

SECULAR NEWS.

Notice that the University Fund is growing. Keep it rolling!

A telegram from Chicago announces the death of Samuel P. Putnam and May L. Collins.

Don't forget the Cantata at Liberal Hall, Silverton, Christmas Eve.

LITTLE CANDLES are now lighting up our Sunday schools.

A rush of work at this office made it necessary to have our friends at the Appeal office help us with the printing this week.

The blackboards for our University will soon be completed. They will be green, however, instead of black.

We are in receipt of The London Freethinker in which the Torch and our Convention at Silverton are mentioned. Think of our Torch crossing the United States and the great Atlantic and shedding its light in English homes. Isn't this success?

A SECULAR CHRISTMAS.

A grand free entertainment will be given at Liberal Hall, Christmas Eve. Special music by the Marine band, violin solo by Mr. Coolie; choruses and recitations by the Sunday school children; new and beautiful cantata, "Catching Kriss Kringle;" short address by Nettie A. Olds; subject: "Why Secularists Celebrate Christmas."

Perhaps the most beautiful feature will be an illuminated horse-shoe loaded with presents for the children of the S. S. S. All to conclude with a grand ball. Supper served in the hall by the ladies of the Secular Church. Every body come and enjoy a pleasant evening.

BAD NEWS.

We have received information of the death of Samuel P. Putnam and Miss May Collins, two active workers in the field of Freethought.

We have no knowledge as to the cause of their death, excepting a rumor that they were killed by escaping gas at a hotel in Boston.

Following are short biographies of their lives:

SAMUEL P. PUTNAM.

Samuel P. Putnam was born July 23, 1838, at Chichester, N. H. His father was a Congregational minister of that place. During childhood he lived, after five years of age, at Cornish, N. H., Worcester, Mass., and Epsom, N. H., attending the common schools. He began to fit for college at Pembroke Academy, Pembroke, N. H., and entered Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H., in 1858. In 1861 he enlisted in the army as a private. For the first two years he was in the valley of the Shenandoah and about Washington. He was then promoted to a captaincy and transferred to the department of the Gulf, where he remained un-

til the close of the war, campaigning in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas. In 1865 he entered the theological seminary of Chicago, where he remained three years. After graduation he preached in the orthodox pulpit of De-Klab and Malta, Ill. In 1871 he resigned his connection with the orthodox church and joined the Unitarian denomination. He preached in this association at Toledo, Ohio, North Platte, Neb., Omaha, Neb., Evansville, Ind., Northfield, Mass., and Vincennes, Ind. He then gave up all relations whatsoever with the Christian religion and became an open and avowed freethinker.

During the administration of Hayes he was appointed under civil service rules to a position in the Custom House, N. Y., where he remained until 1887, when at the Cassadaga Congress, he was elected secretary of the American Secular Union, and after that devoted himself entirely to the Freethought work. After serving as secretary for three years, he was elected president of the Union in 1890.

During that year he established "Freethought," a Liberal journal, at San Francisco, with Geo. E. Macdonald. He was elected president of the California State Liberal Union and labored mainly upon the Pacific Coast until 1891, when the publication of "Freethought" was suspended. In 1892 he was elected president of the Freethought Federation of America.

During his life and labors, Mr. Putnam has visited all but four of the states and territories of the Union, and has also spoken extensively throughout the Dominion of Canada. He has traveled over 100,000 miles in all. He is author of "Prometheus," "Gottlieb; His Life," "Golden Throne," "Waifs and Wanderings," "Ingersoll and Jesus," "Why Don't He Lend a Hand?" "Adami and Heva," "The New God," "A Problem of the Universe," "My Religious Experience" "Religion a Curse, Religion a Disease, Religion a Lie," "Pen Pictures of the World's Fair," and "Four Hundred Years of Freethought."

The above was written in 1894. Since then Mr. Putnam made an extensive lecture tour in England, and arranged with Foote and Watts to visit America. He came to the Pacific coast last summer and delivered lectures that will long be remembered by the friends of Freethought.

During the last session of Congress, in company with Francis B. Woodbury and others, he defeated the God-in-the-Constitution Amendment. Last month he conducted the most successful Congress of the American Secular Union, and was re-elected president. At the time of his death he was arranging to again defeat the same bill that is to be introduced at the next session of Congress.

MAY L. COLLINS.

The following sketch of the life of Miss Collins appeared in The Independent Pulpit of November 1896.

The subject of this sketch Miss May L. Collins, is a young lady of fine mental poise, remarkable ability and unusual promise. Her genius, her intellectual faculties are of a high order, and although barely twenty years of age, for she was born in Midway, Kentucky, on the first day of May, 1876,—a sweet May flower—yet she handles the most abstruse questions and theological problems with the keenness of a practiced logician and the calmness of a philosopher.

The rare insight and cool judgment of Miss Collins in the consideration of matters of deep importance are no less marked than her fine argumentative powers and felicity of expression. Her education was received in Cincinnati, Ohio, and it was at the latter place she had the privilege of reading the thoughts of our most advanced thinkers, Herbert Spencer and kindred authors. In such a mellowed atmosphere her young mind broadened, brightened and blossomed into the fair flower that strengthens and adorns the ranks of Liberalism today. The tiny seed was sown, however, in her brain when, at the age of seven, she listened with delight to her father as he read from "Volney's Ruins" and Ingersoll's published lectures. Thus was she early inclined to rationalism and progressive ideas which have steadily grown until she is able to grasp readily the most difficult and complex subjects.

She made her first appearance before the Liberal public in the Blue Grass Blade, C. C. Moore, publisher, where her brilliant contributions elicited much attention and comment, favorable or otherwise, as they were read by the unprejudiced reasoner or the blinded bigot.

Miss Collins is a woman suffragist. Her "Plea for the New Woman," a lecture first delivered in Cincinnati, and later, published by The Truth Seeker company of New York, is a comprehensive analysis of the position of woman and the ultimate attainment of her true status in life, through the process of reason and evolution.

The deep reading and the clear thinking of this bright Kentucky girl have not taken her out of the sphere of gentle womanliness or closed her heart to the amenities of social life. She is an accomplished musician, with fine execution as a pianist. She cares little for fashionable conventionalities, but finds keen enjoyment in communion with minds congenial to her own. She has a pleasing and attractive face, with all the natural and unaffected grace of youth. Her appearance upon the lecture platform has been greeted by success, and she proposes making a lecture tour at an early day.

It is rare that one so young turns

her mind to the work that has engaged the attention of our gifted friend, and when it does occur the event is worthy of commendation, honor and respect. Miss Collins has brought her polished and scholarly mind, with its wealth of thought and wisdom, her accomplishments, her youth and her beautiful presence and laid them all, a free and noble offering on the altar of Freethought and Liberalism, consecrating her life to the honorable cause of emancipation of the human mind from bigotry and superstition.

ENCOURAGING WORDS.

The Truth Seeker wishes the Oregon Liberal University unbounded success. We hold, subject to revision, the view that, since Liberals are taxed to support the public schools, they ought to enjoy their benefits; and that the special work of Secularists is to secularize the public institutions to the maintenance of which they are compelled to contribute. Legally and constitutionally, the teaching of religion, the saying of prayers, and the reading of the Bible is prohibited in most of the states of the Union. Secularists aim to bring the conduct of public schools into conformity with the Constitution, with the law, and with enlightened ideas of civil rights and religious liberty. Nevertheless the enterprise of the Oregon Liberals is worthy of applause. There is no institution in the world, that we know of, where Secular as distinctly opposed to religious training can be systematically acquired. No attempt has been made to place all the evidence against Christianity or religion in such form that they may be studied in the seminaries. Our lecturers and advocates are in the main self-educated for their work. The time they are obliged to spend, first, in getting rid of their early religious training and after dipping into books here and there to acquire an education in the principles and arguments of Freethought, might be immensely reduced were the religious information omitted at the beginning and the facts of science and true knowledge substituted. If religion is a delusion, as we hold, then there is the same necessity for skilled rationalists to deal with it that there is for expert scientists to deal with kindred forms of mental aberration. A university that would turn these out, full-armed, would be a good thing.—Truth Seeker.

"Mama," asked the little four-year old "how do you spell 'ginger'?"
 "Put away your book, dear. It is time for you to go to bed."
 "Papa, how do you?"
 "Don't bother me, Katie."
 "What does it mean when it says"—
 "Didn't you hear your mother?"
 Katie threw the book on the floor.
 "I don't believe there's anybody that loves me," she burst forth, "'cept grandpa and God. Grandpa, he's in Michigan, an' I don't know where God is!"—Exchange.