

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 hand pointing to this notice denotes that your subscription has expired. 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, MAR. 30, E. M. 299

A Fiendish Obsession.

The following is taken from a kind letter written by one who, though far away from the scene of battle, knows what our victory will mean to humanity. It suggests to us the idea of the oneness of orthodoxy and that infidel element that, like its parent, the Christian church, is hindering and destroying the good done by all lovers of truth and right. Here is the quotation:

"I am surprised that the Liberal University fails to get the support it deserves. I sometimes think there is some fiendish obsessing power holding back or restraining the grandest movement that ever was undertaken in America. I would say, never give it up, as the frozen clogs may be thawed loose and knocked off after awhile."

Our friend is right in his "sometime" thoughts. There is a fiendish power at work, and although it has never made us budge from our position, it has prevented much that we might have accomplished. This enemy was a surprise to us at first, but we are now fully acquainted with its methods and its strength, and are not afraid

"Never give it up"? No indeed. Giving up is the idea farthest from our minds. We are working, and we have been taught that "labor omnia vincit". Labor is conquering everything; for the obsession of that element among the ranks of Liberalism which always attacks every organized effort among us, and especially if it be of a nature that brings their creed or loose ideas into question, is powerless to overcome us, although it has to some extent postponed our Secular triumph.

Yes, the establishment of the Liberal University is, we believe, the grandest movement that was ever undertaken in America or in the world. If, after learning of the opposition of the fiendish power above mentioned and how it is applauded by the orthodox, who love to see the fiendish opposers of the home and of scientific thought flourish rather than have a respectable institution exist in the name of Freethought, we had not thought that we were right in our views and that such an institution as we propose to establish would be the pivot on which would turn the moral, secular, scientific religion of humanity, we would have given up. But no, our faith in our work is based on facts and is stronger today than it was three years ago when we first began to formulate our plans. And what is three years, when compared with the time that others have worked that we might have the degree of peace and freedom that we now enjoy? As long as our school is prospering, even though it be slowly, we will not complain; and although we sometimes wish conditions were better, yet we always think that "time is our inheritance" and if properly used will gain for us the victory.

Yes, brother, the frozen clogs will soon thaw. We only lack the support that a few can easily give, and the superstitious and the worse than superstitious will soon wonder why their gods ever allowed such an enemy as the Liberal University to spring up in their reckless, Christian midst.

Earthly Hell.

Eternal torment can be no worse to bear than a torment that is just as tormenting though only a lifetime in duration. Now we know that certain causes always produce an earthly hell, while there is no proof of the one the preacher tells about, which is prepared for those who do not believe on the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In view of the fact that preachers have no way of finding out these things more than we have, and that we know of no proof that the silly idea of belief in a soothsayer of nineteen hundred years ago is necessary to our eternal rest, we think it the part of wisdom to spend our time trying to prevent ourselves and our fellows from the hell that we know exists.

Walk along the streets of any city and you can see men, women and children writhing in as awful a hell as any human mind can possibly conceive. Unbelief is not what brings this kind of hell, for most of them are not to blame for the hell they are in. How to keep out and keep others out of the only hell there is, is to study, teach and preach the Religion of Humanity, whose savior is Science, and whose god is All Truth.

Sunday in the Country.

Our friend and co-worker, Mr. H. E. Klein, has been sick for several weeks, but as he is now convalescent and can entertain company, Mr. Julius Fisher, another substantial Secularist of this land of Freethought, and ye editor "cut cross lots" last Sunday to visit our brother out of Christ.

The day was a lovely one — bright and balmy. In the distance majestic Mt. Hood glistened, white pyramidal monument to the ancient giant powers that formed this most wonderful region. Beautiful green fields of wheat, the finest pastures with succulent grasses, where sheep and cattle lazily grazed or lay chewing their cuds, fine modern farm houses with beautiful flowers in front, groves of second-growth oak and fir where hide the silvergrey and the mongolian pheasant, old and young orchards, emblems of plenty and promise, are some of nature's pictures we were happy to examine on our road.

We find our friend much better, and as he shows us his fields, groves and other points of interest about the farm, we can not help thinking what a lovely world — what a heaven parts of this earth could be made. But no, it is only glimpses that we can get of an earthly paradise as long as superstition has its vile clutches upon our throats. Mr. Klein is an ex-Catholic, and the faithful(?) priests, as soon as our friend was taken sick, flocked to his aid and offered him — urged him — almost if not quite tried to force him back into the church. When a man is down is the time the cowardly saints pitch onto him. Finally they got his permission to pray. This point gained, they then urged the poor, weak man to take the holy sacrament; but no, even in his weakness, almost crazed with exhaustion and disease, they could not force this upon him. Finally, the priests being forbidden to enter the house, his sickness, which was of a character requiring freedom from excitement, began to leave him.

There is an interesting history to this case which furnishes another chapter in the awful book of religious intolerance, but space forbids its recital. Suffice it to say that our friend still resists one of the greatest forces of superstition which has been brought to bear upon him — the same force which has swept many who would be free, back into the slimy current. For the sake of their church they would rob a man of his home, make him a hypocrite, or drive him to despair and then point to him as an example of infidelity. But their former power is broken forever, and they must decline, and we are happy to believe that in this case they have met more than their match.

But what trouble the old spook

doctrines cause! In a country where one can sit down to such a dinner as Mrs. Klein and her daughters prepared for us — in a land where nature has done so much, why, O why can not we get rid of the old hobgoblins and be free? We will be free! We must be free!

As we walk home after our pleasant visit and exchange of promises of similar good times in the near future, we are strengthened for the weeks', the months' and the years' work before us; and we vow that not one opportunity shall "pass us by" to help make this earth such a happy home as it should be for the producers, and the others whose success depends upon the workers' freedom and the right to enjoy unmolested the fruits of their own labors.

Waiting for Evidence.

In the well-known Freethought journal, the Truthseeker, we read among the objects of its existence the following:

"It [speaking of their paper] denies the existence of the theological heaven and hell, but as to the existence and immortality of the soul neither affirms nor denies. It waits for evidence."

There is a reason for everything, and we wonder why it is that our brothers in the work of freeing the slaves of superstition deny the existence of one kind of a heaven and hell after death, yet are careful about affirming or denying the other kind. It may be all right to wait for evidence if they think there is any chance of securing it, but they will wait a long time for evidence of an immortal soul. The fact is that this idea is as great and as injurious a superstition as the theological heaven and hell notion, and we believe that our contemporary knows it. What can be the reason then for such a statement?

In these days of policy, one naturally looks first for the reason of such things along the financial line. Now if the Torch of Reason were a policy paper, and cared more for subscribers than for doing good, it would cater to the large class who, although they call themselves infidels, believe in the "existence and immortality of the soul".

We believe in Freethought and in being free to express free thoughts. If any one believes in a soul and in its immortality he is no less our brother, but we should be no less his brother if we say frankly that we do not believe in anything of the kind. The fact that there is no proof that there exists in man an immortal soul is proof enough to us that there is no such thing; and especially do we deny its existence when we think how hard priests (of all kinds) have worked to prove it and how