

Torch of Reason

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Hold The Fort.

If we had more money our work would move much faster, but we must keep good-natured and be willing to work a long time if necessary without any other reward than the satisfaction that we are "holding the fort," for our friends will surely rally some time and then we will see our beloved work move as it deserves to move.

We need more teachers; we need scientific apparatus; we need help on the new building. It takes money to get these things but we must keep up good cheer, do the best we can with what we have and when enough of us get thoroughly converted to secularism the work will become easy, for "many hands make light work." That we are doing well is a fact, and when the best people of the orthodox churches thoroughly understand that our work stands for everything that is good and that at the same time we are free from that old serpent, the devil of superstition, they will be with us and that to bless.

We who understand just the conditions, should live lives spotless and thus by our example as well as by our tongues and pens help to hasten in the glorious day of humanity.

The Difference.

In our constructive work we must have help in order to succeed, and we, without a blush, ask every Secularist to help us all he or she can without doing themselves or family an injury. But if we call for help in what respect are we better than orthodox churches? We are quite different in several important respects. The money we ask for is not to be sent across the sea. It is not to pay a princely salary. It is not to be used to teach children as truth that which is not known to be true.

We only ask those who are able, those who will not suffer by contributing, to help build a school that will be theirs when it is completed—a school that will educate workers for the great struggle that

is soon to take place between the hosts of superstition and the children of liberty. Do what you can friends, but we do not want the pennies of the needy, for the master we serve is humanity and we do not wish to rob our master.

We do not believe in "devouring widow's houses and for a show making long prayers" but we do want all who are able, and can see the great necessity of constructive Freethought work, to place as large a stone as they can easily carry in a great living monument of liberty, a Liberal University.

How We May Conquer.

For years Freethinkers have been tearing down the orthodox ideas of the churches and have demonstrated beyond a doubt in the minds of reasoning people that there are no reasons for believing in the mythical stories of the bible; but this kind of work, necessary as it has been, must now give place to something better if we wish to entirely put to flight the powers of ignorance and superstition.

We must do constructive work. We must teach temperance. We must insist on our members being pure, clean, upright, honorable men and women. If we do this the battle is won. It may be quite a struggle for some of us to let go of some old foggy notions we have gained from the old methods of warfare, but victory is within our reach; shall we refuse to accept it because the plans of battle are somewhat of a surprise to us? Ah, no. We will, we must show the world that Secularism is its savior—its savior from drunkenness, from the tobacco habit, from the opium habit, from libertinage, from ignorance, from poverty, from superstition, from crime. People must see that we will soon empty the penitentiaries, the insane asylum, and the reform schools; that we will close the doors of the dives, the gambling hells and the schools of infamy.

O, friends it has been demonstrated that Jesus and his love can not do this, and if we once show that we can, the world will be at our feet.

The greatest weapon that the children of superstition use against us is that we are not a moral people and although this is not true, yet it is our opinion that as far as organized work against the great evils of our time is concerned we are not much better than the Catholic or protestant churches.

We can do better than they have and we will do better. We are young as far as organization is concerned and it may take some time to get our plans completed, but that the work may not be delayed we call upon every human being who loves humanity to step forward and do what he or she can to perfect this glorious plan of salvation.

Reaching Plain People.

The above is a heading which may be found in the Christian Herald of January 27, and the following words on the subject show about the way leading christians look upon other people. The Herald says, "During the present month, many letters have been received approving of the suggestion of Evangelist D. L. Moody, that the christian churches of America generally should devote Sunday evenings to the presentation of the plain gospel for the purpose of reaching the common people." Then follow short letters which explain the conditions of churches in the different country towns of the different states and of course like good common people ought to do, they all agree with the uncommon Evangelist. With what contempt a man who has formed an appetite for something better than the miserable slush that is dished up by these dealers in ignorance, looks upon such words as, "plain gospel for the purpose of reaching the common people."

How long will people allow these men who know no more than "common people" do in regard to divinity and immortality, lead them around by the nose?

"Common people" indeed! The wily priests may be able to hoodwink the people a while longer but some of the "common herd" are having their eyes opened and if our public schools could be kept secular it would not be very long before this damnable business of making stock of the "common people's" ignorance would give place to something better.

How many thousand times better it would be if every preacher would talk no more about gods, saviors, harps and crowns and teach the "common people" the many, many things they are dying to know and help them to be something besides "common." My dear Christian reader, how long will you be "common," and feed on the trash your self-imposed masters deal out to you? How long will you call your best friends harsh names and shun them as you would something unclean?

Let us study the sciences instead of trying to understand theology. Let us work to make each other happy instead of trying to please the imaginary angels etc., that these uncommon preachers pretend to know about.

Come, now is the time to work for better conditions, for "the night is coming when man's work is done."

Two Ways of Working.

There are two ways of working for humanity. One way may be called the narrow gage and the other, the broad gage. The narrow-gage worker can only see a short distance and never thinks of

the whole of humanity, but just thinks of helping this sick brother or that unfortunate sister. The broad-gage worker understands that the way to do the most good is to remove the causes of suffering, and then so many brothers will not be sick and so many sisters will not be unfortunate. A person who is working on this broad gage plan may help his neighbors fully as much as his narrow-gage friend and is apt to help him more but he sees that what little he does in this way is of but little consequence compared with the broad-gage work.

One who is a narrow-gage worker should not be condemned for not being able to see farther, in fact he should be encouraged in his work, for as long as a man is a worker at all there is great hopes of his developing into a broad-gage worker and one real worker of this kind may do wonderful things in a short life.

There are many noble men and women who have the broad gage idea but whose environment makes it impossible for them to carry out their plans, but these grand would-be-workers often do the world great service by inculcating their grand ideas into the minds of their associates and thus many times their ideas are carried out even after they are dead. Life is very short at best and every human being should see to it that he or she does something in this great work of making happy conditions.

Along every line of every real reform then let Secularists be found. Let us help each other to develop into broad-gage workers that can comprehend that the sufferings of our brothers and sisters all over the world may be lessened by our righting the great wrongs that are destroying and holding back freedom of thought, and keeping up the pious robbery that is now practiced in the name of a mythical redeemer.

Moody.

Mr. Moody said: "As for a minister who does not believe in all of the bible, I don't think he is worth the snap of my fingers. I tell you, my friends, when you cut out the tale of Jonah you have got to cut out God."

According to Mr. Moody's creeds and childish ideas, God is a personal anthropomorphic being, probably not bigger than the fish that swallowed Jonah. Fantastic stories like this have a fascination for boys, and to the mind of Mr. Moody, though physically he is fully developed, is a boy's mind in its inability to raise abstract thought and in its proneness to dwell upon incredible stories like that of Jonah and the whale. But Mr. Moody is only one of many who have attained to the physical stature of manhood, but in thought are still in a state of intellectual childhood, being victims of arrested development.