

Religio-Philosophical Journal

JOHN C. BUNDY, Editor. J. R. FRANCIS, Associate Editor

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To all who Seek the Truth and will Follow where it Leads, Greeting!

The RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL feels a just religious and philosophic pride in all the well attested means and honestly made efforts, for the establishment of closer relations of intimacy and communion with the Spirit-world.

Hence we look out upon mankind with a broad sympathy which no wickedness can disconcert, and no ignorance or superstition can paralyze.

In carrying on this great work, we shall break lance on every side with thousands, but shall break no faith and bend no truth for any. Those who deny the life beyond, and those who achieve a partial suicide by seeking to live wholly in the other life, before completing this, must equally feel our lance, but they shall not be able to detect our malice.

We enter the lists against materialism as a barren idealism, that shipwrecks our race on the pitiless strand of death, and makes every soul that embraces it poorer, weaker and less loved and loving.

In short, we shall be too critical for the camel-swallowers; too receptive for the negationists; too broad for the sectarians; too frank and plain for the tricksters and impostors, and too faithful to law and moral principle for all whose thinking knows no allegiance to sound reason, nor their life to a sense of duty.

In conducting the JOURNAL, we shall aim to give so much of the phenomenal news of Spiritualism abroad and at home, as shall enable those specially interested in phenomena to be fairly informed without recourse to any other American or to any foreign spiritual paper.

concern for the methods of organization and work, which will cause Spiritualism, Liberalism and all modern culture to be felt as the ruling and predominant social force of this age, will continue.

To the old readers of the JOURNAL this enunciation of its aims and objects is, of course, to a great extent superfluous; the JOURNAL's work has long been their hope and their pride.

The Inter-Ocean is the only really Christian daily morning paper published in Chicago. The other two are edited respectively by a Materialist and Spiritualist, who veil their belief, if at all, only from prudential motives.

The tendency of the public mind, we say, is toward "liberalism," a phrase limitless in meaning, and which may signify the reason of the unbounded license of infidelity as expounded by Robert Ingersoll.

As to the scarlet woman of the French Revolution, which is the perpetual bugbear of the modern Christian, it may suffice to say that in the person of Mary the Magdalen (or Prostitute) the scarlet woman stands as intimately associated with the benign founder of Christianity, as it can well be with any modern phase of infidelity.

The true ground of regret in the great exodus which is now going on, out of the old superstitions into the new light, joy and liberty of a healthy and vigorous manhood, is that the liberal and philosophic ranks are so poorly organized for the reception of so large an accession from the churches as is now coming over.

The liberals who have done most work in battling against the errors of Christianity do not feel so. They know that the present revival of reason will only result, in a few years, in a grand retrogression into superstition, if a disorganized and nomadic liberalism is left to maintain the conflict against a well organized army of superstitionists.

In every city and hamlet in the country, there are social, sensible, influential, reflective men and women, who have been led to isolate themselves from the churches and other agencies of Christian endeavor, by the feeling that the Christian creed is a false, and degrading superstition.

This renders liberals everywhere weak, socially, in spite of their numerical strength, and often bigoted and narrow personally in spite of their boasted liberality and breadth.

The remedy for this lies in the formation of local, liberal or philosophic organizations in every neighborhood, which shall combine the social advantages of a church, the

dramatic and artistic interest of a theatre, the scientific and practical instruction of a college, the co-operative helpfulness of masonry, and the investigating and debating spirit of a class in philosophy.

There is no neighborhood of one thousand inhabitants which can not find men and women in it who are broad enough to see the advantages of meeting each other from two to four times a week, not for the purpose of sustaining or promoting any faith or unfaith, but for the six practical purposes following, viz:

1. Practical lectures by physicians on the laws of health, by economists on the principles of social science, by lawyers on the questions of political progress and business reform, by humanitarians on crime and its remedies, by professors of cuisine on cooking, and of astronomy on the stars; by men of antiquarian research on the Hebrews and Jesus, and by men of modern research on Goethe and Shakespeare.

2. Dramatic, musical, recitative and eulogistic entertainments, wherein history shall be drawn upon for every object of true praise whose contemplation can enlarge the soul, and fiction shall be ransacked for every form of art that can refine, exalt and satisfy the imagination and the senses.

3. Helpful plans tending to promote the welfare, enlarge the business, encourage the efforts or secure the employment of the less prosperous members of the fraternity.

4. Exercises, such as dancing, promenades, refreshments, music and the like in which the young people can participate with physical improvement and social profit.

5. Circles in which the mysteries of psychology, the new facts in biology and the latest helps from spirit communion with other worlds may be brought within range of all, so that a doubt of the life beyond shall be more impossible to the least advanced in Spiritualism than it has heretofore been to the most advanced outside of it.

6. Philosophic discussion in which the platform shall be open to all whether he have science or presumption, knowledge or guesswork, truth or error, harmony or discord, to promote.

Prominent working liberals write us in full harmony with such a platform. It will be observed that it is full of bases of practical unity, yet unembarrassed by a creed or a negative. Let those who would attempt the formation of colleges of philosophy, after this pattern, employ their home lecturers as far as practicable, and communicate with us as to the residue, and they will labor under no difficulty as to a supply.

Such organizations growing each year in power will differ from local lecture associations, as an oak that grows through a century, differs from a reed that dies with each year. They will differ from the churches, as men that are free from superstition differ from men that are in its chains.

The London Times in a recent editorial shows how great has been the advance in England of religious liberty. "Two centuries ago nonconformists could not meet for public worship. They could only meet in holes and corners, in back parlors and haylofts, on the sly and as law-breakers.

A bombshell was thrown into the Methodist Conference at Appleton, Wis., last week, by the introduction of a resolution demanding that some definite declaration should be adopted in regard to the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, and against "liberalism" in all its shapes and forms.

The Seymour Times, edited and published by Dr. Monroe, at Seymour, Indiana, is a unique affair in its way. As Dr. Monroe says, it is a "red hot radical sheet" yet withal, it is pure in moral sentiment and so far as we have observed a fair and candid exponent of materialism.

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Now, friends, let us all work together with a will and see how largely we can swell the JOURNAL'S list before New Year's Day! Every subscriber has the ability to obtain from ten to one hundred new names within the next sixty days.

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Adler Against Immortality.

Mr. Felix Adler, a young preacher of Jewish descent, who resides in New York, is the President of the "Free Religious Association," represented by the Free Religious Index. Possibly this may be a reason why that journal scoffs at the idea of a "psycho-physical science;" in other words of a science which regards man as having a soul as well as a body.

"Frankly admitting that the facts and philosophy of evolution, in his opinion, rendered the hope for personal immortality irrational, demonstrating as they do that from the development of worlds out of the primary fire-mist, up to the culmination of evolutionary labor in the production of man, nature everywhere is careless of the individual, sacrifices it to the perfection of the type,—he asked what remained of comfort, and incentive to noble living, to the believer in rational religion.

It is more spiritual and charming, according to the notions of Mr. Adler and his school, to exercise influence as a dead man than as a live man; much more "rational" and satisfactory to enjoy what he calls a "corporeal immortality," that is, to "build one's self into the structure of the social fabric of the future, than to look forward to the "individual immortality" which such low fellows as Socrates, Plutarch, Tertullian, Baxter, Glanville, Wesley, Franklin, Paine, Voltaire, Benjamin Pierce, Thiers, Guizot, and some others believed in.

Because why? Well, because all the worlds have been evolutionized from a fire-mist. And according to the Straussian and Haeckelian genesis, from which Mr. Adler would seem to have borrowed his own sage conclusions, we must go, in search of the origin of man, back to the mysterious fermentation of certain ultimate particles of matter, forming, somewhere at the bottom of the seas that gelatinous substance called protoplasm.

It must be admitted that all this is as yet but a stupendous hypothesis, but it is quite enough to satisfy Mr. Adler that immortality is an "irrational" doctrine. How have his teachers learnt all about it? Why by simply affirming, as Haeckel, Molechott, Buchner, and Strauss have done, that all matter has existed from all eternity because one cannot comprehend how it could have commenced.

Now, friends, let us all work together with a will and see how largely we can swell the JOURNAL'S list before New Year's Day! Every subscriber has the ability to obtain from ten to one hundred new names within the next sixty days. You like the paper; you want to see it grow in influence and strength, and thus advance the cause of truth. Now, put forth your best efforts in its behalf, who will be the first to send us a list?

Virchow, the great German histologist, tells us that so far as there is any evidence at all of a pre-historic man, he is seen to be as thoroughly a man, and with as distinct a separation from the ape as is the modern man. These philosophers, says the same high authority, who preach to us of the origin of man from fire-mist or mud, say much more than there is any scientific warrant for saying. They confound science in the state of a crude hypothesis with science in the state of an established fact.

We have no particular objection to the mechanical theory of evolution. Providence may work by mechanical processes as well as by any other. Only, when the question comes up, whence came the power that

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