

Torch of Reason

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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.

THURSDAY, FEB. 24, E. M. 298

The Tenth Psalm.

To the Freethinkers called Secularists.

Why standest afar, always waiting for others;
Or hidest thyself, as the old heathen god?
The wicked in pride doeth persecute brothers;
Then help us to break the old iron rod.
The priest and the king of their powers still boast;
Indulgences sold for dishonor and shame,
Not the good that's in man, but they worship a ghost
And think not of good, but only of gain.
The honest of thought are wounded and sore
From the unequal battle 'gainst priest-craft and greed;
And the proud and the lofty would close every door,
And laugh as humanity suffering plead.
Their mouths are all full of craft and deceit,
Mischievous vanity from theologies' school.
In secret they murder every honest conceit,
And make of their victim a lackey and tool.
Like a lion or tiger they wait for their prey,
Or as well woven nets, become "fishers of men";
They pretend to be righteous, but only for pay,
And at heart are far worse than nine out of ten.
They think as they've fooled us in dark ages past
That forever we'll bow to their follies and lies;
But lift up your heads, ye humble, at last,
For the great sun of truth will surely arise.
Then let us cast off every presumptuous bother,
And require of our fellows the pledges of right;
Let us be to each other "a kind, loving father"
And hunt to the death the angels of night.
When the people are kings forever and ever,
The heathen no longer will worship their lords,
But the good must be strong and all join together
To loose from her limbs fair Liberty's cords.

The Modern Infidel.

Waco, Texas, seems to be the home of several species of the genus homo sometimes called in-fidels. There the editor of the Independent Pulpit, Mr. Shaw, resides. Then, there is the Iconoclast, edited by Mr. Bran, the idol, and ideal, ~~smasher~~. Then again, Armstrong's Autonomist is edited in that wonderful city of cranks, and it is to an article headed, "The Modern Infidel," found in the last mentioned monthly, to which we wish to call the attention of our readers. Here it is:

"I find the modern Infidel for the most part, as inconsistent, as absurd and as bigoted as the old orthodox. And right here I wish to give Macdonald, of the New York Truthseeker, a small sized conundrum.

"I am now writing with a Remington. Suppose that as I write a page I tear it up; and continue to write pages every day and tear them up? After awhile there would arise a suspicion in Macdonald's mind that I was insane—that I had a manomania for typewriting. Why? Because I labored without a sensible purpose.

"Now let us suppose that a life is made up of seventy years. Let us call each year a page, which we lay aside until we have accumulated seventy pages. According to Macdonald, upon the completion of the last page Death will set fire to them all, and that will be the last of them.

"Now, I want him to show me syllogistically and without any long-winded peroration, of which the materialist is full, how it is that the man who lives out the seventy years is not just as crazy as the man who has a mania for typewriting.

"Admitting that there is nothing in religion and something in science, there is still more in the nothingness of religion than in the somethingness of science. Science proclaims the ultimate death of the universe, as it is. Religion proclaims the soul's immortality. Common sense proclaims pleasure as the object of all existence. It may be that I find pleasure in writing a page to tear it up, but that is foolish. Hence if the soul is not immortal, men who live for the pleasure of writing the seventy pages of their lives are foolish. Sanity is, therefore, not possible except on the basis of immortality. The soul must survive the 'wreck of matter and ruin of worlds', or we are the monomaniacs of time. The scientist therefore, to be consistent, to be scientific, must admit the immortality of the soul; and yet, the moment he admits it he is unscientific, because it cannot be proven.

"If life ends in death, and death is nothingness, then life is a cause without an effect, which is again unscientific. It is impossible to escape the idealism of Berkley, or the pessimism of Schopenhauer. To maintain a reputation for sanity I prefer the Englishman to the German. Let me hear from Macdonald."

The absurdity of the above article shows us plainly what we have been advocating all along, that there are Infidels and Infidels, i. e., that the word infidel is very broad,

and it proves again that the Oregon State Secular Union in adopting a basis did a very wise thing. Secularists, real, true Secularists, can work together in an organization, but not all infidels can, and the different factions of Infidelity are as far apart as the most orthodox orthodox are from the most Infidel Infidels.

But let us examine Mr. Armstrong's article. The title, "The Modern Infidel," shows a great lack of judgment, for there are many kinds of modern Infidels, and the reader would be led to think only of the one kind mentioned and forget the class to which Mr. Armstrong belongs and the other classes. Mr. Macdonald, of the Truthseeker, is chosen as the type. Why? Is it because he best serves as a scapegoat for the sins of Mr. Armstrong's "insane" brethren? Notice the comparison between living, and writing on the Remington. An Infidel or the most superstitious Christian who labors without "a SENSIBLE purpose" might be considered insane, but the Infidel, known as Mr. Armstrong, should know that not all Infidels thus labor.

We do not know who has informed him that the editor of the Truthseeker is laboring without a sensible purpose, but one who is easily convinced that sanity is not possible except on the basis of immortality can easily be convinced that science and common sense are insanity. Mr. Macdonald may not have a sensible purpose in living, but Infidels can have one which is far more sensible than the selfish, unscientific, absurd, unprovable doctrine of immortality. What more sensible purpose for living can be thought of than to so live and work that there may be, throughout long future generations, men, women, youths and little children healthier, happier and better in many ways on account of our having lived and labored? This can be and by right ought to be one of the sensible purposes of sensible people. It is the ideal purpose of an ideal god. It is an immortality that is reasonable, scientific and productive of happiness.

It is not always foolish to "write a page and then tear it up," as Mr. Armstrong says. If by writing a page we learn to write the next one better, how "sensible" a thing it is to write it, even if it is torn up; and so it is with our years of life. If we so live this year that we may do more good next year, our years are not wasted, and death does not end ALL, for our good works will live and live on and on, even though we are gone. Our life is like a book. Let us write the best one we can and others will read and receive a "sensible purpose" for living when the author is asleep.

No one is more insane than he who thinks that to believe a false-

hood is for the benefit of humanity, and our statement that sanity is, therefore, not possible excepting on some more reasonable basis than that of immortality, is worth at least as much as Mr. Armstrong's opposite statement. To say, as he does, that the scientific must be unscientific is indeed one of the cap sheaves of a shock of absurdities, and the other is found when we read his statement that "if life ends in death, and death is nothingness, then life is a cause without an effect". If a river should dry up would it have been a cause without an effect? Life is the effect of many causes and the cause of many effects, even if death does end the individual life, and no one knows this better or realizes its importance more than the Materialist. Yes, let us hear from Brother Macdonald.

Give Your Thoughts to the World.

There are many men who have great thoughts, but who, on account of some false modesty or lack of self-esteem, keep their "light under a bushel". Don't do it, Secularists. Your best thoughts are valuable. Jot them down as best you can and send them to the TORCH OF REASON. We need them. They will encourage others and perhaps do much good throughout a long future.

In the Big City.

Last Thursday, after bidding our students and teachers goodbye and promising them some candy on our return, we started for the great metropolis of this great state. Arriving in Portland, the business manager started at once for Vancouver, where old and new friends entertained him royally, and where he secured some new subscribers and another student for the University.

We spent a very pleasant evening at the home of Mr. C. Beal, who is now in Central America, and we were entertained as only a good grandma Secularist and her polite and intellectual grandchildren know how to entertain their friends. We hope in the near future to have these workers with us in Silverton. Mr. Ernest Bailey's home was another bright spot in the desert of orthodoxy and greed, and the hours flitted by with plans, suggestions and reviews of our work for humanity.

After seeing many oldtime Liberal friends, getting a number of new subscribers for our TORCH, some fine books for the library, receiving promises of \$100.00 for the University from our friends, Mr. Harry Fricker and Mr. D. Bolton, and laying in a small stock of printing material, we started home, refreshed and ready again to take up the pen and the pedagogical