

TORCH OF REASON.

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

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NO. 6.

A Priceless Paradise.

BY EDMUND NANCE COOKE.

If some weird gnome should seek my home,
Some genie, fairy, witch,
To blink my eyes with every prize
Of life and ask me, "Which?"
I think I'd choose, in half a trice,
This boon: to never ask the price.

I would not claim a gilded name,
Or be a financier,
Nor would I hold the wide world's gold;
And yet I somewhat fear
I'd ask a just sufficient slice
That I might never ask the price.

A coat-of-arms has meagre charms
To men of modern views,
Yet were it mine to make design,
I know which one I'd choose;
An open purse, with this device:
"He never, never asks the price."

Is Heaven a state, a place, a fete,
A rapture, a rest?
The question's old and each may hold
His own opinion best;
But my idea of Paradise
Is where one need not ask the price!

—[Saturday Evening Post.

Wagner's Music.

BY ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

(From Dresden Edition, Vol. 12.)

It is probable that I was selected to speak about music, because, not knowing one note from another, I have no prejudice on the subject.

Music expresses feeling and thought, without language. It was below and before speech, and it is above and beyond all words. Beneath the waves is the sea—above the clouds is the sky.

Language is not subtle enough, tender enough, to express all that we feel; and when language fails, the highest and deepest longings are translated into music. Music is the sunshine—the climate—of the soul, and it floods the heart with a perfect June.

I am not saying that great music was not produced before Wagner, but I am simply endeavoring to show the steps that have been taken. It was necessary that all the music should have been written, in order that the greatest might be produced. The same is true of the drama. Thousands and thousands prepared the way for the supreme dramatist, as millions prepared the way for the supreme composer.

When I read Shakespeare, I am astonished that he has expressed so much with common words, to which he gives new meaning; and so when I hear Wagner, I exclaim: Is it possible that all this is done with common air?

In Wagner's music there is a touch of chaos that suggests the infinite. The melodies seem

strange and changing forms, like summer clouds, and weird harmonies come like sounds from the sea brought by fitful winds, and others moan like waves on desolate shores, and mingled with these, are shouts of joy, with sighs and sobs and ripples of laughter, and the wondrous voices of eternal love. Wagner is the Shakespeare of Music.

The funeral march for Siegfried is the funeral music for all the dead. Should all the gods die, this music would be perfectly appropriate. It is elemental, universal, eternal.

The love-music in Tristan and Isolde is, like Romeo and Juliet, an expression of the human heart for all time. So the love-duet in The Flying Dutchman has in it the consecration, the infinite self-denial, of love. The whole heart is given; every note has wings, and rises and poises like an eagle in the heaven of sound.

When I listen to the music of Wagner, I see pictures, forms, glimpses of the perfect, the swell of a hip, the wave of a breast, the glance of an eye. I am in the midst of great galleries. Before me are passing the endless panoramas. I see vast landscapes with valleys of verdure and vine, with soaring crags, snow-crowned. I am on the wide seas, where countless billows burst into the white caps of joy. I am in the depths of caverns roofed with mighty crags, while through some rent I see the eternal stars. In a moment the music becomes a river of melody, flowing through some wondrous land; suddenly it falls in strange chasms, and the mighty cataract is changed to seven-hued foam.

Great music is always sad, because it tells us of the perfect; and such is the difference between what we are and that which music suggests, that even in the vase of joy we find some tears.

The music of Wagner has color, and when I hear the violins, the morning seems to slowly come. A horn puts a star above the horizon. The night, in the purple hum of the bass, wanders away like some enormous bee across wide fields of dead clover. The light grows whiter as the violins increase. Colors come from other instruments, and then the full orchestra floods the world with day.

Wagner seems not only to have given us new tones, new combinations, but the moment the orchestra begins to play his music, all the instruments are transfigured. They seem to utter the sounds that they

have been longing to utter. The horns run riot; the drums and symbols join in the general joy; the old bass viols are alive with passion; the 'cellos throb with love; the violins are seized with a divine fury, and the notes rush out as eager for the air as pardoned prisoners for the roads and fields.

The music of Wagner is filled with landscapes. There are some strains, like midnight, thick with constellations, and there are harmonies like islands in the far seas, and others like palms on the desert's edge. His music satisfies the heart and brain. It is not only for memory; not only for the present, but for prophecy.

Wagner was a sculptor, a painter, in sound. When he died, the greatest fountain of melody that ever enchanted the world, ceased. His music will instruct and refine forever.

During all my life, of course, like other people, I had heard what they call music, and I had my favorite pieces, most of those favorite pieces being favorites on account of association; and nineteenth of the music that is beautiful to the world is beautiful because of the association, not because the music is good, but because of association.

Now, I always felt that there must be some greater music somewhere, somehow. I thought there ought to be music somewhere with a great sweep from horizon to horizon, and in the meanwhile could fill the great dome of sound with winged notes like the eagle; if there was not such music, somebody, sometime, would make it, and I was waiting for it. One day I heard it, and I said, "What music is that? Who wrote that?" I felt it everywhere. I was cold. I was almost hysterical. It answered to my brain, to my heart; not only to association, but to all there was of hope and aspiration, all my future; and they said this is the music of Wagner. I never knew one note from another, and was utterly and absolutely ignorant of music until I heard Wagner interpreted by the greatest leader in my judgment, in the world—Anton Siedl. He not only understands Wagner in the brain, but he feels him in the heart, and there is in his blood the same kind of wild and splendid independence that was in the brain of Wagner.

The best interpreter of Wagner in the world is not German, and no

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SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM.

The Modern State and Individual—What Each May and May Not Do.

(From conclusion of President Woodrow Wilson's book, "The State.")

THE state of the ancients had been an entity in itself—an entity to which the entity of the individual was altogether subordinate.

The feudal state was merely an aggregation of individuals—a loose bundle of separated series of men knowing no common aim or action. It not only had no actual unity: it had no thought of unity. National unity came at last,—in France, for instance, by the subjugation of the barons by the king; in England by the joint effort of the people and barons against the throne,—but when it came it was the ancient unity with a difference. Men were no longer state fractions; they had become state integers. The state SEEMED less like a natural organism and more like a deliberate organized association. Personal allegiance to kings had everywhere taken the place of native membership of a body politic. Men were now subjects, not citizens.

NEW CHARACTER OF SOCIETY.—And, more than that, the result has been to give to society a new integration. The common habit is now operative again, not in acquiescence and submission merely, but in initiative and progress as well. Society is not the organism it once was,—its members are given free play, fuller opportunity for organization; but its organic character is again prominent. It is the whole which has emerged from the disintegration of feudalism and the specialization of absolute monarchy. The whole, too, has become self-conscious, and by becoming self-directive has set out upon a new course of development.

In brief, the modern state has been largely DE-SOCIALIZED. The modern idea is this: the state no longer absorbs the individual; it only serves him: the state, as it appears in its organ, the government, is the representative of the individual, and not his representative even except within the definite commission of constitutions; while for the rest each man makes his own social relations. "The individual for the state" has been reversed and made to read, "The state for the individual."

FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT MUCH THE SAME NOW AS ALWAYS.—This is indeed a great and profound