

The Silvertown Journal

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This paper stands for freedom of thought, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, equality of opportunity and the religion of righteousness. It is radically opposed to every form of superstition and tyranny, or licensing or permitting any form of evil.

WHY THE DOUBLE STANDARD?

There are two very distinct classes of newspapers in this country — two extremes — and the public sets a different standard for each.

Just why, no one knows — but it does.

Of the one it requires truthfulness, decency and moderation.

Of the one it requires nothing — it just takes what is handed out and looks for more.

The great metropolitan daily gathers up the news of the world and that news is read at the breakfast table or during the day, or after the evening meal.

The reader seldom pauses to remember that reporters and editors have warped and colored much of that news up to satisfy the public craving for sensations. It may contain a few grains of truth and a few bushels of fake.

The country paper gathers up the news of the home community and sends it forth on press day. That news must be TRUE or the editor's reputation for veracity is ruined and his career of usefulness is at an end.

Faults that are condoned or entirely overlooked in the big daily are unanimously condemned in the humble weekly.

The city daily often builds up a tremendous circulation by pandering to one of the worst elements in humanity — the insatiable desire for scandal.

The country weekly builds up its circulation by catering to a higher plane of citizenship by the dissemination of facts in its news columns, by rigid adherence to truthfulness in its utterances.

The world has apparently learned to expect about a certain amount of fakery, exaggeration, sensationalism, and sensuality in the metropolitan daily — though happily there are a few dailies that are disappointing to their readers in this respect, they are decent.

Of the country weekly it demands the traversing of the straight and narrow path — the elimination of suggestive and questionable matter — the publication of a sheet which would not shock Christ if he came to earth. Why the double standard?

LISTEN, DAUGHTER!

Dad knows that Christmas is coming and so does your mother and your brothers and sisters. And we all know just what will please you most. So, from present appearances, you are not to be disappointed. But you seem to have the wrong point of view about Christmas, honey, and I want to set you right. Christmas is the season for giving. Got that? The real happiness lies in planning what you are going to do for others and then doing it. The real Christmas spirit fills only those whose thoughts are upon the happiness they hope to bestow upon their friends and upon the unfortunates who think they have no friends. It's not so much what you give as to whom you give. There's a poor woman living around the corner. No one is thinking of what she would like for Christmas. She'd be the second happiest woman in town if you were to walk in on her early Christmas morning with a gift of something warm for her to wear. The happiest woman would be my little girl who brings it. There is old Black Jim who shovels the snow and carries out the ashes. Never thought of him? Well, think of him to the extent of a pair of warm mittens. Knit them yourself. Don't know how? Your mother will start you. It will be twice as much fun for you and old Jim's look of gratitude when you give them to him, will repay you more than all the fine phrases of all the young squirts to whom you send neckties they won't wear and pin cushions they won't use. Try Dad's prescription, Daughter, and you'll be the happiest girl in town Christmas day. You will find that it isn't getting what you want for Christmas that makes for real joy. You'll discover something. That's all right. Start now.

REPLY TO MATERIALISTS

By Guy Fitch Phelps.

In The Silvertown Journal of December 11th is a little piece by Mr. Van Trump in which he accuses, because he has nothing else to say, evidently, of wilful falsehood. I have been looking for an outburst of materialistic spleen, and here it is. I have been telling the readers of The Journal that Materialists were not after the truth, nor trying to settle whether there is a God, but their whole contention is a bitter, unreasoning hatred of God himself. This article is a fair sample of that spirit. Pull up infidelity, and you will find the tap-root is bitterness against the Infinite which has its place in the breasts of infidels themselves. Study this article and see if I am not right. I shall not reply in kind, the culture of Christianity forbids.

He begins by misquoting Paul in Rom. 3-7. Let the readers of this debate turn in their Bibles and read the chapter where this verse is found, and they will discover that Paul is establishing the very opposite of what Mr. Van Trump seeks to prove. Please read the 8th verse of this chapter, and see that either he willfully put a false meaning into Paul's words or he is not capable of seeing the truth. I am willing to believe the latter is the fact. Paul is simply speaking of the beauty of righteousness, with sin for a background. This is a sample of the sermons preached by infidels. Truly the Bible speaks the truth: "The natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are foolishness unto him." Now, I want my readers to take careful note of the fact that Mr. Van Trump admits that Paul lived, a thing Mrs. Bliven denies, for she said the Council of Nice invented Christ, the Bible and God.

He accuses me of telling what is not true regarding the Materialistic School at Silvertown. Let me be very frank in the matter. I received my information from a gentleman who was, and is well acquainted with the facts and whose word I certainly think stands as high as Mr. Van Trump's anywhere, in view of this last article of his. This man told me incidentally how quite a number of those who were prominent materialists of Silvertown who did commit suicide and seeing that it is simply this man's word against Mr. Van Trump's, I prefer to believe he told the truth to the best of his ability. And I am willing to investigate the matter when opportunity affords, and if it appears that the gentleman was mistaken in his information, and that all who supported the Infidel College at Silvertown died like "a serene autumn," then I shall be very glad to admit my mistake, for I assure you the cause of Christianity does not rest on how any God-rejector may live or die, or whether they live or not. Mr. Van Trump assumes a good deal when he intimates that I know the history of the School at Silvertown. It was not so important as all that. And hard as it may be on his vanity, I must confess that I never knew that he was connected with that school — a very doubtful honor — till I read this issue of The Silvertown Journal. Nor did I ever hear of him till this debate gave him a chance. I am sorry I was so ignorant of important events, Mr. Van Trump, but we should not be held responsible for what we do not know, a fact which should give Mr. Van Trump no end of consolation. I venture that not one man in ten thousand in Oregon could tell the history of the little defunct effort at running something without God — which died, as all such things die — at Silvertown. And the illustrious gentleman who was once at the head of this institution, and who died honored in America and Europe (?), certainly had no cause to feel that his honor was a result of his connection with said school.

I had to smile when I read where Mr. Van Trump says that he is 45 years old, in his right mind, and able to tell the truth. If self praise is half scandal, then he is in line for his own promotion. But the thing which made me smile was his boast that he had been connected with the Silvertown School and had weathered it through to 45 without committing suicide. Congratulations, Mr. Van Trump, congratulations. But I suppose it is a fact that some men suffer less from a bad conscience than others. I leave Mr. Van Trump to make his own application. It is true that some preachers will lie, but no Christian will lie. See, Mr. Van Trump? The little story about the man who said that Mr. Ingersoll recanted on his deathbed has nothing to do with the case. I have never believed he did; although Mr. Olin Ross' article half admitted it. But whether he did or not is out of court. What has that to do with the so-called science (?) of evolution? Mr. Van Trump, are you able to logically debate evolution, or Theism? or would you prefer to indulge that

spleen which I have found in every infidel I ever met. They (Materialists) are so afraid their arguments will be met that they fly into a rage and snarl and bite on the first show of sense. Oh, don't deny it, I know you thoroughly. The last thing in this world a Materialist wants to find is that there is a God. Why? ??? There is so much about Ingersoll that I like, and he stood so bravely for so many good things that I regret that he charged a dollar admittance for all who came to get the light of reason from him. If I should charge a dollar per head from widows and orphans who wished to hear me what a howl would go up from Silvertown.

Then, last, comes the old saws about Washington and Lincoln being infidels. Look in the Encyclopedia Britannica, and see what it says about Washington. It says that he was a strict member of the Episcopalian Church. Then read what a man has to believe when he joins that church and you will see how much ground infidels have on this point. What does Mr. Van Trump hope to gain by bluffing on that point? Lincoln was not an infidel. His state papers show it; his letters show it; his struggle during the war brings it out clearly that he looked to the Infinite for help. Now to show that Mr. Van Trump is a bluffer, and guilty of dust throwing, I ask the school children to get Lincoln's Gettysburg speech, that classic of Anglo-Saxon literature, and they will find that close to the end of it he says: "That this nation, UNDER GOD, shall have a new birth of freedom." Notice, Mr. Van Trump, he says that the nation will have this new birth of freedom "UNDER GOD." Do you see where he puts Deity in his national ideals? Did you never read that before? Whom did you think you were writing to when you insisted that Lincoln belonged to your mud church with its dirt god? But Christianity does not stand or fall by Lincoln or any other man. It must speak for itself. If Mr. Lincoln had been an out-and-out infidel, Christianity would go on the same splendid thing it is now. I appreciate the troubles the Materialists are in, and I do not blame them for trying to borrow a few decent folks from the church, for they certainly need them.

Now a word in regard to the statement that Lincoln wrote a harmony of the gospels. I did not say that he did. I said that he was not an infidel, and that Jefferson arranged a harmony of the Gospels, which is true, for I have examined the book. If the editor of The Journal has my copy it will be seen that I did not say that Lincoln wrote such a book. I noticed when the paper came out that the printer had somehow left out the line which made it read just like I had said Lincoln wrote the book. Mr. Van Trump is excusable in what he said on this point, but it should teach him that in other things where he is quite fast to charge a minister with falsehood he may also be wrong. It always pays to go slow in calling men liars, and snarling and snapping after the manner of God-rejectors.

I call the attention of the readers of The Journal to the fact that Mr. Van Trump, who is the only gladiator who appears in this issue to represent the camp of Philistines, is completely off the subject. We were debating on Materialistic Evolution, and here he goes, trying to show that Ingersoll did not repent of his sins at the end, a thing better men have done. For I tell you, Mr. Van Trump, it takes a braver man to look up and say, "God I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," than to swagger out into the future with a spirit of bravado. Try it, my friend.

I will conclude this article with something on the line of the general discussion which called this debate into being. I am determined that Materialists shall have the chance to fight for their darling hobby, materialistic evolution, on a fair field. They have boasted and presumed and taken the ignorance of the average reader so much for granted that I propose that they shall face their make — belief and absurdities and prove them if they can. I am not surprised that Van Trump refers to me as the "Rev.," and snarls that I am a liar, because that is what lies ready in their war-sack, and when they can't meet in fair debate the points of an adversary they descend to such stuff as makes up the childish weepings of this article of Van Trump's. He should be ashamed of it, and reform. Let him come up like a man and meet the issue, and if he can beat the game on fair grounds I shall shake his hand and be his friend; but if he can't do that, then he is not the man to "push himself in" where he was not invited. Thus having turned aside to notice his article, or honor which it does not merit, I will

close with a few things on the main subject.

The old contention of evolutionists used to center in a sort of a jellyfish as a beginning but we do not hear so much about that these days. It was contended by these debaters that the whole animal, and I suppose the vegetable, kingdoms, as we see them today, sprang from this organelic mass. Now, I am reminded of what an old trapper once said in my hearing, after listening to a debate on Materialistic Evolution. Just as the debate was drawing to a close he said: "Well, if everything that has life came from a jellyfish, I'd just like to see the old woman who stewed the sassa to make the jelly." I think homely bit of philosophy is bound up the fecundity of materialism. These loud-voiced boasters cry out against miracles and call those who believe in them superstitious, etc., and then they come back in the next breath and tell us that unguided by reason, or any degree of intelligence the aimless forces of nature not only wrought out the billion perfect adaptations of nature, with all the means to ends, but actually created reason itself, which is greater than matter, and not materialistic at all. In order to establish this view (?) they are forced to believe in ten million miracles where the Christian has to accept one. I am surprised that they can't see this; others can see it, and they should be able to. Materialists believe that common matter created reason and the sentiments. But would that not be a miracle? Take a handful of earth in your hand and conceive, if you can, reason and mother love coming from it. More than that, take a pound of dust and conceive a man springing from it spontaneously, even in a first cell. The cell is not there, and the reason and love are not in the dust, so it follows that the dust could not produce them. In order to believe that these came from dust I am forced to accept a stupendous miracle, which only the Christian idea of man's creation will justify. The facts are simply these: The Materialist wants you to believe that unaided, unguided, unreasoning force, did what only Infinite Intelligence and Power could possibly do, and yet they tell us that those who believe in the supernatural are superstitious!! They are given to talking much about things being created and worked out by law. And this is some more of their shallow reasoning. Law works nothing out. Law is a method, nothing more, that which executes law is reason, purpose and personality. Do the laws of a state enforce themselves? No. Neither do the laws of nature. It is intelligent life in nature which makes the laws of nature operative. Darwin said: "If there was the least variation in the gradual development of a species the whole would fall into ruins." I have embodied his thought in my own words. He is correct, speaking for evolution. And right here comes in the credulity of Materialists, for they base their whole system on almost infinite changes of life and habits, which have produced the organs and amputated the tails, and then they declare in the next breath that there has never been the slightest deviation from a perfect unfolding of forms, and confess that had there been their whole system would fall into ruins. Talk about absurdity, credulity and miracles! If that is not unreasonable then I am unable to understand what would be. And yet these are the people who snarl and hiss and rant about somebody else being superstitious and believing in miracles. Then after they have worked out their system of millions of miracles, they throw the whole thing to the scrapheap in death, and their beautiful house of miracles lies in ruins. And they tell me that is reasonable! Reason has only the facts of being to rest upon, and such theories are contrary to the foundation facts of reason itself.

Now a word about the challenge which appears in this issue of The Journal (Silvertown). I notice it reads: "Materialism vs. Theism." I accept this challenge, and will meet Mr. Cantrell the last of March or the first of next April, on the following points: **Revised, that Materialistic Evolution is Unscientific, unproved and unreasonable. That Nature proves the existence of Infinite personality, Power, Plan and Intelligence.** We will see if Mr. Cantrell will meet me on these points.

I received a letter from Mr. Van Trump which contained practically what is embodied in this challenge. With five additional points, and in my reply to him, which was to be forwarded to Mr. Cantrell, I suggested five points for debate. But since the Materialists have issued their challenge under the above caption, I withdraw the other points and accept the challenge on the two points I have named. I do this because Nature and Evolution is the heart of Materialism, and the whole matter stands or falls by these two things. If the being of God is proved, Materialism comes crashing to the earth, for in its very nature the two cannot exist together. I will affirm the two points throughout the debate. It will be impossible, however, as I wrote Mr. Van Trump, to take part in the debate this month.

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I have the manuscript of a book to correct, also, Christmas exercises. Then the month of January is to be given to revival meetings here in the church, with all the other work which I must do. But this will not matter, as Mr. Van Trump assured me that the debate would be held at my convenience. I shall be pleased to meet Mr. Cantrell on the points I have named, which are certainly the home-diamond of Materialism.

I am willing to meet Mr. Cantrell in Silvertown, but I ask as my right that the debate be held in one of the churches there. I think this is fair.

If I go to that town, fairness would suggest that concession. Churches are well lighted and comfortable. I am quite sure the Christian Church will be available to us. We will see now whether Mr. Cantrell will accept the challenge which his friends have issued in his name. I believe this is another bluff by which the infidels around Silvertown wish to make a show of reply, for you will notice they have replied to nothing in the paper discussion. I hope I am mistaken. I shall be glad to meet the issue on its merits and if the truth is with Materialism, if there is no God in this Universe, then I am as old as I wish to be without knowing it. I demand also, that the debate shall be conducted according to the strict rules of decorum, that both speakers shall be given perfectly quiet and respectful hearing by

the audience, and that each debater shall have the right to choose one judge, and these a third, who shall not reside in the community where the debate is held; and who shall, as far as possible be neutral in his views of Religion and Materialism. If possible, too, I wish we might have the debate taken down in shorthand, and published afterwards. This, of course, is a mere feature of the debate, and not necessary. I await the earliest reply of the Materialists as to whether Mr. Cantrell will meet me on his own challenge.

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