

## 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 Thirteenth Psalm.

To the Freethinkers called Secularists.

The oppressed of kingcraft and priestcraft

Are stretching their bony hands  
For the rich and the mighty to save them,

But help is for "poor heathen lands".

How long! Wilt thou always forget them,

O wise of our mighty race?  
How long, for the love of self-interest,  
Wilt thou hidest thy guilty face?

How long shall a few holdeth council  
In weakness 'gainst the great hordes of ill?

How long shall the (d)evil be victor,  
And the world with its sorrow be filled?

Consider and hear them — the weepings  
Of poverty, want and of crime!  
To lighten the eyes of the blinded,  
Right now is surely the time.

The traitors to truth and to justice  
Rejoice at the mischief they do;  
And thou, O wise of our nation,  
Art only a few—scattered few.

But we'll trust, and we'll work with rejoicing;

We will sing of salvation on earth,  
For we know that right now evolution  
Is giving her children "new birth".

### Fairy Stories.

Some teachers recommend fairy stories for young children to read, but we think it is time children should be taught that which they will not be obliged to unlearn. It hurts the child's mind when it discovers that it has been lied to, and there are (we speak from experience) true stories, and stories that are not impossible, that will entertain, instruct and always remain a benefit to the children. Secularists, we should be careful what we fill the minds of these children with; we should teach them to hate ALL KINDS of spook and myth stories, and especially those which are apt to deceive or confuse the innocent. Most of these stories were written and taught to the children in the dark ages when men did not know

the evil effects of lying to the children; and when we come to an understanding of the effects of truth and falsehood, of confidence unbroken and trust betrayed, on the minds of the little ones, we will be a long way on the road toward solving the great problem of how to increase the retaining faculties of the human brain. Evolution will bring it, and evolution will work rapidly under favorable conditions.

### How Can we Free the Public Schools?

We attended a teachers' meeting held here on the 19th inst., and although it was above the average as far as being free from the orthodox blight is concerned, yet one who knows what every Secularist knows could not help feeling sad when he realized what the young people who come under the instruction of many of these teachers are obliged to listen to day after day until the most absurd and blighting lies are forever fixed in their defenseless brains or they are forced into the useless and damaging mental battle between truth and myth—between science and superstition—between knowledge and faith—between courage and fear. A number of these teachers are professors of religion and some of them are ministers of orthodox churches, and the following from White's Pedagogy, the book which the association is studying at present, tells the story of their work better than we can. Here is what it says:

"It is doubtless true that the most impressive forms of presenting religious sanction to the mind and heart of the young are prayer, silent or spoken, and the reverent reading of the bible, especially that present human duty in its relation to the divine will—forms still permitted in four-fifths of American schools. . . . At least three avenues are open for the introduction of religious ideas and sanction, in all our schools. These are sacred songs, the literature of Christendom, and, best of all, faithful and fearless Christian teachers, the living epistles of the truth. Against these there is no law."

No, there is no law against these living epistles of lies, and the laws we do have are disobeyed by them in their endeavors to please their Jesus. The teaching of these worse than ghost stories as gospel truths cannot be stopped, for the officers or interested parents cannot afford to stay in the school house all the time, and honor stands a poor show when it comes in contact with religious fanaticism.

Some of the teachers in their otherwise excellent speeches and papers spoke of God just as though it were a settled fact that such a being exists and it would be absurd to suppose that such teachers would not thus speak before their students in spite of the fact that some people do not want their children taught these, to them at least, foolish notions.

The only way this great evil can be eradicated from our schools, from our country and from the world, is by Secular education, and this is why we are trying to establish a university where all the branches of knowledge may be taught without the students' minds being filled with these false ideas.

Of course this important subject, as well as all leading subjects of our time that would be of the most benefit to the children if the truth in regard to them could be discovered, is carefully avoided in teachers' meetings, but we live in hopes that some time all men can discuss all important questions and settle the same without prejudice and without political or superstitious fears.

### Our Prospects.

In making our paper a semi-monthly it might appear to some of our friends a sign of weakening, but it is far from it. We let go to get a better hold, and our plan is proving very successful. From the extra work we have been able to do even in this short time, new students are coming in, our financial prospects are looking up and our teachers have more time and can thus do better work. Now we will bend every effort to get our new building ready for the opening of the fall term, and we mean just what we say when we state that the prospects are very encouraging. There are some people who are near sighted and never can see anything until it is stuck right under their noses. Some who call themselves Secularists and Freethinkers will be astonished in the near future to find just what we have all been wishing for and declaring to be just the thing, already established without their having a hand in it. Of course the more progressive, as soon as they hear of our work, become much interested and begin to investigate and then to help in any way they can.

Mr. Bales, of Vancouver, Washington, has been thoroughly convinced that we mean business and that our plan contains the elements of success. The consequence is that we have in our school today a bright girl, twelve years of age, in training for the grand future work against ignorance and superstition, and the advancement of all that is good, noble and true.

Mr. Coleman, of Coburg, thinks of starting his sixteen-year-old son next Monday, so that he can finish the Preparatory Course this year and be ready for the three years Scientific Course next fall. Mr. John Diamon, of the same place, has helped us again financially. He sends us word that he is a wild Irishman and will try to come and see us next summer. We wish there were a few more "wild Irishmen"; we'd build this university in a hurry.

Two new students entered school last week, and at this writing four have entered this week. Our Y. P. S. S. C. is increasing; seven members were installed last Friday evening, and everything seems to point to a splendid success in the future. There is one thing, however, we dislike to mention, that is not in our favor; and that is, the building we occupy at present. It was not made for a school. It is a good building, and we are making the best of it, but it was made for other business, and our lease runs out next term. Now, we have an excellent nucleus, as far as the educational part is concerned, in over forty working young men and young ladies, all doing their very best for themselves and for the school. Neither is this nucleus of spontaneous growth, but it represents two years' honest endeavor and is as stable as any school in the United States.

The only question now that troubles us is the financial one. While Christians are sending millions to heathen lands, we can certainly raise enough to build one school, and we will, just as soon as the friends of progress investigate our work and find what it means. We invite every progressive thinker to become acquainted with the LIBERAL UNIVERSITY IDEA and we are sure that all will do SOMETHING to further Freethought education.

Please do not think this an ordinary newspaper plea for help. It is not. We have one of the finest school sites, one of the finest pieces of land, in one of the finest valleys in one of the best states in the greatest country under the sun. We also have a fine school started and more students coming. We can't build the building and paint it, we can't buy the seats and apparatus and fix things up the way they should be, alone. We will do all we can. "In union there is strength." Who will unite with us in this grand work of training the Freethought youths of our country, that they may free the world from its greatest curse?

### Christian Boycott.

Perhaps there has been no greater factor in the suppression of Freethought than the Christian boycott. We can hold Freethought meetings; we can publish Freethought literature; we can discover scientific truths which contradict Christian myths, but although Christians have ears, they will not hear; although they have minds, they will not understand, for they fear the disapproval of their god or their priests' displeasure. We have often wondered if an opposing boycott would not bring these misled brothers to a proper understanding of things; but we believe the more honorable way is to force the recognition of Secular truths and suppress Christian myths by Secular education. If we succeed in sending out young, energetic graduates from our school, armed with the great truths of science, being unbiased by any theological nonsense, the result will astonish the most sanguine. If we meet the Christians' dishonorable boycott with honorable scientific wisdom, it is needless to say who will be victorious.