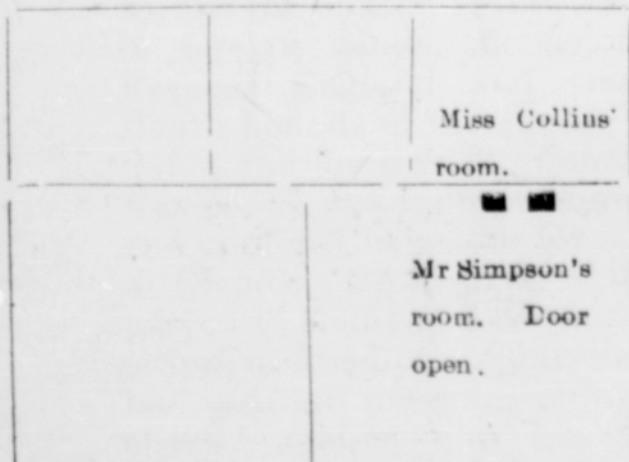


**The Death of Our Friends.**

Orthodoxy has been busy the last few weeks trying to scandalize Samuel Putnam and May Collins who were accidentally killed in Boston not long since. If these people were as anxious to find the truth as they are to slander their fellow man who happens to differ with them, these falsehoods would not be so often invented.

The following is taken from a letter written by a lady living near Boston and must surely be a correct account:

"I arrived in Milford December 8, and was getting ready to have a visit from Miss Collins when the news came of her death. Knowing how mixed newspaper reports are, and that you are interested I thought I would write you the straight facts. My sister lives in Stoneham, and my father and his wife have rooms of her, also Miss Minchen has rooms there. Miss Minchen invited Mr. Putnam, Miss Collins and Miss Grasswinckle to dinner. They spent the afternoon all the folks together, my father, step-mother, sister and all, but all who sat at Miss Minchen's table were Mr. Putnam, Miss Collins, Miss Grasswinckle, Miss Minchen and her sister Mrs. Tynan. They had dinner at 5:30. Mr. Putnam took some claret out for dinner and they passed it around to those who did not dine as well as those who dined, there were three bottles, each bottle supposed to contain enough for one person. They left Stoneham on the 6:15 train arriving in Boston at 7. Mr. Putnam and Miss Collins took Miss Grasswinckle to the door of the Tremont Theatre. (She was playing there.) Then Mr. Putnam took Miss Collins to her room, arriving about 8 o'clock. He lighted the gas or she did and in some way turned on two burners. Mr. Simpson spoke to them as they entered, and said they had been in the room but a few minutes when he was surprised that all was so quiet, for Mr. Putnam was always so noisy, moving his chair and his feet, and laughing and talking so loudly. He thought possibly he had dropped asleep in his chair, yet it seemed so strange to have him so still that he kept wondering about it. The rooms are arranged like this and Mr. Simpson on the lounge indicated by black mark:



So you can see how near he was to them. He went to sleep and in the morning he got up at past 7,

and smelled gas. He had smelled gas the night before but seeing the bright light in May's room had not supposed it was there. When he smelled it in the morning he tried the other rooms and not finding it he went to May's room and putting his nose to the crack in the door discovered it there, and opening the door saw both Mr. Putnam and May lying dead on the floor. They were lying, he on his back, she on her face, or nearly so and had been there all night, for the print of the carpet was on her face as it could not have been otherwise. Mr. Simpson was all broken up over it. He sent for the medical examiner, and Ernest Mendum and Miss Minchen then telephoned to me, but failed to get the message to me though I got word there was a person waiting to talk with me, but when I got there they had gone; had waited four hours for me. When the evening paper came, I knew my message must have been about the tragedy so I took the next train for Boston, arriving at 9 p. m. I went right to 47 St. Botolph Street where it occurred. The folks there are friends of mine and old friends of Mr. Putnam's. Of course the bodies had been removed to the undertakers but I learned all about it.

The next morning I sent to the undertakers to enquire if I might stay with May's body until it was sent home. The gentleman I sent got there before the office was open, but he waited. They said there was no good place to stay and the body was in the basement on ice, etc. I went down and saw the bodies and staid a little while. In the afternoon I went again and in the evening I went with three others and staid more than an hour. The body was then in the casket ready to send to Kentucky the next morning. The casket was in the chapel and we could stay there as it was comfortable. May did not look natural as her face was bruised on her forehead where she struck something when she fell and the other side of the face was marked by the carpet. Mr. Putnam looked as though he could get up and talk as well as not. Oh it is terrible, but I need not tell you that, I just wanted to tell you the facts of the case, as there is much that is not true being circulated. There was a bottle with a little whiskey on May's table but it had been there in the same condition of emptiness for several days."

**Secular News.**

Wednesday Jan. 6th, marked a great page in the history of Liberalism. It was the first day of the first Liberal University. Those who attended are:

Lora Ames, Reber Allen, Elvin Ames, Earnest Maloy, George Riches, Perry Venable, Frank B. Forward, Roy Fitzgjerrell, Amie R.

Forward, Elma Smith, Walter Smith, Jerry Desart, Walter Dolan, Albert E. Fisher, S. O. Coolidge, Alfred Down, Robert Down, Dona Guiss, Kreta Hicks and Anna Hammond.

There were just twenty, and more have enrolled to begin next week.

The interior of the building was photographed during school hours and we will have the picture of the first day of school to compare in after years. Let every true Liberal feel that it is his duty to help this grand movement.

Miss Ada Dewey, our pianist will be with us Saturday, ready to begin her work Monday, as instructor in the musical department of the Liberal University. She will also assist in kindergarten work and primary teaching.

Miss Dewey is sure to give satisfaction in what she undertakes and will be a valuable addition to our force of teachers. She has been acting as musical director and Secretary of the Portland Secular Sunday school for the past three years and will be greatly missed by the Secularists of Portland.

Miss Nettie A. Olds will soon start on a trip over the western part of the state in the interest of the Liberal University and the TORCH OF REASON. She will be greatly missed here but we feel that she can do a great amount of good in the work for a few months during which time she expects to visit as many localities as possible.

All persons desiring to have her lecture will please correspond with her at McMinnville, Oregon, or P. W. Geer Business Manager, at this office. She will make no regular charges for her work but expects people to provide accommodations and a hall to speak in, and pay her what they can. Remember she is working for THE LIBERAL UNIVERSITY. Help all you can.

Josiah Kemp, Sec'y. O. S. S. U. and Supt. of the Portland Secular Sunday school is deserving of much credit for his untiring energy in the Secular work, or in fact we may say he would be deserving of a great deal of blame if he didn't do all he could, but there is no danger he has the stick-to-it-iveness as well as the ability. From the two Christmas stories in the last lesson in the S. S. quarterly, he arranged some tableaux which were very interesting and beautiful if reports are true.

We do not often come across a person so interested in the cause of Secularism as is Miss Julia Moffitt of Newton Iowa. She is doing some splendid work in the way of organization in her locality and bids fair to be a leader of some repute.

**Six Smiles.**

Young lady graduate, (to her father,)—Pa did you ever think who planted the stars in the ethereal

blue?

Father,—No, Sallie, but I can tell you right now that I wouldn't ever have such a feller as that plant taters for me.

Mother (to little girl)—Pet, do you love your Mamma best of all?

Little girl—Yes Mamma, all 'cept God; and I's afraid not to love him best.

Mamma, who was in the parlor entertaining callers, said to three-year-old Bessie, "Go into the sitting-room, dear, and see if the clock is running, I have not heard it strike this afternoon." Bessie went and looked at the clock, then came back and stood in the doorway. "Well, is it running dear," asked mamma. "No, mamma, it is just standing still and waging its tail."

I don't think my kitty is as nice as Charley Brown's little dog, cause yesterday he came over and when he saw my kitty he went right up to her and put out his paw and said "Bow wow" to her, just as nice as he could, and she just stuck up her back and blew her nose in his face.

When you go for five cents worth of very sharp, steel point needles, what do you want them for? For five cents.

Smile once more, just to make out the number six.

**From Iowa.**

RIVERSIDE, IOWA, Dec. 28, 1896. —To the Editor: Last July a few of us Freethinkers met at the home of Jacob Fesler and organized a Secular Sunday School.

We adopted the quarterlies issued by the Oregon State Secular Union; have used them here ever since and find them both interesting and instructive, and in our opinion just what is needed in every Sunday School in the land.

During summer months we met in the opera house but since it is too cold there we meet in the home where we organized. Last Sunday being the last of our second quarter new officers were elected. The writer was re-elected President and Miss Daisy Fesler Sec. The prize offered to the primary class for the ones who would repeat the memory gems in regular rotation was won by all the class.

The membership is not as large as it should be. There are a good number of Freethinkers here who should meet with us, but they have been out of every thing of this kind so long that they have become indifferent. Can some reader of the TORCH suggest some way by which we can bring them into the fold?

I write this with the hope that it may encourage some one where there is no Secular Sunday school to make an effort to organize one. I believe there is material in every town in the United States for a Secular Sunday school, wherever there is a Christian S. S. there should be a Secular one.

J.P. McCLUSKEY.