

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.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, E. M. 298

The Fourteenth Psalm.

To the Freethinkers called Secularists.

The fools have said in their deceit there is a god. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there are but few that doeth good.

2. The progressive, right thinking people looked upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek truth and goodness.

3. All have made mistakes; they have, through false teachings, become filthy: there are many that doeth evil, yes, very many.

4. Have all the workers of hypocrisy and deceit no knowledge? Do they not understand that that which is good for all is good for the individual?

5. Belief in gods put men in great fear, and the generations that are the most religious are the most cowardly and brutal.

6. Ye have not listened to the cry of the poor and innocent, and have given them a stone when they cried for bread.—Thou hast given them lies and taken the fruits of their labor.

7. Oh, that the salvation of Secularism might come to the world! When the people listen to the voice of reason, they shall rejoice and their children shall be made glad.

A Lie.

"Thou shalt not lie," is a command which all Christians profess to obey and teach, because they think their god thus commands them. Secularists know that it is wrong to lie because it is an injury to the individual and to society — because we could have no trust, no confidence in each other, and the loss of trust, confidence, sym-

thy and harmony makes people unhappy. This doctrine was taught and practiced by ancient heathen peoples many thousands of years before the bible was written. But some way or other it is not practiced by the people of the world today as it should be. Doctors, lawyers, editors, merchants and teachers can be found by the hundreds who lie continually. We cannot pick up a newspaper without finding the most absurd lies told in its advertising columns for the sake of gain. What is the matter? Why don't people tell the truth? Is it because the class of men who have assumed to be our teachers have set us the example and thus taught the people of this generation to lie?

We have before us as we write, a Presbyterian catechism for children. It has one hundred and forty-five questions and answers and it contains about that many absolute lies. Is it any wonder that the people have wandered from fidelity when it has been the business of their teachers to make their daily bread by the science and art of lying?

Q. Who made you?
A. God.

The man or church who says that a god made us does not know it to be a fact, and when one tells that which is not known to be true, whether it be true or not, the deceiver has all the symptoms of a liar, to say the least. Read the following, taken from a page of the above-mentioned catechism, and then ask yourself, honestly, if it is any wonder that the world is still in the darkness of ignorance and falsehood:

Q. In how many persons does the one God exist?

A. In three persons.

Q. What are they?

A. The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Q. What is God?

A. God is a spirit and has not a body like men.

Q. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

Q. Can you see God?

A. No; I cannot see God, but he always sees me.

Q. Does God know all things?

A. Yes; nothing can be hid from God.

Q. Can God do all things?

A. Yes; God can do all his holy will.

Pretending to be great schools of truth, churches that teach such abominable lies are nothing but cesspools of falsehoods and superstitions. Talk about the saloons being bad! They are bad schools; there is no doubt of it, but they make no pretensions of righteousness and rob the young of their happiness without pretending to be agents of their loving father, while the church, like the sneaking robber that it is, works on the noblest traits in the youths' character in order to break down their reason and make them cringing, praying slaves, or by inducements of social and financial advantage make them cunning hypocrites. If man had not naturally been progressive — had not naturally sought the good,

the beautiful and the true, he would, ere this, have been destroyed by priests and their hellish lies, but light is coming, and the children shall be free; and the noble men and women of future generations will hold in high esteem the few who dared to make way for their freedom, who dared, for their sakes, sacrifice for a happier civilization, free from everything that "loveth and maketh a lie".

A Call to Fidelity.

Mr. August W. Dellquest, of El Paso, Texas, has made himself known to us, and we find that he is right in line with our ideas of moral, progressive Secularism. He writes to us as follows:

"I herewith send you twenty cents in stamps, for which send me as many copies of the TORCH OF REASON dated March 10th as you can. I wish to distribute that number. From the enclosed "Call to Fidelity" you can see that there is no paper that suits me better than the TORCH OF REASON.

This letter shows that Mr. Dellquest backs his principles with his actions, but the letter is not the whole story. His enclosed "Call to Fidelity", a little pamphlet of eight pages, is one of the very best articles we ever read on the subject of Secularism. We hope to be able to publish it in the TORCH, but must content ourselves this week by giving a few quotations.

"Fidelity to truth is the ethical aspect of Freethought and the Humanitarian plan of redemption. Not he who merely confesses with the mouth his love for liberty, but he who makes the best of his liberty by doing something for the advancement of truth, is the true friend of liberty. Truth—the cognition of the reality of things—is the only light, and in darkness there can be no liberty. Liberty is nothing except so far as it is an opportunity for progress. Progress is born of the power of love, and not of the weakness of indifference. Truth and love, liberty and progress constitute the quartette that sing the praise of human existence. Truth has been bought by the blood of martyrs, pain is the price of sympathy, the price of liberty is obedience, and a constant strife and struggle is the price of progress.

"Then, what is the purpose of your existence? Is it not to make your life conform to the inexorable laws of that which is most worthy of your adoration and obedience? The purpose of your existence is to so obey the eternal laws which regulate human progress, that you never cease your efforts to draw nearer to your highest ideals regardless of your own happiness. The attainment of your own happiness merely, though it may be a consequence, should not be regarded as the main aim and purpose of your existence. Life is an opportunity to be a factor in the progress of humanity, and every man fulfills the purpose of his life to the extent he practically identifies himself with the progress of that of which he is a part—humanity and nature. In other words, the purpose of ex-

istence is to do right."

"To behold the panorama of distress and suffering in the world, would, as it were, make a heart of stone vibrate with sympathy, and it would feel no peace before its sympathy was made manifest in deeds. Every step you take, every word you speak, and every cent you give in the interest of truth, is a manifestation of your sympathy for a suffering and degraded creation. Who can help respecting himself if he feels the peace of knowing that he is faithful to the cause of truth? A man's unfaithfulness to what he regards as the sacred truth causes the loss of his self-respect.

If we had less Infidels identified with our cause and more Freethinkers, and if all the Freethinkers we have were also Humanitarians, we could reasonably expect to see the advancement which ought to be made. To swear, to deny the "Jonah and the whale story", and to penuriously abstain from paying pew-rent, does not make a man a Freethinker. It is in self-sacrifice for the progress of the race in which the heroism of Freethought consists; and a man must be both a THINKER and a FREE thinker in order to be a Freethinker. He must feel free to think both outside and inside of creeds and bibles, and accept the true, the good and the beautiful everywhere."

"Freethought not only has its god, but it also has its devil, and its devil is selfishness. This devil has a following chiefly among those Liberals who are 'liberal in nothing but illiberality'. Some of these Liberals often seek to excuse themselves in their selfishness by asserting the falsehood that everybody acts from a selfish impulse. If a person should at the risk of his life save the lives of some of his fellow-men, according to these philosophers(?), only selfishness could be the cause. To them there is no difference between selfishness and self-satisfaction, nor even between selfishness and self-sacrifice. The only self-sacrifice they know of is selfishness. Aside from their selfishness their excuse rests on a mere empty play of words, for to say that self-sacrifice is only 'a more refined form of selfishness' is to unnecessarily use the term selfish with a double meaning. Not selfishness, but sympathy, is the basis of ethics."

"The world today needs a strong Freethought movement more than it ever did. To strengthen our movement we need to love progress more than self; we need to emphasize the positive side of Freethought more; we need to induce the half-hearted Liberals to subscribe for the magazines and the journals; we need to circulate reading matter among the orthodox through post-office, missions and libraries; we need to educate the young in our principles; we need to become closer united."

"Do not by inactivity make true the orthodox assertion that 'Christianity works while Infidelity only talks'. Weep not over the martyrs of the past, but honor them by co-operating with the self-sacrificing spirits of today. Their work is your work, their glory is your glory, their triumph is your triumph. The spirit of inquisition in the church is not dead, and ecclesiastical power does not slumber. The world can and must be made better."