

## 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.

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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.

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THURSDAY, DEC. 8, E. M. 298

### False and True Ideas.

Some Freethinkers seem to think that, in order to start a University, we should have two or three million dollars. There are many whose *infidelity has gone to seed*, and who have that conservative, hold-back idea that hinders our cause more, perhaps, than orthodoxy itself. While these sluggards do nothing but tear down everything, both unprogressive orthodoxy and progressive Secularism, the Liberal University, in spite of its many hindrances, is educating young people for the future work. Many who listen to these croakers do not realize what we are doing right now. Why should we wait? The time is ripe when some one should take the initiative, and it would be a long time before two or three million dollars would present itself to those who are capable of conducting such a school. The right way—the most successful way—is for an institution to commence as the Liberal University has commenced and grow into success.

Two million dollars placed in the hands of a board of trustees selected promiscuously from those who are supposed to be Secularists, would result in the money being used for salaries, buildings not yet needed, disappointment in regard to attendance, removals of teachers, dissatisfaction and, finally, the exhaustion of the money and failure. Stephen Gerard had the money, but his plan failed and his ideas of Freethought are trampled underfoot in the very institution that his money and his love for mankind established.

Everything in nature, that is

lasting, is of slow growth, and if our work here at Silverton is not too slow, it is far better than the failure that would surely come to a big "blow out" of a miscellaneous lot of people whose faith(?) only touches at a few points.

The Liberal University Company is anxious to be known of all men. Our ideas are radical; we do not try to deceive anyone, and if we can hold out until those who are naturally our friends learn the truth about our plans, we will carry on the work without interruption. If we do not get help enough we will be obliged to stop our school until we can earn money to complete our building. We hope and believe that this will not be necessary when it takes so little to finish it, and a stop would hurt us so much, but whatever be our ups and downs now in our pioneer work, the success of our institution is sure, for the world is ready and we are in earnest. Let us get into our new building next year and we will more than double our number of students, and as the expense is not much more for one hundred students than fifty and the income much larger, this will give us another push forward.

As we look out of our window and see our healthy Freethought boys and girls at their games; when we see our young men and young women enjoying themselves in the debate, the dramas, the tableaux, the charades or the social dance; when we remember the work that these students have already done in the school room, and the great change for the better already come to them, and what a great aid they soon will be to the ranks of progressive, working Secularism, it gives us courage, for it "chucks the lie into the teeth" of the croaker and the Christian bigot, who say that Infidels can never do anything.

Yes, we are doing something now, and coming years will show to the world that our work of establishing the first Freethought University was one of great importance in bringing about the then more perfect civilization.

### Disappointed, Not Discouraged.

About ten years ago we left the Congregational church. A number of years before we had been fooled into joining the ranks of orthodoxy because we were young and our judgment and reason not strong enough to detect the fallacy when the wily preacher presented to us the beauties of a Christian life. We wanted to do just what was right, but we did not understand what an awful wrong was being done us, all in the name of truth, right and a holy God. But our honesty of purpose, our growing intellect, our great desire to find the absolute truth, and our horror of being duped by letting others

think for us, led us, though young, to think, investigate, pray over our doubts, and at last doubt our prayers and everything belonging to priestcraft. Then came a period when we were alone. We were pined and prayed over by the saints, misunderstood and laughed at by the nothingites, who did not believe in our ideas of true salvation through education and moral preaching and practice. Even our better half did not understand and could not believe as we did.

Lonesome! O, how lonesome one may feel at times! But, glory! Our better half began to think! She says that when she joined the Congregational church and during the years when she was a member, she never really thought. The preacher was good and wise, and of course she supposed he knew all about it, and she never tried to think, but she at last thought. Then came a number of years of happiness with one who shares our ideas of a happier, truer religion than the old beliefs in the gods and devils, but we were ever anxious to find some way to help others find the light. Finally we heard of the Oregon State Secular Union, and our hopes arose.

Here was an opportunity to preach and teach our doctrines of freedom from superstition and our religion of right living. So, with willing sacrifice, we entered the work, but imagine our astonishment to find much wrong doing, much quarreling and confusion and much superstition in the ranks of those professing just the opposite. How disappointed we are when we think of the slavish thinking of many who claim to be Freethinkers and the filthy thinking of those who talk purity. At last the idea dawned upon us that "things are not what they seem," and that many who were taking an active part in the Secular work were only working to force upon the unsuspecting Infidels other doctrines as absurd, and some of them perhaps as injurious as the Christian dogmas. Others were working for notoriety, and others for the money that a Robert Ingersoll commands. Jealousies, backbitings and corruption in high places, nearly as bad as those in the Christian churches, paraded themselves before us until we were actually sick, but through it all we have believed and still believe that there is a bright future for the religion of Humanity. Education is what we need. We must have educated workers. We must have those workers understand what we did not understand when we entered the work. They must know the nature of the enemies, and they must have a definite plan and a definite moral standard. This is why we established the Liberal University, and this is our excuse for offering the Torch of Reason to the

world. And although some of the very parties who could and should help us most, are misled by the cries from the opposing elements, although those who were willing to take from us our labor, our time, our hard earned knowledge, our very life, and then "kick us out," are the first to cry thief against us, when in spite of their unfaithfulness we succeed in going on with the work, in spite of all, we are going on, and never felt more encouraged with our work or more able to cope with all opposing forces than we do at this writing. We will succeed! We are succeeding, and those who have so kindly helped us WILL NOT be disappointed nor see their work for educational, progressive, moral Secularism brought to naught. Our little band must be patient and labor on and know that thousands upon thousands will join our ranks when they once learn what great blessings to the whole world will swiftly follow the success of the first school of Freethought.

### A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.

The most successful thief is the one who has the appearance of innocence and he who can successfully pose as honest while in the act of robbing a victim, has a great advantage over one who makes no pretensions of honesty. Thus in the past the largest and most successful stealing games have been the ones whose promoters could successfully make their dupes believe some wonderful story of divine purity, innocence and wisdom. The history of all supernatural religions are the same in this respect, Christianity being no exception. The character of Jesus Christ has been used for the purpose of robbing the people in the most civilized countries, and thousands of the weaker sort are still victimized in free America.

Christ is represented as the Lamb of God, and touching stories told, showing how he loves us. His sufferings are pictured in the most affecting colors and everything done to make the young in years and the weak in intellect feel pity, love, reverence, awe and adoration for this character, and then the dupe is politely requested to "throw up his hands," while his pockets are rifled. It makes us cry to think of the past—how the poor workers have thus been robbed; but the individual losses and gains are nothing compared with those of the nations. Christianity is the biggest thief on record. It stole its idea of a god from the very people whom it condemned and plundered. Its best moral precepts came from the heathen whom it condemned to an everlasting hell. The good customs of those it could not overcome, it has appropriated and named Christian. It has entered