

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

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We Advance

Our school opens again this week, and we are so very busy that we scarcely have time to write editorials. No one can imagine with what interest our little band looks forward to the coming year's campaign. Everything seems in our favor. We have secured another building, which is just what we need for our present work. It gives us two more study rooms and three fine recitation rooms. This, with the Liberal Hall for the music work, society, entertainments, reading room, etc., gives us a great advantage over last year. Then, some of us boys are talking of fitting up the dining hall for a gymnasium, as we have concluded to remain in our present quarters, there being ample room, when we move the printing outfit into an office nearer the school. In this way we will be prepared to exercise our bodies and minds this winter to good advantage. And now if we have friends enough to give us the much needed support, financial and otherwise, we will deal old Ignorance a blow that will make him stagger.

Our Sunday School.

We wish that our Liberal friends everywhere could have had an eye in Liberal Hall last Sunday, and have seen the work of our splendid Secular Sunday school; and how we wish that there were enough Secular teachers to establish one equally as good in every city and town in the United States. But we must be patient, and do what we can, and when these young people are educated in the work Secular Sunday schools will multiply much more rapidly. Above

all things, we must teach in our schools the purest kind of morality, so that these students, when prepared to do the scientific part of the work, will be fit examples for the young.

It would be well for our teachers to supplement the lessons given in the Little Candle each week by stories and conversation illustrating some moral truth which will impress on the young peoples' minds the great principles of right living; for we must not make the same mistake that the orthodox people have, and think that if the young people only confess and believe that that makes them whole. Little by little in their every day conversation they learn to be true men and women, or to be deceitful, cruel and corrupt.

"Don't be Frightened."

"Many in Christian citizenship can be frightened who cannot be fooled, and many fooled who never frighten. We need more patriotic Christians who are too well informed not to know their rights under the law, and their grave responsibilities; too courageous to be turned aside by threats of boycott in business, or of personal violence, and too earnest and consecrated to compromise with sin at a single point. We are not to strive to be ultra radical, but to be wholly right. And in the righteousness of God let us have unwavering faith and add to it an unswerving loyalty."—Keystone Endeavorer.

A few verbal changes in this exhortation would much improve it, and make it servicable for Secularist's encouragement, many of whom stand as much in need of moral backbone as do any whiffle-whaffling Christians. How will this do, wabbling Secularists?

Many in Secular citizenship can be frightened who cannot be fooled, and many fooled who never frighten. We need more patriotic Secularists who are too well informed not to know their rights under the constitution, too self-respecting not to insist upon them under the law, and too honorable not to know and fulfill their natural responsibilities to everybody; who are too courageous to be sidetracked by bigotry or bulldozed by hypocrites; too sensible to halt at the half-way house of "liberal Christianity," and too conservative of knowledge to sell it for rags and pottage; too earnest and straightforward to compromise with superstition at any point, and too American to yield an inch of our blood-bought soil, or give the protection of our battle-rent flag, to the thieving cutthroats from over the sea, or the slavish worshippers of a man-god, who is prisoner in his government-confiscated palace at Rome. We should strive to be as radical as truth and as persistent

as fact; to be exactly right and strike wrong with all our might; to give Yankee rum, Holland gin, German beer, British ale, Irish whisky, and Christian wine no quarter. But in the righteousness of reason, the fidelity of soberness, let us think freely, deal justly, love wisely, and leave the gods to look out for themselves, by being loyal and helpful to mankind.

JOHN PRESCOTT GUILD.

The Licensed Preacher.

By Rev. Old Mortality

My little ones, circumstances force me to forego my usual inimitable, interesting sermon, but when you have learned of the things that circumstances have recently brought into existence, you will no doubt rejoice as I rejoice. I have lately received a very threatening epistle from a redhot gentleman who is now going into cold storage. I will read it to you:

REV. OLD MORTALITY. Sir: I write you this in order to apprise you that after being humbugged by you for nearly forty-seven years, my eyes have now opened to your schemes. During these many years you have taken my hard-earned dollars, and in return you have given me naught but J-wish fables, selected from the most questionable book that ever emanated from the develish brain of man. Now, sir, to the important object of this letter. In looking over my ledger, I find that I have paid you \$2,393.67. For what? For telling me about a god and a heaven, a devil and a hell; and a Jesus Christ and his silly plan of salvation, which, sir, you do not believe. As for God, Jesus Christ, the Devil and hell, you can know no more about them than a newly born babe. This being the case, I look upon you as a conniving swindler, who has taken my hard-earned dollars by false pretenses. And now, sir, unless you produce proof of the existence of God, heaven, the devil, and also locate his hell, I will, inside of thirty days, bring suit against you for the recovery of \$2,393.67; unless you see fit to immediately refund that amount, which you have taken from me during the many years I was under your persuasive influences. Your poor victim,

ELI EMERSON.

My little dears, when I had read this threatening letter, I was nigh distracted with grief. For I know naught of this god I talked so very glibly about, and I acknowledge that I know no more about the devil and his hell than a newly born babe. As for Jesus Christ, there is no proof whatever that such a character ever existed, except in the brains of the writers of the new testament, and who these men were is not known, even unto this day. Kersey Graves, in his work on gods and saviors, tells us that we have had sixteen crucified saviors, and forty-two men and women who called themselves the sons and daughters of God. All of these personages died violent deaths, and all were schemers, whose work was to ogle a living out of the ignor-

ant and superstitious, who are at all times and in all places so ready and anxious to be hoodwinked out of their reason and their cash. I knew full well that I was quite unable to give our dear brother, Eli Emerson, the proof he desired, and to refund the money I have taken from him by false pretenses was quite out of the question, as no preacher of respectability is expected to give; no, no. "Take all you can get and keep all you have," is our motto, and how can I be expected to violate this old-time law of our church? Hence I was nigh distracted, and for six days and seven nights I could neither eat nor sleep. I finally telegraphed Rev. Mrs. Roxey Jane Mortality, who was over on the Wetwater creek, visiting the rich widow, Mrs. Helen Fishfin, for the purpose of ogling her into making over her property to our tabernacle, ere she became an angel. (Sister Fishfin was quite sick of a fever.) When Rev. Mrs. Roxey Jane had perused this threatening epistle she meditated for a moment, and then hastily withdrew from my presence. The following day she returned and informed me that we had entered into partnership with Brother Emerson, had given him \$650, and he had immediately taken passage for the Klondike. She then handed me Bro. Emerson's receipt in full for \$2,393.67.

My little ones, so much pleased was I at this unlooked for redemption, that I cried for joy, and then wound up by acting the fool. I kissed her; yes, I kissed Roxey because she got me out of it so very cheaply. I have since learned that Bro. Emerson had been reading several Liberal papers and magazines, in which he made the discovery that we sky pilots were a parcel of religious bunco steerers, who live solely on the gullibleness of the world at large. It also appears that his lawyer advised him to bring suit against me for the recovery of the amount set forth in his threatening letter. Little ones, keep this story from your parents, for should they learn of it, they too might want to go to the Klondike. We now have all the partners we care for at present, in that far off God-forsaken land of cold storage.

On Friday evening I learned that Sister Fishfin had willed all of her money and vast domains to our tabernacle. Her heirs are out of it. She was a proud and vain woman, and told Roxey that she was afraid that Abraham would notice the unsightly protuberance on the left side of her nose, and not admit her to his bosom. But Roxey assured her that St. Peter would meet her at the pearly gates with a stick of heavenly lunar costic and remove the unsightly object in the twinkling of an eye, and ever after she would be a favorite belle with all the old bachelor and young mar-