

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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

J. E. Hosmer, Editor
P. W. Geer, Manager

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

One year, in advance.....	\$1 00
Six months, in advance.....	50
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.

Notice!

A pencil mark here denotes that your subscription will expire with the next number. You are earnestly requested to renew so that you may receive the paper without interruption. We have decided that it is best for all concerned that we do not send papers longer than the time paid for unless so ordered. This will prevent any loss and we will know just where we stand.

We request you to send us the names of Secularists who might become subscribers and we will mail sample copies.

THURSDAY, AUG. 4, E. M. 298

By Their Fruits.

While in Portland last week we attended the Catholic church, and the priest spoke on the same text that the Methodist minister of Taylor Street church had spoken on a few Sundays before when we were in attendance: "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Everything about this Catholic church is calculated to awaken that faculty of the mind that makes a person fanatical unless it is governed by reason. The whole background of the pulpit is composed of an imaginary picture of an imaginary god—Jesus—with a halo about his head and a sanctified expression on his imaginary features. Then there are statues of the "blessed virgin mother" with her god boy in her arms. St. Joseph, and pictures of angels, etc., etc. As the poor, deluded people come into the church, young and old bow the knee to the priest who, dressed in mysterious, costly robes, stands with his back to the audience, going through some mysterious ceremony, assisted by little boys who, mysteriously dressed, mysteriously kneel, pass the wine, change the big bible from one side of the fat priest to the other, in a most mysterious manner.

After many mysterious "false motions and mumblings, the god-man talks in English(?), and wonderful are his words indeed, so wonderfully delivered are they that they would make the members of the Y. P. S. S. C. blush with shame if they were delivered by a member of that youthful society, and especially if in the presence of company, not because of the substance, but because of the broken, hesitat-

ing, unscientific manner in which it was delivered. Some of the ideas were good, but no better than any schoolboy could have given without divine assistance.

"By their fruits ye shall know them", said the priest, and then went on to tell some of the things essential in order to be considered a good tree. Every other thing mentioned was, it seemed, designed to fool the people into submission to church ordinances. Here are most of the things mentioned, in their order:

Be good to the poor.

SUPPORT THE CHURCH.

Do not swear or use rough language.

BE FAITHFUL TO MASS.

Be temperate.

BE FAITHFUL TO CHRIST, HOLY MASS AND THE SACRAMENT.

"If you do these things," said the god man, "you are a good tree."

In urging them to come to vespers, he said it is a good thing to pray alone, but that it is a better thing to pray together. This seems contrary to the teachings of their own master, for he advocated, according to the gospel writers, the idea of praying in one's closet.

But the contribution-taking was quite a revelation to us. The box is made of hard wood, and every piece of money dropped into it makes a ringing sound that can be heard all over the house. This works excellently, for the box was not allowed to stop its money-music scarcely a second excepting when the collector paused as he came to the end of each aisle to bend the knee in humility to the priest and when he passed the poor Infidel, who has nothing to give to the gods. The collection having been taken, the most mysterious part of the ceremony began.

The priest mumbled and grunted; the people knelt and prayed; the priest looked at a little thing he held in his hand and took a drink of grog; the little queerly-robed boys knelt and changed the holy book—more mumbling and grunting—more kneeling and praying—oh, it makes one sick to think of the blank, open-mouthed wonder and superstition pictured on the faces of these poor, priest-ridden brothers and sisters.

Finally the sickening performance is over, and we arise to go, but as a clincher we find by the door little dishes of holy water, and as each member goes out he or she dips the finger into this priest-blessed (cursed) aqua pura, makes the sign of the cross and passes on.

"A change comes o'er the spirit of my dream" In the street a crowd is congregating. A man is going through mysterious motions, and, curious to know the cause of the excitement, we approach. On the ground is a small satchel, and the man is mysteriously motioning for it to come toward him. It does

not come, but he does not hesitate in his mysterious motions. He is excellent at gesturing, and with no verbal expression excepting to say in a solemn, mysterious way, "Do not laugh, please", he by his motions commands the satchel to come to him—to arise—to go to one side—to turn around, etc. He dances to one side in a mysterious way; he points to the satchel in a dramatic manner. What in the name of wonder is he trying to do?

Ah, he is drawing a crowd, and by and by, giving his hat to a small boy, he says a few mysterious words, picks up the grip and motions for the people to come. The crowd as one man, with wonder pictured on every face, closes around him. We suppose the grip contains some patent medicine cure all, or something that, when sold, will bring the man a good revenue.

How similar are the two pictures, and how they illustrate the power that wonder, hope and veneration have for evil when not under the control of the highest faculty of the human brain—reason.

Moral and Financial Support.

From a private letter from one of the wealthiest bankers in the West, we quote the following:

"Such an institution, to develop into what you anticipate, would have to have a very large moral and financial support."

This is true, and as our faith looks up to humanity instead of to a mystery, we believe that when the moral people of these United States find out that our school is being built on strictly moral lines, we will have the moral and financial support necessary to make the Liberal University the greatest in the land.

It is sure to come. Our principles are right, and no amount of opposition or neglect can possibly defeat our work. The Liberal University is a product of our advancing civilization; the very nature of things forces such an institution into existence. Like all reforms, it moves slowly at first, but it is gaining momentum every day, and when our building is completed this fall, many who are now waiting to see if it is going to be a success will need no further proof. The time is so short now before it must be ready for the opening of the fall term that the workers almost faint under the burden, but it must be ready, and so they stagger on. A few hundred dollars means very much at this stage of the work, and we hope that those who are able will not postpone their assistance.

What an immense book might be composed on all the things once believed, of which it is necessary to doubt.—Voltaire.

In Salem.

Salem is a city of churches, but Secularists don't stop for trifles, and so we entered the capital city with not only the hope, but the belief that we would find some help for our school. Soon after arriving we found that our expenses, at least for board and lodging, would cost us nothing. Thus we were, from the very outset, encouraged and went forth to find Liberal friends who could afford to be liberal.

We find that many here belong to the Unitarian church who are members because, as some of them explain, "It comes the nearest to our views of any organization in the city." Besides the help we have already shown, by the names in the different funds last week, we received many kind, encouraging words and promises of help in the near future, and we leave the capital for our own beloved Silverton, where much business and our better half patiently await us. There are many whose names were mentioned as being in sympathy with freed education and the religion of humanity, whom we could not see on account of lack of time, but with the assistance of our friends we will indirectly reach them all, and all will have an opportunity to help lift the dark cloud of ignorance and superstition that now hangs over the world, and allow the bright light of reason to energize the slumbering seeds of truth now lying dormant.

Abroad.

Several small thunder showers Saturday morning prevented us from leaving the home of Joseph Putnam until after noon. Traveling along the north fork of the John Day river for four miles, we arrived at the little town of Monument, which has grown up since my last visit to this place, five years ago. We used to ford the river, but now it is crossed by a fine iron bridge, which adds much to the convenience of travel.

Leaving the John Day valley, we followed up a small stream a short distance and then began the ascent of a range of hills which lay between me and Long creek valley. The thunder storms had not all passed over; in the west the black clouds rolled up, and in a short time I saw that I was sure to get a good wetting unless I could outrun the approaching storm. I urged the bike along at a rapid rate up the grade, with the storm close behind me. It was the first race of the kind I ever had. Behind was a terrific storm, not over two hundred yards away. Before us was a steep grade, at the top of which stood a friendly clump of trees which might afford shelter if we could only reach it. We made a dash for it. The angry cloud threw