

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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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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The Ninth Psalm.

To the Freethinkers called Secularists.

We'll praise the good in human kind;
Let heathen praise their god;
We'll show forth works of hand and mind,
For man's the highest that we find
Above the beast and clod.

The thoughtless enemies of our race
Are praising, frantic fashion,
Three spooks, each serving in his place
A heathen myth, shown on its face,
No "body, parts nor passion".

There foes who cling to dying past
Will lose their whole life's work;
Their false memorials will not last;
But honest minds, evolving fast,
Will not their duty shirk.

As long as man can be called man,
His mind will be enduring;
And Freethought science, in the van,
Will torch of reason ever fan;
Give judgments most assuring.

Our refuge, then, in health or pain,
Our stay in sin's oppression;
When trouble every hope has slain,
E'en when cold death has proved its claim,
Is love of man's progression.

We trust in good and not in gods,
The good we'll not forsake;
No matter what the present odds,
Our work will bud like Aaron's rod
And bloom for others' sake.

While others praise a mystic king,
The cause of man's privation,
While, mouth agape, they pray and sing,
The old, imaginary thing
Does nought for man's salvation.

But heathen thoughts are sinking fast
Before enlightened people,
And those who've dug the pit, at last
Will sink into the heathen past,
And brazen bells in steeple,

Will all give way to electric bells,
In schools of art and science;
And when each school its story tells
They'll ring, for myths, their funeral knells
In happy, glad defiance.

Ye gods are known and all your priests,
Your judgments mixed with evils;
And now 'tis time your folly ceased!
Be off to hell, which you have pleased
To make for us poor devils.

The needy we will not forget;
The priest-robbed of our nation
Shall not forever, birth regret;
Arise, our standard must be set!
Give priests their own damnation.

When killed all fear, except of wrong,
Man takes to right more kindly,
Then men are men and not a throng;
But when afraid they grope along,
And follow phantoms blindly.

Theories, Old and New.

It would be impossible for us in one short editorial to mention all the theories that have been advanced in reference to the great questions that affect us and which when solved lead us up to a higher and nobler civilization. There have been, however, a few great, leading questions which we can mention that have affected us — which are affecting us and which will affect us throughout a long future. Among these few great, leading questions are the questions, who has the right to govern the people in temporal things, where did the earth and its inhabitants come from, and what is our destiny?

It might appear that in selecting these questions we did so without reference to any analogy or relation which they bear to one another, but for the very reason that they, in their relations, have been the three great strings by which the world has, for centuries, been held, is our reason for choosing them. Please do not forget what they are—Who has the right to govern us in temporal affairs; where did the earth and its inhabitants come from, and what is our destiny?

The question, who has a right to govern us, was answered at first by force — by the idea that might makes right, and powerful chiefs arose and people obeyed them. The question, where did the earth and its inhabitants come from, was answered by priests under the names of medicine men, seers, prophets, etc., who claimed that gods, beings like we are, only very much stronger, made all things, and the question, what is our destiny, was answered by these priests, and, upheld by the chiefs, they forced, coaxed and frightened people into believing that there is a place beyond the stars where those who did as this precious pair, the chief and the priest, told them to, would go and be oh, so happy.

Finally, after humanity had developed a little more, the mighty chief could not hold his position by his own strength alone. Others, somewhat weaker, would combine against him, but the power of the priest was so great that his help was called for and first, as last, it was not refused. Thus the divine right of kings as well as the divine leadership of the priests was established and long held sway. Those who have read history know what it has done for the world — this divine right of kings. The story of France, and of England's bloody wars are tales of horror that will not soon be forgotten.

These two, priest and king, sometimes under these names and sometimes under other names, have

long ruled the people. They have been opposed, bitterly opposed, by the most intelligent men, by Heretics, Skeptics, Freethinkers, Secularists, Scientists and Philosophers, but people have not known how to answer the last two and kindred questions, i. e., where did we come from, and where are we going, and the priests have declared up and down through the world that they know. There are those today who have been taught by the priests until, like parrots, they declare that they know there is a god, and, like parrots, they do not realize what lies they are telling.

If it had not been for the priests, the king's power would have been wiped out long ago; but the priests and medicine men of all tribes and nations have told such beastly witch and ghost stories that they have kept the poor, ignorant world in subjection. We have hardly dared to peek out from under the bedclothes of the church for fear of seeing some spook.

It is amusing and instructive to read the different answers that priests have given to their people. Glooskap is the divine being of the legends of the Northeastern Indian tribes. A Penobscot woman said: "Glooskap gave names to everything. He made men and gave them life, and made the winds to make the waters move. The turtle was his uncle, the mink his adopted son, and the woodchuck his grandmother. The beaver built a great dam and Glooskap turned it away and killed the beaver. At Moose-tchick he killed a moose; the bones may be seen at Bar Harbor. He threw the entrails of the moose across the bay to his dogs, and they too may be seen there to this day, as I myself have seen them; and there too in the rock is the prints of his bow and arrow."

Isn't it sad that these poor people believe such lies, instead of learning the beautiful and beneficial lessons of science? There is much work for us all to do. "Let us then be up and doing."

Yes, there is much for us all to do and we need not hunt up an Indian village. There is plenty in our own homes. But our work must be broader. We can reach a wider field with the printing press, Secular Sunday schools, churches, and Liberal Universities. We must send the glad tidings all over the world for all priests in all countries have had similar stories to tell, and have taught it to us while we were young but now, in America, the new theories of science are taking possession of the minds of the people and the king is not known. To be sure we have money kings but kingcraft received a heavy blow when Georgie used his little hatchet on the Redcoats. Who should rule us in temporal things? A Catholic priest told me not long ago that

our government could not stand. "A kingdom," said he "is more stable." This is only one mistake of many. We say the PEOPLE should rule and some day they WILL rule. We who oppose the priests, say that the matter of which the universe is composed, as far as we know, is eternal and no creator is known. They say, that the elements of which all things are composed was made, but they neglect to tell us who made the maker. Some claim that he always was, but this is a statement without the least foundation, and does not appeal to any reasonable mind but must be believed without reason. Dear reader, we should not cling, nor by our silence permit to live, the old ideas that we ought to be governed instead of governing ourselves, that we were created and have degenerated, and that as individuals, a few of our race are to enjoy a tinsel heaven, instead of the grand idea of the upward march of the human race toward a state of high perfectability and happiness.

At The House of God.

There being no lecture in Liberal Hall, Sunday evening, we made God another visit at his Methodist home in this city. His self-chosen representative was more Secular than the average, and with but few exceptions our thoughts, as our brother talked, were pleasant ones. Although the audience was not very large, and a good share of it infidel, still cries and groans of amen from the sanctified were not lacking whenever anything mysterious was mentioned in the preacher's prayer. The music was very good, there being in addition to the singers and organ, a "fiddle." We could not help thinking how rapidly even the Methodist church has evolved to make use of an instrument that was thought to have the Devil in it only a short time ago. The minister seemed to be in earnest, and his well prepared sermon was not one calculated to drive away the skeptical or to offend the most devout. In the bible reading, the story of Christ's attempt to get followers occurred, and the passage which represents Christ telling a young man who wanted to bury his father to "let the dead bury their dead" made us think of a similar saying from a man in the state of Washington. A young man who recently committed murder was hanged according to the law of that state, and his father when asked a place on his farm for his son's burial, remarked that the butchers could take care of their own meat. But perhaps this cruel speech was worse than the one Jesus spake, when we consider that Christ and the other people of his time, comparatively speaking, were ignorant heathen, without the fine sense of decency that