

TORCH OF



REASON.

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

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Progress.

BY GRACE D. GOODWIN.

WHEN I've thought the deepest I can,
The strongest, the wisest, the best,
And life's large, excellent plan
Out-widens my narrower breast,
When I'm dead, I say,
They will find the way.

When I've sung my defective songs,
That touch the soul's outermost edge,
When I've gazed at the world's wall of
wrongs,
And with labor have entered my
wedge,
I shall die at last
And the work be past.

And some day those yet unborn
Shall take my unfinished thought,
This work that has eaten and worn;
Then—toil did not go for naught.
But what will they do?
If I only knew!

They will write, they will paint, (and
well,
Thought, color, that we have dream'd;
They will plan, sing, struggle, and tell
Of the past, how imperfect it seem'd—
And we who are dead
Are forgot overhead. [?]

What Is Religion?*

BY ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

PART III.

IT is insisted by theologians, and by many of the so-called philosophers, that the moral sense, the sense of duty, of obligation, was imported, and that conscience is an exotic. Taking the ground that it was not produced here, was not produced by man, they then imagine a God from whom it came.

Man is a social being. We live together in families, tribes and nations.

The members of a family, of a tribe, of a nation, who increase the happiness of the family, of the tribe or of the nation, are considered good members. They are praised, admired and respected. They are regarded as good; that is to say, as moral.

The members who add to the misery of the family, the tribe or the nation, are considered bad members. They are blamed, despised, punished. They are regarded as immoral.

The family, the tribe, the nation, creates a standard of conduct, of morality. There is nothing supernatural in this.

The greatest of human beings has said, "Conscience is born of love."

The sense of obligation, of duty, was naturally produced.

Among savages, the immediate consequences of actions are taken

into consideration. As people advance, the remote consequences are perceived. The standard of conduct becomes higher. The imagination is cultivated. A man puts himself in the place of another. The sense of duty becomes stronger, more imperative. Man judges himself.

He loves and love is the commencement, the foundation of the highest virtues. He injures one that he loves. Then comes regret, repentance, sorrow, conscience. In all this there is nothing supernatural.

Man has deceived himself. Nature is a mirror in which man sees his own image, and all supernatural religions rest on the pretence that the image, which appears to be behind this mirror, has been caught.

All the metaphysicians of the spiritual type, from Plato to Swedenborg, have manufactured their facts, and all founders of religion have done the same.

Suppose that an infinite God exists, what can we do for him? Being infinite, he is conditionless; being conditionless, he cannot be benefited or injured. He cannot want. He has.

Think of the egotism of a man who believes that an infinite being wants his praise!

What has our religion done? Of course, it is admitted by Christians that all other religions are false, and consequently we need examine only our own.

Has Christianity done good? Has it made men nobler, more merciful, nearer honest? When the Church had control, were men made better and happier.

What has been the effect of Christianity in Italy, in Spain, in Portugal, in Ireland?

What has religion done for Hungary or Austria? What was the effect of Christianity in Switzerland, in Holland, in Scotland, in England, in America? Let us be honest. Could these countries have been worse without religion? Could they have been worse had they had any other religion than Christianity?

Would Torquemada have been worse had he been a follower of Zoroaster? Would Calvin have been more bloodthirsty if he had believed in the religion of the South Sea Islanders? Would the Dutch have been more idiotic if they had denied the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and worshiped the blessed trinity of sausage, beer and cheese? Would John Knox have been any worse had he deserted Christ and become a follower of Confucius?

[To be Continued.]

SOCIOLOGY IN SWITZERLAND.

How it is Taught in that Social Republic.

(From Sociology at Paris Exposition.)

FROM Switzerland, the country in which political socialization has advanced farthest, there were four reports, those, namely, of MM. Suter, Renard, Vittoz, and Combotheca. Of these the first two were publicly defended by their authors at the Congress and fully discussed.

REPORT OF M. SUTER.

M. Suter's report is historical and descriptive. Its title is: "Present state of instruction in the social sciences in Switzerland: universities, high schools, special schools.

The following is the substance of the report:

There are in Switzerland five complete universities, which in the order of their age are as follows: Basel, Zürich, Bern, Geneva, Lausanne. Besides these, Friburg possesses a Catholic university which lacks the faculty of medicine, and also lacks scientific freedom, since its instruction is placed under the Dominicans.

In none of these institutions of higher education does instruction in the social sciences occupy a very large place, and nowhere except at the University of Geneva is it concentrated in a special faculty.

There is no cause for special wonder at this state of things. The title to be called a science even of our knowledge of the organization and conditions of development of human societies is still disputed, notwithstanding the importance and constantly increasing number of works on Sociology. Thus we read in the *Petit Dictionnaire politique et social*, published in 1896 by M. Maurice Block, member of the Institute of France, article Sociology: "Does there exist a social science? We may answer squarely, no." Without discussing such assertions one may conclude from them that the social sciences have not yet emerged from the groping period, for no one would think of disputing the scientific character of mathematics, for example, or chemistry or physics. Social science being relatively so young, the teaching of it can scarcely have attained a great extension, and no more in Switzerland than elsewhere.

The universities located in Switzerland are all cantonal institutions and are under the exclusive control of the cantonal authorities. The federal legislation has com-

pletely respected the autonomy of the cantons in the matter of public instruction. No general law or regulation, therefore, controls the universities. Therefore a great diversity can and does in fact reign in the organization, distribution, and tendencies of the higher education.

One feature, however, is common to all our universities except that of Freiburg. This is the complete independence of instruction as regards the state or any authority whatever. There does not exist in them any trace of official doctrine, and even in the choice of the persons teaching the cantonal governments allow themselves in general to be guided by the interests of science and of education, at least so far as the limited appropriations at their disposal permit.

Cantonal governments, accused of socialistic tendencies for having introduced the progressive income tax and tax on inheritance, free school apparatus, compulsory state fire insurance, etc., have called to the chairs of political economy of their universities pure individualists, convinced opponents of all state intervention in the domain of economics. Such are Professor Pareto, at Lausanne, and Professor Pantaleoni, at Geneva. On the other hand, governments not at all suspected of socialism have appointed professors who proclaim themselves Marxist socialists, such as Professor Reichesberg, at Bern.

At each of our universities, along with the ordinary professor of political economy belonging, either as at Lausanne and Geneva, to the liberal school of economists of Adam Smith and Jean Baptiste Say, or as at Basel and Zürich, to the school of social politics often called state socialism, there is generally an extraordinary professor, or *agregé* (privat docent), teaching the most advanced doctrines by means of special courses in sociology, history of economic systems, etc.

This great freedom, coming out of this diversity in the exposition of theories and ideas on human societies, seems to present, if not a guaranty, at least favorable conditions for a healthy development or this branch of education.

If a more or less exclusive and uniform tendency happens to prevail in this class of teaching, the search for truth incurs the risk of taking a false course in the interest of a social class or of a dominant political party. In Switzerland students desirous of forming an opinion for themselves have in general an opportunity to hear more

*This was Colonel Ingersoll's last public address, delivered before the American Free Religious Association, in Hollis Street Theatre, Boston, June 2, 1899. It is interesting to know what his latest views were, and so we will print the whole of this address in parts. Note in reading, the difference between the religion of the past,—of Theology, and the religion of Science, with which the address ends.—ED. TORCH.