

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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J. E. Hosmer, Editor
P. W. Geer, Manager

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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, SEPT. 16, E. M. 297

At Chemawa.

One evening last week we accepted a kind invitation from our Liberal brother, Mr. F. J. Beaty, and made his locality a visit.

We found Mr. Beaty getting ready to build a new house, his former residence having burned down about four years ago, compelling him to live in a small building that was spared by the flames. After being treated to some delicious fruit and a good, hearty supper we went to the hop yard belonging to Mrs. Beaty's father, Mr. Pugh, where we were advertised for a lecture and concert. After building a bonfire Miss DePeatt, Mrs. Hosmer, Mr. Geer and the writer ascended the throne, a large farm wagon, which had been fixed for the purpose, and for about two hours gave an entertainment of songs, recitations, guitar music, etc., and expounded our ideas of Secularism to a promiscuous audience of hop-pickers. Some were much pleased and applauded, others were sad and some seemed to have the old 17th-century spirit of persecution aroused. One sister made the X mark while the lecture was in progress that the speaker "ought to be knocked off the wagon." We were informed afterward that the lady is an Adventist and it is somewhat surprising to hear such an expression of intolerance from one whose sect is bearing such persecution, even imprisonment and criminal servitude. We are sure that we uttered not a word that we are not thoroughly convinced is true, and even now after her expression of assault upon our person, we have no evil feelings toward the sister that would lead us to wish to injure her or destroy her religion except by the use of reason. We had

the pleasure of being introduced to the superintendent of the National Indian School. We are pained to learn that he is a Christian and that Protestantism is taught in the school. It seems too bad that the poor Indian boys and girls are taught this degrading superstition, which leaves their minds in as bad condition as did their old Indian traditions; and when we think that just a few miles from here is another public Indian school where Catholicism is taught it makes us sad indeed. These Indians from the different schools must meet and if they are intelligent they must see that there is a great difference between Catholicism and Protestantism, and this with their natural tendency away from civilization must, and does, ruin many of our poor brothers and sisters, the native Americans. The worst of it is that this treatment makes many of them hypocrites and then they are despised by the very men who help make them so. This isn't all; it is a downright steal and damnable fraud to tax the thousands of people who do not believe in teaching such trash to support schools and pay teachers to teach these old heathenish myths. What are we going to do about it? We are going to stop it!

Quite a number of the Indian students were present and took the TORCHES we distributed and we believe that the seed thus sown will bring forth good fruit. After the lecture was over and the offering for the cause taken we shook hands with a number of new-found friends and with many good wishes turned our faces toward Silverton, the home of many Secularists and but few fanatics. The ride was delightful for it was a lovely evening and with the feeling that we had made another successful battle against ignorance, superstition and fear we glided home in the moonlight singing our Secular songs, studying the beautiful stars and wondering how men can still grope about in the dark caves of old religions when a little thought and investigation would bring them out into the beautiful, inspiring light of modern science.

Valuable Addition.

This week has been an eventful one in the history of our University for we have been able to secure some very fine additions to our paraphernalia. First, we have secured what good authorities claim to be the best skeleton in the state and no one who has not had experience in this work can estimate the value of a good skeleton in teaching anatomy, physiology and hygiene. Then we have secured a full set of Chambers' encyclopedia, a full set of medical encyclopedia and about thirty other volumes of valuable books for the library. Add to this an elegant secretary for the president's office, a fine magneto-electric machine, a stethoscope and a number of natural history specimens and it seems that our work is indeed progressing.

Our Success Certain.

Heretofore Liberals have not been able to have permanent working organizations because there have been two antagonistic elements that have tried to work together. One of these elements cannot organize even if alone because its members are anarchistic or individualistic, many of them not even believing in the organizations we call homes. It is impossible for such to organize because they have no definite ideas on the great questions of the day but are governed by their immediate caprices. This renegade element has always ruined every work that the Secularists have tried to do because Secularists have not understood just what has been the matter; but now Liberals who have ideas in common concerning the main questions involved in saving the world from the evils of ignorance, superstition and fear, begin to understand the conditions and reasons of their oft-repeated failures. "Knowledge is power" in this work as well as in everything else. In Silverton and vicinity we have a large number of people who understand the situation and this is why we are succeeding in spite of the whims, contentions and lies of the narrow-minded. We hope that our friends everywhere will understand that this kind of organized Free-thought work is a new departure and that in this constructive work we will be obliged to meet the usual opposition that is always forthcoming from those, who, like the dog in the manger, will do nothing themselves nor let others, if they can help it. We ask all Freethinkers to be sure and remember that our work is now in such shape that it cannot be defeated even if some of our boldest enemies are willing to criminate themselves in order to defeat what they must know to be right.

Some of the questions a Secularist should ask himself when growled at by one of these selfish, good-for-nothing, tear-down-everything dogs-in-the-manger, are: What has this growler done for the cause, and what is he now doing? Are there any selfish or vindictive motives for his growling? Is this growler's mode of living in opposition to the Ethical Basis of the O. S. S. U? Have those whom he growls about as good a standing in the community in which they have lived as he? Is what he is growling the truth or is it a lie?

We have written this because we do not wish our friends to be misled into thinking that the evil reports which two or three growlers are trying to circulate are true and we hope that everyone interested will learn the facts and help us to correct these falsehoods as far as we can; for the success of our work depends very largely upon our friends

and if our friends are misled and hesitate, just at the outset when we need help most, our work will be greatly retarded. We are very much encouraged now for a number of our friends here are coming to our aid financially; Secular families are moving into Silverton on account of the University and we have been able to purchase a very fine collection of books for the library, scientific apparatus and a very essential piece of furniture for the building as soon as it is ready. Now a long pull, a strong pull and a pull altogether, and this beautiful, golden land of the setting sun will witness the unfolding of another bud of our glorious Western civilization.

Independence.

The following foolishness was clipped from the editorial page of the Signs of the Times:

"The feeling of independence is inherent in human nature. The first declaration of independence against God was made by Lucifer, in the courts of heaven, and next, at his instigation, by man in the Garden of Eden, when he set about to make himself equal to God, and thus independent of his authority. The first marked feature to manifest itself in the infant is to have its own way; and unless this disposition is checked, it grows stronger with years until even in early youth he declares his determination to have his own way, regardless of what anybody else may say or think."

The feeling of independence is, by right ought to be, and of necessity must be, inherent in all intelligent beings that survive for any great length of time. We do hate to call a brother editor a liar, and we are not going to, but we wish to ask our intelligent readers what is the most appropriate name to give a man who says, "the first declaration of independence against God was made by Lucifer in the courts of heaven, etc., etc.?" We are willing to wager our life that the writer of those foolish words don't know that there is a God, a Lucifer, a court of heaven, or a Garden of Eden, and yet he says, just as though he knew all about it, that "THE FIRST DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AGAINST GOD WAS MADE BY LUCIFER." What ought we to call a man who will make such idiotic statements as these?

But just the mere statement is not the greatest evil of this species of twaddle, which may be found in all Christian papers. The great injury that is done is the teaching that independence of thought and action should be crushed out of the children, and the reason that the Christian leaders want to make dependent idiots out of the people originates in the desire to use them for building up their unreasonable churches and schools of "faith." As no human being has any knowledge of a God, "independence of God" is