

Torch of Reason

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Notice!

A pencil mark here denotes that your subscription will expire with the next number. You are earnestly requested to renew so that you may receive the paper without interruption. We have decided that it is best for all concerned that we do not send papers longer than the time paid for unless so ordered. This will prevent any loss and we will know just where we stand.

We request you to send us the names of Secularists who might become subscribers and we will mail sample copies.

THURSDAY, JULY 29, E. M. 297

Spread the Gospel.

One of the most far-reaching and genuine philanthropic plans for the salvation of mankind from ignorance, superstition, and crime, has been undertaken by Eliza Mowery Bliven of Brooklyn, Conn.

The success of her plan will depend on the hearty co-operation of Freethinkers in the different states of the Union and we do hope that all will take hold of the work. All can help in this work whether they have money or not and this is one of the great beauties of the plan.

The TORCH OF REASON, although it has much work of its own, will do everything it can to help this brave sister of liberty and light to spread her grand principles of Scientific Wisdom; and if the world has not yet advanced far enough to appreciate and carry on her great plan, we are sure that the effort will not be in vain, but will help to prepare the way for some other brave "promoter" in the future. Every one who reads these lines should study Mrs. Bliven's plan for the Promotion of Scientific Wisdom, read her article in this issue and write to her. Please do not wait; you will be dead bye and bye. Now is the time to do good and this brave woman needs encouragement at once.

Improve.

Secularists let's formulate some plan by which we can make our home, Silverton, the prettiest place in the world. If we could manage to utilize all the time that is squandered by those who need exercise, we could pave the streets of this little city with gold and could beat the New Jerusalem story "all hollow." Shall we call a meeting of the citizens and formulate a plan? Don't let's forget this. Pin it in your hat!

The Mission of Science.

Counting centuries as the hours which go to make up the world's history, yesterday Science was born, and already the birth of this wonderful child, conceived by the intercourse of the Human Intellect with Virgin Truth, has been heralded to every nation and its gospel preached to every people.

Primitive man, like the barbarous tribes of to-day, could only receive the nourishment for body and brain that his wild and scienceless condition would permit; his shelter was a cave or a rude nest in the wood and his whole thought was to satisfy his desire for animal pleasure. Ah! wonderful change; yesterday the human being was but a naked animal, wild and rude, but to day he is thought to be but little lower than the angels.

When in the course of the upward march of evolution the great day came, the savior, which was in the beginning with all truth, entered the world of thought and took upon itself the attributes necessary to save man from his own weaknesses. Yes, the real Savior of the world has really come, but as in the stories of the saviors of old, its gospel must overcome the prejudice of ignorance and the worship of strange gods.

And this is the work that Savior Science requires of its devotees: to show that it is the true savior, that it overcomes pain, that it opens fields of pleasure the half of which has never yet been told, that it illuminates our pathway that we may read true prophecies of future victories over enemies of our race, that it puts out the fires of eternal torment, robs death of its terror and we can truly say, "O grave where is thy victory? O, death where is thy sting?"

Science with its great moral influence has brought about a great change in the religious beliefs of the highest types of civilized people. Although there is a vast number who still cling to the old exploded dogmas, the astrology and witchcraft of theology is fast being swept away by the mighty flood of truth let in by raising the gates of investigation, and a new religion is the result. For ages and ages the bards and sages have sung and prophesied of the glorious future, when all men would be brothers and poverty, misery and crime would only be known through the history of a past and gloomy age; and we who live during the closing hours of the nineteenth century can catch glimpses and hear the distant music of that glorious happy day, and bask our souls in the effulgent light that already shines for those who will but step out from the dark recesses of ancient error, into the rays of Science, the sun of truth.

And what does the great new testament, written in the rocks, and

sea and sky, and the living epistles of plant and animal forms reveal to us? What is the mission that science brings, if it is not that old forms should pass away, that progress is the law, that development to higher ideals is in accord with nature, that happier homes, truer, nobler men and women are what we should try to have faith in, that the time when all men shall be free and happy, when kindness, and love, and liberty of thought, and all that goes to make our lives worth living in this beautiful world of ours, is the heaven that we should strive for. the paradise, that if lost, is lost forever.

Our Start and Our Aim.

We trust that our friends will not lose sight of what we are trying to accomplish. At present we have no medical department, no dental department and many things we expect to teach a little later is not yet possible.

All should keep this thought well in mind: that we expect to make our school embrace the whole circle of knowledge so that a student may enter at any age and fit himself or herself for any honorable occupation or profession, and we hope to send out every graduate with some practical means of gaining a livelihood as well as possessing theoretical knowledge.

The work has been begun in the most practical manner. It was not desirable nor would it have been possible, without great financial strength, to have started this work at the top, that is, to have started with the English university idea and afterwards have added the preparatory work. Now with proper management and support, our school will grow not only to include all the professions, but an industrial department, so that no matter what sphere in life one is fitted for he or she may find ample opportunity to prepare for life's grand work.

Let us make what we have started a success and others, seeing our good works, will co-operate with us and make our university another great victory for freedom of thought.

Governed by The Dead.

The whole world has made, and is making a great mistake by taking the opinions of men who are dead, as sacred, as authority or as of more weight than the ideas of those now living. The words of all men should be carefully weighed and our best judgement used in rejecting the wrong, selecting the right and applying their good thoughts to our lives, thus rapidly advancing to a higher state of civilization and happiness. We often quote the sayings of dead men and this is perfectly right especially those words which we believe

express true principles but all men are and always have been fallible and we should be on our guard lest we fall into the old way of making gods of men after they are dead.

If the world could be governed by the living, influenced of course by the good of those who have lived before us, it would be far in advance of what it is to-day, but the world is practically governed by the dead.

In some countries dead kings reach back and point out the present rulers; a man's wealth with all its power is given to whomsoever the dead, through a legal document called a will, may determine; a large class of people believe that their dead friends are all about them and thus completely give them control of their lives; others believe that somewhere up in the sky their dead friends are watching them and thus loose sight of their friends here on earth. Nearly all of religion is made up of the sayings of the "old dead past" and in this the greatest—the freest nation under the sun, men are still willing and obedient servants of a man who died Nineteen Centuries ago.

When this frenzy to be governed by the dead, ceases, and men look at past centuries as the steps by which we have ascended to our present height, then and not till then will we take a most wonderful step toward the mountain peaks of a most glorious existence.

The men and women of to-day, who have profited both by the triumphs and mistakes of the past should be allowed to govern this world and we should do as the man Jesus is said to have said, "Let the dead bury their dead." Then let us draw our inspiration for our work from each other, from live men and women of to-day and although we should revere and keep alive the words and works of our ancestors we should always be governed by the living present and not by the old dead past.

Our Home and Our Work.

We are well satisfied that we could have found no better state than Oregon nor a better locality than Silverton in which to start our great work.

There are many people, and good people too, who do not yet comprehend the magnitude nor the importance of this great educational undertaking.

The following taken from the Standard dictionary shows that our idea is in accord with modern thought:

"A modern University is not merely an institution for imparting special kinds of knowledge for professional purposes; it has also the function of advancing knowledge generally and facilitating its acquirements by students whose aims are purely scientific."

There are but very few really