

## 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, MAY 19, E. M. 298

### It Is Coming.

Secularism is a winning fight. It contains everything that is good. It accepts no unprovable theories or dogmas, and in its great work for humanity, its great work for the good of this world, it is sure to commend itself to all thinking people, as soon as the shouts of the salvationists have been silenced long enough, by our advancing civilization, so that good people, honest people, in the church and out of the church, will have a chance to investigate its rational plan of saving suffering humanity from its mental, moral and physical degradation.

It is simply wonderful how this idea of the religion of humanity is growing, and what a falling off from the old superstitions is taking place. In places where young people have a chance to hear anything else, the old orthodox army is receiving but very few new recruits. In fact, "good news of great joy" is spreading over the whole earth.

We are none of us born into this world to even run a chance of being burned, or of suffering, in an awful hereafter, while others are enjoying eternal bliss. No, no, we are all brothers and sisters. Let us make each other happy here as best we can. Let us throw all our might against the great wall of evil that surrounds us. Let us break down these barriers which are preventing our onward march into "a happy land" not "far, far away", but right here on this beautiful, green earth. Let us be wise. Freethinkers have made mistakes—bad mistakes; and Christians have made bad mistakes also; but somewhere between these

eternal blunders lies the glorious truth—the true philosopher's stone, whose magical touch will give us the highest and best of everything we are capable of enjoying, and continually make us more capable of enjoying that which is for our good. Some call this true Christianity. We call it Secularism, because it pertains to things of this world, and the word Christianity means so many different things to so many different people. It stands for all kinds of creeds and beliefs, from slavish Catholicism to the wild, ignorant ravings of camp-meeting converts. But no matter what we call it, it is coming. Old things have passed away and behold all things have become new.

There are seeming defeats in every battle for the right—but only SEEMING. The burning of Bruno, the persecutions of Paine and the ridicule of Darwin are none the less steps to victory than the wonderful, applauded oratory of Ingersoll or the great discoveries of Thomas Edison.

"But few men when near by have the vision to interpret things rightly. Given a perspective of a century or two, then all see correctly.

"No skipper ever sailed to a distant port in a straight line. Often at the end of a tack he is farther from his port than at the beginning; but he always has his port in mind, and every tack is an advance, whatever may be the seeming, or even the tracing in his log."

Friends, hear us: Work from a sense of duty, not from exultation and enthusiasm alone. These moods come and go. The old orthodox theories are wrong. They have done and are now doing immeasurable evil. Science, morality, progress—let these be your battle cry.

"Enlist for the war, for life, and be hopeful, whatever the seeming. Live in duty, not in enthusiasms. Edgar Poe once put it thus: 'One may go out to the mountain, but one should always come home to the valley.' As an abiding place the region of the humdrum sense of duty is far better than the mountain-top of exultation. Be faithful and energetic when the work to be done is only commonplace and there is no 'hip, hurrah' in the air.

"Be definite in your work. Don't be like the man who said he aimed at nothing and always hit it. Says Martial, 'He who is everywhere is nowhere'."

We have something definite now to work for, and if we all do our part well, what a wonderful growth of true Secular thoughts and deeds there will be. If there is no better way for you to work for the cause, place the TORCH in at least five new families in your neighborhood this month. You will thus preach Secularism to five families for one year. Let us all do something definite. Try!

### To You.

We wish to speak personally with each reader of the TORCH, as if this were a personal interview. People's minds are filled with thoughts of the war. War is about the only topic of thought and conversation. We have already felt the effect of this, and we do not hesitate to be perfectly frank in the matter. We are anxious to steadily improve in our work, and in order to do this we must increase our number of subscribers and raise enough money to finish our building. Do you think it fair to ask a few to do it all?

Dear friend, you do not know of the sacrifices which have been made to establish our school. If we could tell you how much of toil and hardship, and even suffering, has been paid as the price of the TORCH OF REASON and the Liberal University as they stand today, we believe you would roll up your sleeves and do something to help along the work at once. There are some of us who have worked hard for many, many months, without receiving a cent of wages for our labor. Can you not help a little? If you cannot furnish money, you can certainly help extend the circulation of the TORCH and thus help us find friends who can and will help. The day will come when you will be proud that you helped us. Please do not wait for others. Your help is needed now. Write us a personal letter and let us know that you will at least try to help along the most sensible plan that Freethinkers have ever undertaken. Our work is sure to be a success. You should be one to make it so.

### Who Are the Heathen?

Christian people are quite fond of referring to us "infidels" as the heathen, but we contend that we are in advance of the old heathen doctrines of the gods, and that the Christians and other superstitious worshippers of today are the only heathen in civilized countries. Most Christians worship on Sunday, and Sunday is the old heathen day on which the sun was worshipped. They worship many gods, as the heathen of old worshipped. At least they worship three—god the father, god the son and god the holy ghost. Then again, they worship and adore things that are made with men's hands. Their holy bible is nothing but a book, or books, written, compiled, printed and bound by men, yet it is held to be as sacred and holy as any heathen god of wood or stone.

Nearly all the doctrines, forms and ceremonies of the Christian churches are those of an ancient, ignorant and heathen people who believed in witches, spirits and miracles, and knew nothing about the

modern sciences or the true motive for right living.

The very central thought of Christianity, the doctrine of Christ dying to save wicked human beings, is heathenish, for the idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty is not a civilized idea, but one which could have originated only in the minds of barbarians.

Who are the heathen, the cosmopolitan philosophers, scientists, Freethinkers and Secularists, who are all working to bring about a proper respect and love for humanity and a happier condition on the earth, or the Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc., who are blindly staggering along the old "trodden paths" of credulous worship of gods and angels, of holy days and holy books, as have the heathen in all ages?

### LITTLE POINTS.

The love of truth is the beginning of wisdom: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (See Proverbs i. 7.)

As soon as a man begins to shout in religion, he may be pretty sure he is "hallooing before he is out of the woods".

When men are wronged who have done nothing to deserve it, the evil doer seeks to justify his wickedness to himself by trying all he can to calumniate the injured party; and the more difficulty he finds in doing that to his mind, the more profound is his hatred.—[Cooper.

General Booth says, "The world is growing more and more to think that it can do without God". Evidently the world is on the right track after all, that is, if Booth tells the truth; and he is a pretty shrewd observer. Anyhow, we'll take his word for this once.—[Freethinker.

The article on page 5 entitled "The War and Prayer", condemns the idea of God's answering prayers of a secular nature, but the writer forgets that this foolishness of some Christians is no more absurd than the idea that there is a god to answer any kind of prayer. The whole foundation of Christianity is a mass of suppositions:

An ingenious peace-at-any-price correspondent of the New York Evening Post sends it these clever verses on the situation. Even those who cannot sympathize with their object can appreciate their grim humor:

Lord help us in the holy task  
Of blowing out the Spaniards' brains,  
Give us the strength, we humbly ask,  
To draw the life-blood from their veins.

Their sunny islands may we take,  
Their seacoast cities shell and burn;  
Sad orphans of their children make,  
Their wives to lonely widows turn.

Guide, then, our bullets as they fly,  
That they may mangle, maim and kill,  
And give us succor from on high,  
To work thy righteous, bloody will.