

every avenue of life and stolen, appropriated, bulldozed and forced.

The most secret, fraternal orders, and those which were originally organized for fraternity only, have been saturated with the blood of the lamb or scented with the gas from the holy spirit. Our government, which was intended as a purely secular one, has been worked and is being worked in the interest of this dastardly, Christian trust. Our public schools are, in spite of secular laws to the contrary, still largely manipulated in the interests of this wolf in sheep's clothing to such a degree that the young student in his research is met at every turn by a god, a devil or an angel, to frighten him from his path. Christianity, thief that it is, claims everything in sight that is of any value, and disowns its own children when they begin to reap the harvest of degradation from the sowing of Christian principles. The saloon system, the tobacco habit, the filling of the lunatic asylums and prisons, the political corruption and social rottenness can all be traced to the ignorance caused by the superstitions of the Christian churches.

Let the world once rid itself of this dry rot which is destroying the roots of the tree of knowledge, and let Secularism take its place for a few short years and a greater change will take place than we now realize has taken place since the dark ages. It is coming! Let those who are selfishly trying to monopolize the Freethought cause and run it into channels of their own unprogressive way of thinking; let them scoff at our educational movement; let those whose help would mean so much, withhold it on account of jealousy or fear of loss of patronage; let those who have never made a progressive move themselves, wallow in their stagnant pool of indifference; but wheels of progressive, moral Secularism are beginning to move, and though a few of us may be crushed and broken—though our lives be given to thankless toil—though we are misrepresented, misjudged and neglected, yet we dare sacrifice all for what we know will be harvested from the seeds of truth we now sow.

#### The Book of Judges.

My Fellow Man:—Can you take the Holy Bible for your moral guide? Can you conscientiously read the Bible to your little ones and tell them that it is the word of your Heavenly Father? Have you tried to trace the origin of this wonderful(?) book? Have you read the book of Judges? If you have, how would you like to read and explain the twenty-one chapters to a large Sunday school class? Now, my friend, you may answer the above questions out loud, or, if you prefer, no doubt the editor of

the Torch of Reason will give you space in his paper for a short reply.

I have just been reading Judges, and I find that God must have been a wonderful being. There were some wonderful people, too, in those days. For instance, in chapter 3, the left handed fellow, who said unto Eglon, king of Moab, "I have a message from God unto thee," and, as the king arose, the left handed man drew a two edged dagger and thrust it into Eglon, the king; and the other fellow who slew six hundred Philistines with an ox goad. Then there was the captain who had nine hundred chariots of iron, who, after his racket with the prophetess, Deborah, Barak and the Lord, had to abandon his chariot and flee away on his feet. Who was it that went out and said unto the captain, "Come in, my lord, fear not"; but after the captain had been given a bottle of milk, and lay on the floor covered with a mantle and sound asleep, those same hands, that had ministered so kindly to him, seized a hammer and sent a nail through his temples, making him fast to the floor, and putting an end to his life (chapter 4)?

There are many more noted persons in the book of Judges, but please look them up and give the public your opinion.

DR. CHAPIN (a friend of truth).

#### Union and Federation.

The following resolutions were adopted at the annual Congress of the American Secular Union and Freethought Federation just held in Chicago:

Believing that the Nine Demands express fully the reforms which are near and dear to Liberalism, it is therefore

Resolved, That this body indorse and reaffirm with emphasis these demands as they stand on our records.

Resolved, In the light of passing events we can not fail to recognize wherein the influence of orthodoxy comes in conflict with these demands. To enumerate notable examples, of this we

Resolve (a), That the action of the War Department in granting the privilege of erecting and maintaining chapels on government grounds is a direct violation of the Constitution prohibiting Congress, and thereby the government, from establishing a religion or a church.

(b) That we condemn the action of those Congressmen who voted for the payment of \$288,000 to the Methodist Book Concern of Nashville, Tenn., inasmuch as this payment was for a claim wholly unjust, several times rejected by Congress and would never have been considered had the lobbyist not used religion as a cloak to cover a shrewd and dishonest action.

(c) That the government of the islands, which will soon become a part of the United States under the treaty of peace with Spain, shall enjoy the fullest religious freedom, and that these Demands be applied

to new territory to the fullest separation of church and state, and shall be so unflinchingly applied that no concession whatever shall be made to the church authorities who are now in actual possession in these islands.

Believing the future of Freethought in America as a positive force depends upon the policy of organized Liberals as regards ethical work or constructive endeavor, and that this work can be promoted only by active organizers of original tact and ability, and in sufficient number to influence every portion of the country, it is therefore,

Resolved, That the American Secular Union and Freethought Federation call for volunteers in this work, and to give greater surety for the success of this endeavor, a department organized under this resolution is instructed to make necessary requirements of candidates for certificates of authorization to satisfy the organization of their special fitness for the work and probability of success in it.

To effectually put into operation this resolution it is at the same time moved that a Department of Extension be organized, with power to fix these standards and carry on the work as best it can with means at hand or ability and funds it can attract to it.

Again, it is Resolved, That, since it is the purpose of Freethought organization and propaganda to overthrow superstition and improve social conditions by reforms as represented by the Nine Demands, and it is our aim to help in making the present life more worthy because of greater effort to make the most of it through obedience to natural law, industry in business, social and ethical activity, good will, and cheer among men—for these reasons it is again

Resolved, That this organization refuse to indorse any special school of thought. It is the expressed purpose of this body not to interfere with the private opinions of any individual member, each being entirely free to think and believe as he or she pleases. We do insist, however, that our work be lifted above all creed and specialism, let it be religious, political or otherwise.

The resolution in regard to forming ethical societies is in line with the work in Oregon and was undoubtedly originated by C. Elton Blanchard, of Cleveland, Ohio, one of the committee on resolutions. A motion was made to keep Mr. Blanchard in the field organizing local societies, but we are sorry to learn that it did not prevail.

The editor of the Truthseeker refers to the resolutions in the following words:

The resolutions of the Congress, so far as they relate to the practical work of the Union and Federation, were instigated by the editor of the Truthseeker. The one dealing with the ethical matter was the only one, aside from the reaffirmation of the Nine Demands, brought in originally by the committee. The long one on forming ethical societies was passed partly as a compliment to its drawer and partly as expressing the ideal of the Liberals to see churches replaced by societies teaching morals. Under the

present constitution of the Union and Federation it is inoperative and has no place in the proceedings of the organization. The time has not yet come for it, however strongly we may wish otherwise.

The writer does not agree with the Truthseeker on this subject. The time HAS come for ethical work and we should have been at it long ago. The Oregon State Secular Union is working along this line and is succeeding.

It may not be the policy of the Union and Federation, and we would not desire to dictate what that organization should do, but we do know from actual experience that it is time for Secularists to organize along an ethical line. The Union and Federation has a work of its own to perform, and constructive work along the line proposed by Mr. Blanchard will have to be separate from that organization.

P. W. G.

#### The Church Opposed to Progress.

"The church has opposed every reform and, until quite recently, almost every useful invention. In the England of Elizabeth it was declared from the pulpit that the introduction of forks would demoralize the people and provoke the divine wrath." (Martyrdom of Man, p. 38.)

In the year 1444 Caxton published the first book ever printed in England. In 1474 the then bishop of London, in a convocation of his clergy, said, "If we do not destroy this dangerous invention it will one day destroy us." That bishop was a prophet.

Hume says: "It was remarkable that no physician in Europe, who had reached the age of forty years, ever to the end of his life adopted Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood, and that his practice in London diminished extremely, from the reproach drawn on him by that great and signal discovery. So slow is the progress in every science even when not opposed by factitious and superstitious prejudices." (Hume's History of England.)

When Buffon published Natural History, in which was included his Theory of the Earth, he was officially informed by the faculty of theology in Paris that several of his propositions were "reprehensible and contrary to the creed of the church."

And when Columbus asserted the rotundity of the earth, he was ridiculed by the clergy, who maintained that "everything would roll off on the other side and be consumed in the fires of hell, if the world should turn over."

Benjamin Franklin's experiment with the lightning was condemned, because he was only invoking upon himself the wrath of an angry God. Professor Morse was freely ridi-