

or massacres in bloody Dahomey or cannibal rites in Africa or horrors along the Congo. Within the borders of his own community the agonies of death and worse than death are being inflicted on innocent bodies and souls. A city machine lives not by the comparatively praiseworthy atrocities of money misappropriation, waste, and graft. Not by such toll is the monster really fed. Tears of mothers, agony of fathers, hapless suffering of doomed victims, terrors and oppressions unmentionable, must glut its thirst. The kindest, the jolliest, the best-groomed, the most open-handed of ward politicians is only a mask upon the face of cruel death. The city pays in human lives for every alliance with vice, every saloon deal, every fraudulent inspection. Those rotten life-preservers on the General Slocum—how awful was the toll! Yet the sacrifice of those hundreds of innocent victims is more than exceeded every year and never realized, because it is done in the dark places of misgovernment and kept out of the sight of the people.

Not until every voter understands these things will misgovernment perish. But with each voter who learns to understand it good city government comes nearer. The city of the future is a city with no blood on its hands—a city paying no abhorrent toll to the insatiable powers of evil. As of old the Minotaur was slain, so here again will history be repeated and the living tribute cease to be paid into the hand of sin and death.



THOMAS PAINE

An admirer of Thomas Paine asks why so liberal a paper as *The Outlook* allows the centenary of the death of Thomas Paine to pass without comment. It might be sufficient to answer that *The Outlook* celebrates the anniversaries of the birth of great men, not the anniversaries of their death. That an admirer of Thomas Paine should wish to celebrate his death-day appears to us a curious anomaly.

But if the recent anniversary were that of Thomas Paine's birth, not his death, we should not commemorate it. For we do not share our correspondent's admiration for his honored hero. Thomas Paine was an able pamphleteer in an age when

pamphlets rendered the service attempted in our age by editorial and magazine writers. But we do not regard him as either politically or religiously a great leader. The "Dictionary of National Biography" correctly interprets at once the popularity of his writing at the time and its subsequent disappearance from the realm of influential literature: "He attributed to the power of his reasoning all that may more fitly be ascribed to the singular fitness of his formulæ to express the political passions of the time." Intellectually and religiously he was a child of the French Revolution, and, to quote again, "expresses with uncompromising sharpness the doctrine of political rights held by the French Revolutionists."

In his religious writing Thomas Paine was an iconoclast. He made no attempt to understand either the Bible or the reasons why it had for ages been regarded with veneration. When he wrote the First Part of "The Age of Reason" he rather ostentatiously stated that he possessed no Bible. There is nothing to indicate that he had ever even read one. All his knowledge of it, if it can be called knowledge, was derived at second hand. He supplied himself with a copy when he wrote the Second Part, not, however, to learn what it contained, but to attack it more effectively.

Many of Thomas Paine's criticisms on the literalism of interpretation current in his time are just, and some of his other criticisms concern certain fundamental tenets in the theology of that day. But it is quite evident that he was neither acquainted with the Bible nor endeavored to become acquainted with it. That the Ten Commandments form the oldest, simplest, and most comprehensive of all the world's moral codes; that the Hebrew Commonwealth was the first political organization to hedge about the powers of the king with constitutional restrictions; that it was the first to establish the three great departments of government—the legislative, judicial, and executive; that it was the first to create a popular legislative assembly, to prohibit a hereditary caste or class, to guard against land monopoly, and to make the priesthood dependent on the voluntary contributions of the people; that

the prophets were the first to teach that God is a moral Being who demands righteousness of his people and who demands nothing else, the first to define religion as doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, the first to teach that there is divine forgiveness of sin and rescue from it—he apparently did not know, or, if he did know, he did not think these matters of any serious concern. He ought not perhaps to be greatly blamed for this; for these facts were not then, as they are now, the commonplace of Biblical scholarship. But in estimating the present value of his book they cannot be ignored. And they lead the modern thinker to leave “The Age of Reason” in the oblivion to which time and the development of a better and more rational thought has rightly consigned it.



AN OLD LIBRARIAN

Mr. John Cotton Dana, the librarian of the Newark Public Library, is one of the best-known men in his profession by reason of the intelligence and skill with which he has widened the service of the public library and brought books and people into closer relations. It is therefore somewhat entertaining to receive from his hand as editor, in connection with Mr. Henry W. Kent, “The Old Librarian’s Almanack,” a very rare pamphlet first published in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1773, and now reprinted for the first time. “Philobiblos” was the pseudonym of the author of this interesting document. Jared Bean was born in New Haven in 1705 or 1706, became curator of the Connecticut Society of Antiquarians about 1754, and spent his life in that congenial occupation, untouched by current events and undisturbed by the revolutionary changes that went on about him. He refused to accept the results of the struggle with the mother country, acknowledging George III as his “Sovereign Lord” to the very end, keeping the King’s birthday with devout regularity, and remaining in delightful and dusty seclusion among his books. The Almanack is a portrait drawn by his own hand, a piece of quaint autobiography, cast in an antique form, with the musty smell of old books about it. Mr. Bean

lived and died a bachelor, entertaining the very lowest conceptions of woman in relation to the work of a librarian, and conceived of that work as an end in itself, impertinently interrupted at times by the intrusion of other persons into the library. For him, as for every true bookworm, a library justified itself by its mere existence. Any attempt to use it detracted from its dignity and wasted the time of the custodian.

The Almanack, which is in prose and verse, contains the usual astronomical observations, abounds in references to the classics, and makes all manner of bold weather predictions. On alternate pages it presents Mr. Bean’s view of his employment. The librarian, he says, may be compared to one who keeps an armory of weapons, who neither forges the implements of war nor employs them on the field of battle, but keeps his armory well stocked with the fittest weapons, and chooses carefully those into whose hands he places them, that they be not dangerous in the possession of persons ill fitted to use them. “You shall chuse your Books with Care and Circumspection. When you have determin’d that it is Prudent to purchase a certain Work, do so cautiously and make a Shrewd Bargain with the Vendor,” never under any circumstances buying a volume until after you have read it. He is especially definite in laying down the rule that the importunities of persons who come to the library must not hasten the performance of this task. They should be content to wait for the book until the librarian has satisfied himself of its contents. These books must be kept behind stout gratings in order that nobody but the librarian may take them from their place. Toward persons who come to the library the custodian ought to be courteous, but he must use the utmost vigilance, for the thief of books is his eternal foe; “there be sneeking unutterable Villains who will enter a Library, and in their furtive and Detestable fashion carry from it one of its Treasures!” Mr. Bean is of opinion that the just condemnation of the wretch who purloins a book is recorded in a warning displayed in the library of the Monastery of San Pedro at Barcelona:

For him that stealeth a Book from this Library, let it change to a Serpent in his