THE TORCH OF REASON, SILVERTON, OREGON, THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1897.

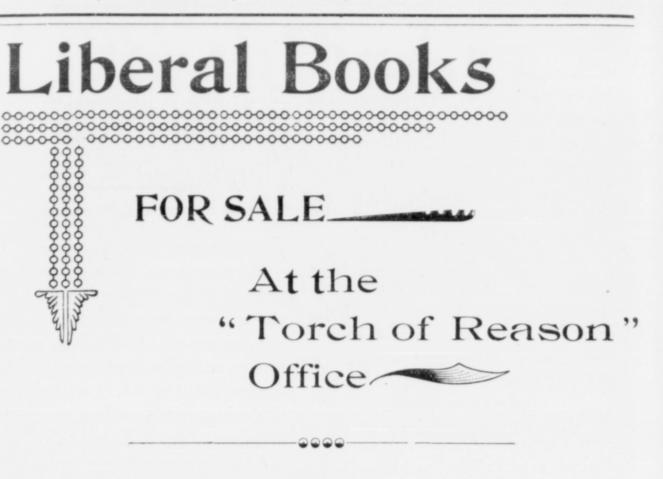
Notes and Comments.

Editor Torch of Reason:

I have read Paine's "Age of Reaductions that I have ever read.

"Come, now, and let us reason together," is what Isaiah says the be of a little different kind from that which the Lord had with Isaiah-that is, there will be a little more truth and reason in it. The Lord tells him, "though your sins as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." There is about as much truth and reason in that statement, we supof Judah, telling him that the kings of Israel and Syria, who were then besieging him, should not be successful, and to assure Ahaz that he was telling him the truth, he gives him a sign. He says, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and before the child shall be phecy foretelling the miraculous 'Praise be to God, said he, the light birth of Jesus. This all took place about 740 years before Christ's truth has no need of examination." time, and it has no more reference to Christ than it has to the highlands of Honolulu; because if it was a sign to Ahaz that he should come out victorious in the war then going will be seen that Ahaz was desperately beaten and taken captive, and delivered into the hands of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter, who slew one hundred and twenty thousand in one day. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons and daughters. See II Chronicles, 28:1-8.

lated about Jonah and the whale; the doctrine of endless punishment, and a hundred others we could refer to. The ministry has been son" and a few numbers of the forced to select subjects to discourse Torch of Reason and I find them to upon more in accord with reason be two of the most reasonable pro- and good sense. It don't take onetenth part the fire and brimstone to satisfy the people now-a-days that it did fifty years ago; they are ashamed of such silly talk as that. Lord told him; but what little When we read the fathers of the reasoning we will have to do, will church and see upon what arguments they have built the edifice of religion, we are inexpressibly astonished with their credulity or their knavery. But allegory was the rage of that period. The pagans employed it to explain the acbe as scarlet, they shall be as white tions of their gods, and the Christians acted in the same spirit when they employed it after their fash-In the first periods of ion. the Christian church not only the most learned of those who pose, as there is in the one that he have since been denominated makes to Ahaz, who was then king heretics, but many of the orthodox conceived Moses to have written neither the law nor the pentateuch, but that the work was a compilation made by the elders of the people and the seventy, who after the death of Moses collected his scattered ordinances, and mixed with them things that were extraneous similar to what happened to the Koran of old enough to refuse the evil and Mahomet. Then in the assembly choose the good, the land that thou at Mecca, giving in their confessions abhorrest shall be forsaken of both of faith, Volney says: "Then came her kings." Christians and Bible- forward with a look of confidence believers try to make this a pro- an Iman of the law of Mahomet, shines with full evidence and the 'Be it so,' replied the lawgivers. But if your statements as to what constitutes the truth disagree, who shall reconcile them? If error has its martyrs; what is the certain on, it was a mockery, a lie, for it mark of truth? If the evil spirit works miracles, what is the distinctive character of God? And what is this luminous doctrine that fears the light? Who is this man, cried all the groups, who thus insults us without a cause? Has not God endowed us, as well as him, with understanding and reason; and have we not an equal right to use them in choosing what to believe and what to neglect? If violence and persecution are the arguments of truth, are gentleness and charity the signs of falsehood? JOEL M. BERRY.



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There is no fact more patent at the present day than that within the last half century there has come over the spirit of the Christian church and is still coming, a great change, with reference to its beliefs and its tolerance of the opinions of others.

joice at this age of rationalism, in- lutions reading him into outer vestigation must go on. It matters darkness. There is a smack of oldlittle how many oppose it; it is im- fashioned orthodoxy in that, includpossible to stay the tide." The ing a good deal of its brimstone; church is beginning to have its and if the doctor doesn't immedidoubts about some, at least, of the ately declare that he believes that unreasonable statements made in which he doesn't believe he will the Bible, such, for instance, as a find himself surrounded by some finite creature giving birth to an very dangerous theological exinfinite one; the silly story as re- plosives .- Judge.

The Confidence of Youth.

The young men of some of the Christian associations are trying to The Rev. Dr. Briggs says: "I re- snub Dr. Abbott and passing reso-