

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

Published Weekly by the Liberal University Company, in the Interests of Constructive, Moral Secularism.

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Entered at the postoffice at Silverton, Oregon, as second-class mail matter.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

One year, in advance.....	\$1 00
Six months, in advance.....	56
Three months, in advance.....	25
In clubs of five or more, one year, in advance.....	75

Money should be sent by registered letter or money order.

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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, MARCH 3, E. M. 298

The Eleventh Psalm.

To the Freethinkers called Secularists.

If in a god we'd put our trust,
To build for truth, we'd surely "bust";
For David, drinking of that fountain,
Felt like fleeing to the mountain.

And though the wicked bend their bow
To spoil our work, we'll beat the foe;
For Freedom's sons, from science schools,
Begin to see that gods are tools

With which the priests have held us long,
To fool the weak, to force the strong.
They've tried the righteous long enough;
Their brimstone stories make men tough.

And now, dear people, turn your face:
Let's build for truth; god lies debase,
When they have fled to land of souls,
We'll make all (d)evils hunt their holes.

The Christ.

Who is, and who by right ought to be, the Christ, the anointed king, if not the people? The old-time religion of the Jews required the sacrifice of sheep and oxen, and it is claimed by the later Christians that this was only typical of the great sacrifice of Jesus, who was to save the world. And now we who have been redeemed from these old religions, and have grasped the great Secular thought, can see that all the stories of the sacrifices, teachings, crucifixion and ascension of the mystical Christ are most useful when used as types of the sacrifices, sufferings, teachings, crucifixions and ascensions of mankind in our progress toward higher modes of thought and action—toward happier conditions here.

The old religion, with its idea of vindictive punishment in hell and its gaudy prize of heaven to those who could believe, has taken from humanity, man's love and adoration which it deserves and which would have elevated our race long before this to a civilization that cannot be known or appreciated by those of this generation. We do not believe

in looking to Jesus. Look at that little child. Should he not call forth all the better emotions of our being? Look at that young man with youth's bright hopes. Think of his temptations, his victories and his defeats. Look at that father and mother. Watch their struggles to bring up their little ones in the way they should go. Talk about the sacrifice of a god—the blood of Jesus! Think of the blood and bone and muscle and mental force that is being sacrificed every day all around you, and then ask yourself if the sufferings and sacrifices of Jesus amount to much. Who is and who by right ought to be the Christs, the anointed kings? The people all around us. Yes, you and I and all ought to be loved. We should all feel sorrow for the sufferings and sorrows and weaknesses of all. We should work to establish this love in all. We should be real Secularists, working for the good of this world.

Another Plan.

As time rolls along we Secularists, now that we have something to work for, will find many plans to promote the work. The friends at Wagner, Oregon, have inaugurated a good plan for helping in the great work of building the University. Perhaps their plan can no better be explained than by quoting from a letter written by Mr. Warren Carsner:

"We gave a basket ball last week for the benefit of the Liberal University, which netted nearly \$35, which I suppose you have received by this time, as I understand Carl sent you a check for the amount, which you may place to the credit of the Wagner Liberals. It is not much, but it is pretty good for these hard times and the time of year, and if the Liberals would adopt this plan all over the country we could soon build the University. It is the old orthodox plan, but good enough if it works. Some of the girls' baskets brought as high as \$5, and we would have done better if there had been more baskets. There were only about half enough to go around. We hope the Liberals all over the country will try something of this kind and see if we can't build the school this year. The Christians build costly churches in this way and the Infidels have done the most of it. So why not turn the tables on them and let them help us?"

It is certain that if there are enough true Secularists in the United States, and if we have as much business tact and loyalty as the Christians have shown in building their institutions, we will soon have one of the finest schools in America. Let each Secularist, no matter if he finds himself alone, look around him and grasp every opportunity to promote our cause with the same energy as the Christian does, and the result will surprise the world. Onward!

Help us Reach our Ideal.

Our readers have some idea of our ideal by this time, we are sure, but perhaps we haven't impressed all with all. One thought we wish to have our friends carefully think about is our idea in regard to amusements in our school. When our main building is up a good gymnasium will be in order. This gymnasium must finally contain all the games and happy, healthful exercises that we can find. A fine skating rink and dancing hall will be one of the attractive features which, of course, will only be open certain hours when the exercise will be an actual help to the students.

All these things properly managed will be a great pleasure and help, instead of a nuisance as they often are when conducted for gain. Of course fine bathing rooms will be another feature, and in time we will have a finely equipped sanitarium. This is not a dream, Secular friends, but will all be accomplished, and that very soon, if all lovers of progress will put their shoulders to the Freethought wheel and lift. Help us reach our ideal before it is too late. Let us do something worthy of our great cause, while we have life and strength. Let us sacrifice. It will make us happy.

"The time to be happy is now, and the place to be happy is here."

A Message for Moral Cowards.

Of course the reader of this sketch knows that it is not intended for him, but he should read it to see what the message is that I have been bold enough to send with such a title.

Some one has recently said, a prominent Freethinker too, I believe that there are not five hundred Freethinkers in the United States. It may be true, but there are some thirty or forty million people in these United States who can not subscribe to any of the various confessions of faith, Catholic and Protestant.

Sunday after Sunday the preachers all over the land shout this gospel of superstition into the faces of many a good "brother" who is thinking all the time, "What a fool that man is making of himself." Hundreds of these preachers are the unhappiest creatures in the world, because they are living lives of duplicity, trying to keep up the "spiritual formality", while their outraged reason and common sense constantly revolt. They are living liars, and they know it. These poor "doubting Thomases" stand up and pray their hypocritical prayers, mentally kicking themselves because they have not the courage to openly denounce a creed they no longer consider fully tenable.

In the pew, their "brothers in misery" are but little better off. For business, social or family reasons

these moral cowards live lives of self-condemnation, a life that is a greater hell than any filled with devils and brimstone. If here and there a man does resolve to no longer act the part of a liar and a policy-monger, he buys his freedom at the cost of business boycott and social ostracism, and from men just as hypocritical as he was before he gained courage to be free. It matters not what the cost may be now, position, income, friends or property, this brave man, who acts the part of honesty, and openly says what he thinks, and denounces what he considers superstitious fraud, will tell you that he would not exchange what he has gained for all he has lost. He has gained a peace of mind, such as a faith in Jesus, Buddha, or any other pseudo-savior can never bring. If he can do no better, he accepts the hardest toil for daily bread, and bears his burden of life's struggle as best he can—a hero.

How many are there of this class of heroes? I do not know, but you know some of them, and so do I. I want to say to these half-hearted, policy-mongering Freethinkers, you will some day awake to the fact that their blood is on your hands. If you were brave men, if you were even men, if you were anything but moral cowards you would take such action, lend such support and make such demands that our present priest-ridden, superstitior-blinded state of soul life would be turned into a speedy and far-reaching era of true reformation. This reformation would secure full and free religious thought. Our churches would be completely fumigated, and all the dogmatic superstition would be driven out. Then, when the smell of this wicked superstition had fully cleared away, we would gather the children there, as so many schools for moral culture. We would ring all the bells then to call the people to hear fine music, useful discourses upon practical and scientific themes. The young folks, and the old folks, too, would gather for social gayety in the house so long wasted in a consecration to an unknown god. There the entertainment would be given, and the concert, and no doubt the social dance. No more again would we hear within those walls the doleful phrase of pious hypocrisy, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

But, alas! it is not so. And it is you, you moral cowards, who allow this, the one great insanity of the race, to still linger in the human mind. It is you who allow the organizations under its name to monopolize all the positions of worth, or nearly all. It is you who permit this influence to continue its evil work in our otherwise progressive era. By your indifference only a few half-fed Freethought journals are able to keep alive, when all publications should be free from