team is driven by the man seated in a low vehicle, and the apparition first appears coming down the road on the east shore of the pond. The horses trot on the water for twenty rods, and then man, horses and vehicle vanish. The route never varies.

Chesleigh Pond is four miles northeast of Geneva. It covers thirty miles and has neither inlet nor outlet, but is believed to have a subterranean connection with Seneca Lake, two miles away.

It has been observed that when a storm rages on Seneca Lake the pond is also rough, and when a calm lies upon Seneca, Chesleigh Pond is unruffled. Its depth has never been ascertained, although many attempts have been made to sound it.

Sixty years ago the pond and adjoining land were owned by Timothy Chesleigh. One day in the winter of 1857. Mr. Chesleigh started to drive across the pond on the ice with a team of horses. Out in the lake the ice gave way, and nothing was ever seen again of man or team.

That the apparitions now appearing are the restless spirits of Chesleigh and his team is the firm belief of the older residents who remember the circumstances of Chesleigh's death.

The ghosts were first seen by