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THE DISCREET NEWS
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REFLECTIONS ON THE FOURTH.

July 4th this year marks the 13th anniversary of the adoption by Congress of the Declaration of Independence. One hundred and thirty years is not a long period of time, if measured by the standards of history. And yet, what a wonderful Republic has developed under the principles embodied in that Declaration! Whether the territorial expansion is considered, or the growth of the population, whether we look at the wealth acquired, or the influence exercised upon the world's affairs, we are confronted by one of the greatest marvels in the history of nations. There have been world-powers before, from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, "the head of gold," but there never was a power that rose to the highest eminence so rapidly as the United States, solely on the strength of the justice and truth of its government principles, and not as the result of unjust wars of conquest. The position of our country is unique in this respect, in the entire range of history. The men who laid the foundations of this wonderful structure were "inspired" to do so. No other explanation accounts for the results achieved. It is the work of God, not of man.

On May 23, 1857, Lord Macaulay, in a letter to a prominent New Yorker who had sent him a copy of "Life of Jefferson," expressed the opinion that "institutions purely democratic" must, sooner or later, "destroy liberty, or civilization, or both." That was as near as could be judged by even the most observant students of history. They thought this Republic would fall, as a building reared on the sand and washed by the waves of a storm-tossed sea. So far were American government principles from the plans suggested by human wisdom alone. Macaulay argued that what happened in France would be repeated here. In 1848 a pure democracy was established in that country. The result was general spoliation, high prices, and ruinous taxation. Then came the reaction and the establishment of a despotism, and an enslaved press. Liberty had to be sacrificed for civilization. The same result will come in due time, Macaulay said, here, when the country is densely populated and the wages low. He predicted a time when, "either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your Republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth—with this difference, that the Romans and Vandals who ravaged the Roman empire came from without, and that your Hun and Vandal will have been encamped within your country, by your own institutions."

It is pleasing at this time to reflect upon the fact that this prediction seems as far from fulfillment now, as at the time it was penned. The American government does not appear to be in any danger from the "Barbarians" within. The laboring classes, the common people, the great majority, are the staunch supporters of this government. They are, moreover, conservative and not easily made the victims of the agitators whose aim is destruction. If there is any danger today, throwing its shadow upon the face of the land, it comes from the side opposite to that from which Macaulay expected it. It lurks in the aggression and arrogance of the barons of plutocracy. It is a fact that this country, in which equality in opportunities as well as before the law was to be one of the leading rules, there is now a well marked tendency to class distinctions with all its attendant evils, dependent on wealth. This menace to free institutions has come, not as Macaulay predicted, as a result of poverty and of prosperity. It is totally different from that predicted. The question is whether the country is equal to the task of meeting the dangers from that side. We believe it is. The wonderful awakening of the public conscience during the last few months, which has resulted in a thorough investigation of the business methods of many institutions, warrants the conclusion that the process of cleansing has commenced in earnest. The ax has been laid to the root of the tree. It may become necessary to interfere by law with the growth of large estates, and provide for their distribution, as has been done in France. Or there may be some other remedy. But whatever it is it will be found. The Fourth of July marks the establishment of a government that is a blessing to all mankind, and that will surely endure until it shall have accomplished the great and glorious mission for which it was founded, by a special providence of God.

NO "MIDDLE GROUND."

We give place once more to a communication from Dr. Frank Fay Mills, in which he explains again the position he occupies in reference to the truth and the claims of its historical personages to divine revelation, the manifestation of angels, the signs and manifestations commonly called "miracles," and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. We hope our readers, those of them at least who take any interest in the subject treated, will peruse the gentleman's letter before reading this brief reply. There is nothing new in it, but merely an amplification of that which we have already published from his pen. He says:

"I try to explain that I regard religion as having a natural evolution, as coming in that sense from the soul of man, but the evolution of man,

physical, mental and spiritual, conforms to and expresses a higher law, that power not ourselves which makes for righteousness." So man himself becomes a revelation as he ascends from the brute and one part of human history is as sacred and suggestive as another."

We are under the impression that we have stated the substance of this explanation as coming from him more than once, and that we have contrasted it with the Biblical doctrine of revelation which is actual communication from God to man, either by the voice of Deity, the ministrations of angels or the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. There is a radical difference between the gentleman's idea about revelation and that entertained by the religious world, ancient and modern. He practically denies the truth of the Biblical accounts of the manner in which religion has been established among mankind. He also denies the doctrine of the creation of man and the universe, and claims that intelligent, responsible humanity has come up "from the brute."

This is a theory without demonstration. Of course he has a right to believe it, if it seems true to him, but so have we to disbelieve it, when we find no reliable evidence to establish it. The theory of evolution of religion as the mere opinions of men, is to us as imaginary as the evolution of man from the brute. The doctrine of revelation from God to man and of the organization of the universe and of man by divine power, is established by facts and occurrences that are as thoroughly authenticated as matters of a different nature, and are attested by witnesses whose words are as reliable as any that appear in history.

The gentleman says that this physical, mental and spiritual evolution that he believes in, "conforms to and expresses a higher law, that power not of ourselves which makes for righteousness." That to us expresses a contradiction. It confesses a higher law than that exhibited in the evolution in which he believes, and that is above the power that is in ourselves. Here then is a recognition of a higher power than that in man and one which "makes for righteousness." This is falling back on the scriptural doctrine which he repudiates. What is that "higher law?" Who promulgates it? What is the righteousness that it leads to? Is it not the power of God, emanating from Him in the higher law and revealing and leading to His righteousness?

It is quite likely that, as he says, "so far as his knowledge goes, he tries to be logical." We do not doubt that. The question is, how far does his "knowledge" extend? In his argument his logic appears to be based upon his mere belief and not upon actual knowledge, and we think he is very much mistaken when he asserts that "probably nine-tenths of the educated and thoughtful men and women among the Anglo-Saxon races accept the evolution thought of the universe, including man and all his problems." So far as evidence goes, the believers in that theory as expounded by him constitute but a minority of the thinkers of the age, and many of them who once espoused the notion have changed their opinions in the light of advanced information and intelligence.

We concede, as we have done all along, the right of individuals and organizations, great or small, to occupy the point of view which the gentleman stands upon, but we do not see how it "broadens our old thought of revelation." On the contrary, it puts upon it a clamp which narrows it and in effect crushes it out. It utterly excludes belief in any divine communication, and admits of no revelation but that which is human and proceeds from the notions and opinions and diverse thoughts of fallible man. This is the parting of the ways between us and the expounder of what he seems to think is a modern concept of religion. As a matter of fact, it is but a revival of ancient Greek scepticism and vain philosophy, that has been discarded by the great thinkers of more modern times.

We do not dispute for a moment that his theory makes the Old Testament nothing but "part of the revelation of growing humanity," and that is one vital objection to it. For the great value of the Holy Scriptures to people in the present age is their declarations of divine manifestations, laws, commandments and precepts. These come with authority. They are a distinct and comprehensive guide to human thought and action. And it appears to us that everything of value to mankind that is brought out for reflection and advancement by those who reject the inspiration of holy writ, is drawn from and but an amplification of those very revelations, the authenticity of which these modern non-believers deny. Is not that the reason why they quote from them? What great principle not conveyed in the writings claiming to be inspired, has been established as the truth by the modern so-called scientific preachers and teachers? The very fact that they have to fall back on the Bible for texts from which to draw subjects and arguments for their discourses, is evidence of their dependence for religious ideas upon divine revelations and inspirations.

Our correspondent advances the suggestion that Jesus of Nazareth simply shared the prevailing ideas of his age and "probably did not know the earth was round or understand the law of gravitation." That is simply one more bit of opinion, without any solid basis on which to build it. We have a right to be opinion that the great Master knew just as much about gravitation as the professedly "scientific" disputer of Christ's divinity. Indeed, if the latter understands the law of gravitation, he is farther advanced than even Sir Isaac Newton, or others, who recognized the law and its operations without really understanding what that force is. But Jesus did not attempt to state anything concerning the rotundity of the earth or the theory of attraction and repulsion, and so the attempt of our Unitarian friend to belittle the great Nazarene is both needless and futile.

As to the Apostle Paul and other scripture worthies who claimed to have received divine communications, they either told the truth or they uttered falsehoods. The notion that Saul of Tarsus, bent on suppressing and punishing people whom he regarded as dan-

gerous heretics, imagined he saw the Savior and heard His voice while on the way to obtain authority to crush the Christians, simply suffered from "sunstroke," may be satisfactory to the gentleman who is such a sticler for scientific evidences and logical deductions, but it strikes us as the very height of absurdity, and entirely out of harmony with the character of the man as set forth by our correspondent, and with his whole life and education, "heroic character" and "dauntless energy."

But the question why quote from his epistles, if he was either a brazen impostor or a deluded fanatic, is not logically answered by the preacher who counts himself "a liberal Christian," and goes to the scripture accepted by Christians as divinely inspired for a foundation for his sermons to other "liberal Christians." We have no objection to quotations from Ruskin, Tennyson, Carlyle or any other great communicator of valuable thought, whether in poetry or prose. We regard all truth as coming from Deity, and believe that a great many other persons were and are inspired of God for the benefit of mankind, than those whose names are of record in the Old or the New Testament.

We maintain the position we have occupied from the beginning of this little controversy, that when any man claims like Moses to have received tablets of stone from the hand of God; or to have had, like Daniel, conversations with angels; or, like Jesus of Nazareth, to have come forth from God, to have talked with God while on earth; or like Paul, to have seen the resurrected Christ, and received special revelations and marvelous powers; or like Joseph Smith, to have obtained from the hands of an angel metallic plates, engraved with hieroglyphics which he translated into English by the gift and power of God, that such claims are either true or false. They are of such a nature as to be out of the domain of the mere imagination, or religious excitement or phantasy.

Our correspondent may consider himself rational in taking that middle ground in which he delights, but we cannot accept his notion and he should accord us the same liberty of thought that he claims for himself. Such individuals as have made the positive assertions to which we have alluded, appear to us either as impostors and charlatans and frauds, or as genuine and sincere proclaimers of actual facts and divine truths. We are not ignorant of the delusions which have led away many persons into error and folly, but they were of a different character to the divine manifestations which are believed in and have been credited by millions of human beings, whose powers of criticism and analysis and logical deduction may be considered as almost equal to those great gifts of mind claimed by the evolutionists of the latter days, and who call themselves "liberal Christians" while they deny the vital principles of the Christian faith.

It is strange that any one will claim to be Christian in religion who denies the Christhood of Jesus of Nazareth, his Sonship of the Father; his personal communication with the Creator; his voluntary offering of his own life to bring about the resurrection of the dead; his powers to control matter, to heal the sick, to give sight to the blind and to go back to the glory from whence He came, and to be the Judge of all mankind in the great hereafter, and the very fundamentals of the Christian religion. A man has the right to believe anything and everything that commends itself to his reason or his faith, and we suppose he may claim the right to call himself by any name he chooses to select. But we cannot hold in great admiration, or even in much respect, the logic by which he claims to be a Christian, when he opposes and treats with ridicule the essential features of Christianity.

An ice pool isn't formed by melting ice.

More people are overcome by drink than by heat.

So far as possible let it be a sane Fourth of July.

An honest trust is the most remarkable work of man.

For Young America following the flag isn't it with following the circus.

Henceforth the curse at Salisbury will be known as Dead Man's curse.

Dr. Condon is for a "modified consolation." A sort of varioloid, probably.

One divorce in every six marriages is Maine's record. No prohibition in that.

Perhaps a greater beef trust will arise out of the packinghouse investigation, who can say?

The President is at Oyster Bay but he is not taking a well-earned rest, simply because he never takes a rest.

Harry Thaw's prosecution will not be pressed because of the very hot weather. He will find the Tombs very cool during the heated spell.

Every dealer who offers toy pistols for sale should be arrested. They are an extremely dangerous affair, and to sell them is against the law.

Three hundred and sixty days in which to pave a mile of street is an awful long time, a great deal longer than the street to be paved.

The handiest man with a gun in New York has just died, not of the electric chair but of cancer. He had more men than anything else in his credit.

When Secretary Wilson gets the most inspection law into good working order of course there will be no more poison squads to experiment on.

John D. Rockefeller has purchased a great collection of fossils for the University of Chicago. There were already a great many fossils in the university.

The President has sent to Senator Beveridge the pen with which he signed the agricultural bill. It shows

that he deems the pen mightier than the sword.

"The packers, it seems, are to be given the degree of Ph. D. this commencement. Certainly, it means doctor or notted hams," says an exchange. Wrong. It means doctor of phat.

General Bragg, more famous for his saying about Mr. Cleveland, "We love him for the enemies he has made," than for his war record, has been granted a pension of fifty dollars a month. It is not much to brag about.

Congress adjourned without authorizing the construction of any battle-ships. The country is with the law-makers in this apparent neglect. The question of spending \$11,000,000 on a vessel that may become obsolete before it is finished, should not be passed on in a hurry.

In opposing the reduction of the circus license Councilman Wells said: "We get free passes to these circuses, and when we reduce their licenses we lay ourselves open to the imputation that we are influenced by them." He never spoke truer words. And the imputation is always made.

It is a ghastly story that comes from Russia to the effect that an entire tribe of Siberian aborigines have committed suicide, in order to avoid death by starvation. A government that is so impotent as the Russian has very little excuse for its existence. It calls itself "paternal." The czar is the "little father." But a "father" who lets his children die in that manner, while he himself is feasting, must expect anarchy in his house.

Very serious railroad wrecks are, fortunately, not very frequent on the English railroads, considering the immense traffic carried, but when they do happen they generally result in immense loss of life. The Salisbury disaster seems to have been due entirely to carelessness. The train was driven at too high a speed around a curve, with fatal result. The death of so many American tourists in the wreck, is a regrettable feature of the disaster. Once in a while we are reminded of the fact that American railroads are, on the whole, as safe as any other roads.

WHERE QUALITY COUNTS.

New York Herald.
Deadhead circulation is well nigh valueless to any advertiser. So is slum circulation—except for the cheapest of bargain offerings. So is circulation that reaches the shiftless, dissatisfied, complaining classes, always out of harmony with the established order of things—the classes that envy success and rail at any opinions but their own. A newspaper that panders to these classes can get them as a following, but whether they count by thousands or by hundreds of thousands, their value to an advertiser of substantial goods is very small.

GRAMMAR OF THE HOME.

Philadelphia Ledger.
In many families the education of the children is committed almost exclusively to the schools, and this sufficiently accounts for the atrocious errors of speech often noted in circles where one might expect better things. It matters not how faithful the teacher may be, the child will inevitably imitate the language heard at home, and forget the instruction of the school. When the child hears incorrect language in the family and imbibes it freely from vicious books he is probably going to speak ungrammatically as long as he lives. A writer on the educational process says that the years from eight to twelve constitute the habit-forming period. "This is the time to break the human coil, in some sense the widest of all animals." Errors in the use of the mother tongue adopted during this time are difficult to correct.

JUST FOR FUN.

Tact Lacked.

Miss Clara Clemens, Mark Twain's daughter, was talking at Atlantic City about entertaining.

"Tact," she said, "is essential to good entertaining. I once dined at a house where the hostess had no tact. Opposite me sat a modest, quiet man. This man suddenly turned as red as a lobster and fell into a horrible fit of confusion on hearing his hostess say to her husband:

"How inattentive you are, Joe. You must look after Mr. Blank better. He's helping himself to everything."—New York Tribune.

He Was Really Industrious.

Two Washington negroes meeting in the street fell into a discussion of the peculiarities of a mutual friend. Said one: "What kind o' a pussion is dat man, anyhow? Seems to me he never do no work."

"O, he is industrious, all right," promptly responded the second negro, "even if he don't do nothin' himself. Why, only las' week dat man spent two whole days trying to git his wife a job!"—Success.

Quite Too Literal.

Fond Mother (showing baby)—They say it's like me, but I think it has its father's nose.

Victor—It is a bit red, isn't it?

After that they did not speak for a long time—Pick-me-up.

Mr. Menzies—It's something dreadful. My wife is always asking me for money. It's money, money, money, all the time.

Mr. Japson—Why, whatever does she do with all this money?

Mr. Menzies—Eh? Oh, I don't know. I haven't given her any yet—Pick-me-up.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

The June number of the Golden Age is in every respect up to the literary standard of its predecessors. These are some of the topics of that publication: "The Passing of Wager of Battle," "June Nature," "English and Its Kindred Languages," "The Basis of Art Education," and many others. There is a good editorial on education, a piece of music, some poetry and "Old Stories Retold." The frontispiece is a fine piece of art—335, Fourth Avenue, New York.

Argleton's Magazine for July is a handsome publication, with many features of special interest. The following is part of the list of contents: "Mural Decorations by C. Y. Turner," "Grim Whittier," "The Supreme Court Case," "Frederick Trevor Hill," "The Prince Goes Fishing," a serial story, chapters I-III, Elizabeth Duer, "Ruskin Arise," a poem, Edwin Markham, "The Fountain," a story, Anna McClure Sholl, "How the Thing Was Managed," a story, L. C. Hopkins, "Spokane Cannon," Richard Weightman, "The Commemorative Side of the Monroe Doctrine," Harold Bolce, "The Cure of Her Soul," a serial story, F. J. Stimson, "J. S. of Dale," "Song of the Pearl," a poem, Archie Sullivan;



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