

Torch of Reason

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Help Needed.

On account of our adoption of the ethical basis and on account of our being very particular, especially in regard to our lecturers it might be supposed by some that we have no love or sympathy for our poor brothers and sisters who are engaged in practices and advocating doctrines which we consider very detrimental to mankind, but this is not true and we hope that no one will judge us as the orthodox god judges people when they displease him. But while we have sympathy for all and while the object of our organization is to make it possible for all to get closer to the truth and learn how to live, it has become very apparent to those who have the success of our work most at heart that the very existence of organized work depended on whether we defined our position on the most important moral questions of the day or not, and this made it absolutely necessary for us to take a stand on high ground, and, although sometime in the future our ideas of morality may change, yet today we could not reach out a helping hand to the fallen or help save the young and virtuous from falling, if we were ourselves in the gutter of corruption, and before we had nothing to show that we were not; so it is very important that we stand for what the majority of the Secularists in this state believe to be right and our lecturers must be of the very best timber obtainable.

Now if the people who have been fighting for years against superstition and other great mistakes of our race, have the good sense that we believe they possess they will all join hands, and well may the orthodox ghost tremble in his boots.

Many are sending us word that they approve the action of the convention and we hope that all who believe that we should "hew to the line" will stand up and be counted. At present we want several lecturers but none need apply unless they are free from superstition and moral corruption.

Neither do we wish aspirants to think it is a very difficult thing to become a worker for us. Young men

and young women, here is a grand chance if you are free, and if you wish to help liberate the slaves you see all around you. Come and visit us and we will help you. After you have passed the examination for a lecturer you will be required to write a lecture which will be an easy task, for you can weave into your own best thoughts the best thoughts of the noble philosophers of the past and present, and, after having your work approved by the board, you can start out, deliver your lecture in the different cities and towns of the state, help to organize churches and Sunday schools and scatter our literature. We can not promise you a large salary at first, but we will see to it that you make a good living and if you do right you will receive a permanent position and be doing much good. Come and see us if you can or write and tell us what you can do for our great cause.

Why Do You Wait, Dear Brother?

Secular friends, in order to send you a good lecturer and wake up your whole neighborhood and organize a fine, progressive Secular church and Sunday school, much work has to be done. We know that much money and energy have been practically thrown away in the past, but in the starting of any great work it seems almost necessary for this to be the case before the workers learn how to work. We are now on the right track and if every one takes hold it will not be long before we will have an army of active workers in the field. The first thing to do is to get our stronghold here at Silverton firmly established and well fortified. Now bring the best shovel or pick at your command and "lend a hand." If you can't give money, do something. Don't wait for others, for others may be waiting for you and if you do something it may induce others to take hold and thus lead right up to success.

There are a few who are doing just all they can do, and the work is sure to succeed, but we want to see as much done as we possibly can before Mother Nature calls us to rest, and so we should not wait for one another.

Don't be afraid of doing too much, for, as soon as our University building is up and furnished, we must immediately commence planing our industrial department and sanitarium. Our library must be second to none and our telescopes and other apparatus for obtaining knowledge must be the best.

You see the field is ready, the workers coming, and, although it may take years of work to do all these things, it will be pleasant work for us if we love the great and grand principles of Secularism that philosophers and sages of all ages have toiled to unfold to the world.

One World at a Time.

If there is a place to which an immortal part of men and women go after they die and if they enjoy indescribable happiness there throughout eternity, we have no objections whatever, but, as there is not one thing in all the sermons of holy men and doctrines of holy books that proves to our minds that there is such a place, we would be doing very wrong to say that we believe in a future life. Some think that their great desire for heaven proves that there is something beyond; but their desire does not prove it, for, if what is taught in our schools in regard to the Brahmins is true, the majority of the people of the world desire eternal forgetfulness, and thus we see the desire proves nothing. If we had been taught that the height of happiness is to have the desire to make the world happier and better now and after we are gone, and that when we are dead we are at rest, and, if these ideas had been believed by all as long as the eternal life idea has by some, the feelings of many who now look upon eternal rest with such horror would be reversed and the idea of a future life and especially the idea of a hell for a large part of the human family would be looked upon as absurd and worthy only of undeveloped minds. So we say if there is a future state of existence there is no proof of it, and it would be as foolish for us to spend our time teaching these things as it would to teach that we were angels before we were born or any other unproven, unprovable imagination. Our time is too precious to waste on these theories and as long as one human being is suffering for food, or clothing, or shelter, or mental training, men are committing a crime against society in teaching such absurdities and thus drawing people's attention from the real causes of happiness into channels which only retard our mental and moral growth. This then is the work of Secularists: to teach what we do know, discarding all unprovable theories of a future existence and making the world happier and better by studying and teaching all the grand truths of our own lives and of our surroundings. We believe "that the proper study of man is man" and not angles, and spirits and gods and devils and that in studying man we are obliged to study nature in order to discover man's place in nature and that the speculative study of theological nonsense only retards, dwarfs and hinders the mind from grasping the knowledge necessary for us to understand how to control the forces of nature so as to have them minister to our comfort and happiness.

What are the great factors necessary to a high state of civil-

ization? Is belief in Jesus one? Which came first, progress or the doctrine of immortality? Ah! many people who never heard of Jesus and many who would have listened to the story of immortality as we would listen to a ghost story have lived and prospered—a happy, contented, refined, moral people; but the doctrines of Secularism are inseparable from progress and happiness. Can any one point to a happy progressive people either of ancient or modern times and say that they have not practiced the religion of humanity? Just to the extent that any people practice the principles of fraternal love and are free to think each one for himself—free from the priest and prophet—just to that extent are they happy and progressive; but when priests are given power, and their work of scattering seeds of mysteries, and mummeries, of falsehoods and miracles bears fruit then fears and persecutions and creeds and hate spring up and degeneration sets in. This life is all anyone knows anything about and if we are true to ourselves and our fellow men, we will do what we can while we have the opportunity. Now is the time to be happy! Now is the time to be good! Now is the time to work!

Real Angels.

The little children whose eyes are so bright and eager to learn about the birds and flowers, whose little feet are so willing to act as messengers for their friends, and whose little minds so easily learn the lessons of friendship and love, are the real angles, the honest true cherubim of the only heaven worth having.

And how we older ones ought to try to help these angels to enjoy their service and keep them from the filth that spoils and from the slavish fear that degrades.

O, little innocent, happy child, you are indeed the holiest, the purest of all creatures; we kneel at thy feet and pledge ourselves to thy service. When we are at rest, our work will live in you; our light will be placed in the hands of others who will have profited by our combined influence and help, and thus will our work, the product of our minds—our real souls—be immortal.

The good that we may do gives us hope, and for this and the happiness of these real angels do we press on and think and think, and work and work!

Applications for lecturer's diplomas are coming in and we will soon have workers of the right sort in the field. The adoption of our ethical basis gives our lecturers a recommendation that is worth having for now they are not only obliged to stand an examination for lecturing but they must be of good moral character and free from bad habits.