

# Torch of Reason

UNIVERSAL MENTAL LIB-  
ERTY.

ONE WORLD AT A TIME.

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J. E. HOSMER - - - - - Editor.  
P. W. GEER - - - - - Business Manager.

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ularists who are not regular subscribers.

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## Light Ahead.

The children of Secularists have been at a great disadvantage, for their parents, not wishing them to be taught superstition, have kept them from the orthodox Sunday schools and while other children have been learning a little about reading and getting the advantages of being in society, many of our poor little Secularists have been left to themselves. But now there is light ahead. Our children are to have the advantage, for while the christian children are learning a little about reading, and getting false ideas about supernatural things in their Sunday schools our little ones will be learning about form, color, how to use their fingers in making pretty ornaments, how to train all their faculties; and our older ones will be delving deep into the mysteries of nature. Young and old will at the same time be learning those valuable lessons of morality that can only come from mingling with others and debating the questions of right living.

The fellowship that comes from working together in a great cause will make us all better and wiser men and women. This great work is to be accomplished by our Secular churches and Sunday schools. When the secular children who have these advantages have grown to be men and women they will be philosophers and will be writing books, lecturing, inventing and doing all those things that build up our civilization and make men fit to live; but the poor religious devotees will be clinging to their idols and trying to save the world by fitting their fellow men for an imaginary country and to love, honor and worship the imaginary gods of the ancient Jews.

Secularists, we need workers. We need lecturers and teachers. How

can we get them? There is only one successful way and that is through our Liberal University.

Do all you can and get others to help.

## Our Christian Caller.

A short time ago a poor old gentleman who was trying to arouse enthusiasm at his revival meetings, by goading his infidelic friends with false statements of their doings, called on us, and, as we are ever ready for a good natured argument, he found no difficulty in calling forth a few of our ideas in regard to the popular superstitions of the day, but alas! the holy ghost seems to forsake some christians at the time they most need it and the poor old gentleman became angry, or at least much grieved and demanded his hat and coat in such a way as to have done credit to a robber chieftain, and, although we had been as polite and nice as poor infidels are capable of being, yet he indulged in a few expressions that did not seem very complimentary to us and our little stock of knowledge.

Our christian friend left us so hurriedly that we hardly had time to begin our argument; but a few of the things that we touched upon may be of interest to our readers. In answer to the inquiry as to how a personal god could be everywhere, we discovered that he can be omnipresent just as Grover Cleveland can i. e., in influence. Very well, we leave the subject with the idea that the omnipresent idea is all a humbug, for Grover is no more everywhere than neighbor Smith's baby. We gave our idea as to the origin and development of life but our divinely taught friend thought it very absurd and substituted the bible story of creation and tried to show how very foolish it would be to suppose that a child could be taken care of by animal parents and so excited did our friend get that he would not give us a chance to explain that the process of development has been very slow and that, while a modern baby could not live perhaps with the care that it might receive from a wild ape, yet the fact that the babies of our animal-like ancestors were born of their parents is enough to show that they would be taken care of. The babies as well as the parents have changed.

The origin of language then occupied our attention and although we were allowed to give part of our views in regard to the simple language of our ancestors and its subsequent growth, our excited friend became very indignant and repeated again and again that language was not natural but acquired and that it could not have been learned without a teacher and the teacher was God. Of course in his excitement he forgot to explain how God learned to talk without a

teacher but that of course is a foolish of thought an infidel and we'll get our worthy divine's hat and coat. Good bye, come again.

We feel sorry that he became so worked up that he forgot to close the door gently, as we love peace and harmony; but we must not expect too much from a follower of him who said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword."

## The Dawning.

It is said that it takes all kinds of people to make a world, and this is often offered as a sort of an apology for the idiosyncrasies of others, but we must confess that we can not see just why a large part of the human family should be so indiffernt to the real honest truth and its progress in the world as to be silent upon the great questions involved in the present struggle between orthodox ideas and ideas of advanced thinkers, and yet, when we think of the past and the almost absolute necessity of many parents smothering their honest opinions, we do not wonder that the men and women of this generation, whose brains are but off-shoots of their parents brains are different than they would have been if their parents had enjoyed better conditions. It is one of our duties, Secular friends, to do all we can to show these indifferent and crafty ones the error of their ways.

We should show the evils of superstition and ignorance and their accompanying crimes which are being committed before their very eyes, and that one who looks on without doing what he thinks best to prevent these wrongs against his fellow-men, is an accessory to the crime.

There is much to do. The twentieth century is to see a great change. We believe that mankind is to soon see conditions as far superior to the present state of things as our civilization is in advance of our ancestors when they left the father-land of India.

Shall we see the dawn of this happier day? Look! The rosy light already illumines the sky, and a few who have climbed to the lofty heights of mental liberty, can see the beautiful sun-rise. And listen! Can you catch their words? Secularism, Unity, Brotherhood of man, Love, Liberty, Universal Happiness, A Heaven on Earth.

## Two Ways.

The following appeared in Dr. Talmage's paper, the Christian Herald, Dec. 9:

Wanderers Reclaimed.

Mr. D. Talmage Merston, assistant superintendent at the Bowery Mission, relates the following interesting incidents of the work there: "I received a letter from a man

whom I had helped and who had deserted his family at Princeton, N. J. He was bound for England. We kept him here in the mission till nearly two o'clock, and then got him to write home to his family and confess his sin. Since that I have received a letter from him which I have before me, post-marked 'Princeton, N. J.,' and saying that he was at home and had been freely forgiven. Last night I was in our office till two o'clock with another man—an engineer—who came forward at our Gospel meeting two nights ago. Almost every night I am kept here till one or two o'clock, talking and trying to help the fallen. I might tell you of many many instances where boys have been helped, and some, I feel confident, have been fully saved."

Now this, we believe, is a fair sample of the salvation that orthodoxy offers. After a man has become mean enough to forsake his family and become as bad as he is capable of becoming, he is coaxed or frightened into saying that he believes in Jesus and is, right there and then, saved.

The man who was bad enough to leave his family without a good cause is mean enough to pretend to believe and thus work himself back into the affections of his innocent family, but if he had some cause for leaving and was really a good man, he would need no such recommendation to be forgiven.

This patching up a character after it is rotten and then palming it off on innocent parties is like taking an old water-soaked boat and after varnishing it selling it to unskilled parties as new, or just as good as new. And did you ever notice that it is the men who are saved and sent back to their families. Do you suppose that such efforts would be made to get bad women reinstated in their former homes?

This crazy patchwork is not what we want. Men and women who have been bad may become better and we ought to help them all we can, but they never can be fully saved. In order to fully save people we must prevent them from falling, and in order to do this we must work on a broader plan than skirmishing around the edges and trying to pull back a few after they are already besmeared with the filth of wrong doing.

Better conditions, so that the young will not fall into error is what we should work for, and as far as those who feel that they have not done right in the past is concerned, the words ascribed to Jesus are very appropriate, "Go your way and sin no more."

We are not obliged to believe anything, in order to be fully saved; all that we need to do is to live up to our highest conception of right.