

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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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, JUNE 15, E. M. 299.

ALL ABOARD!

At Antelope a Christian boycott determines the size of our audience, and, instead of being a large one, it was what we considered rather small. The cause of this was clearly shown. A gentleman entered just before it was time to begin our exercises and, coming up to us, enquired in regard to the nature of our lecture. He said that there were several ladies at the door who would like to come in, but that it had been noised around town that our lecture was against Christianity, and they did not like to hear it if it would interfere with their religious belief. We went to the door and explained to the ladies as best we could and gave them permission to leave the building when the lecture commenced, inviting them to come in and hear the rest of the program. They concluded to run the risk, came in and remained interested listeners the whole evening. Their escort contributed more to help along our work than any one else in the house.

Sunday morning, after paying our hotel bill, which was more than our income at this place, we packed our bikes and started toward Mitchell via Cherry Creek, the home of Jack and Nancy Shrum, who are so well known to our readers. The road is very hilly, and after traveling several miles afoot, we were all glad to accept an invitation to ride in a freight wagon. The wagon, or rather wagons, for there were two of them hitched together, was drawn by six horses.

The sheep men in this part of Oregon are sending their wool to The Dalles at this time of year and we met many six and eight-horse teams, with mammoth loads, slowly crawling over the hills to that city, one hundred miles away, where it can be shipped by rail to all parts of the United States. This freighting business is quite an industry in itself, the usual price for hauling freight being 75 cents per hundred pounds. Some of the hills are very steep. We felt sorry for the poor horses, and hope that science will soon give us a practical way of getting produce to market without causing so much pain to these poor, faithful, dumb creatures.

We reached a pretty little ranch about 1 o'clock, where the teamster informed us we could get dinner, but the landlord, Mr. O'Neil, hardly knew whether we could get dinner or not. After some delay we managed to get a cold lunch at 50 cents each. We thought this "a big price for beans," but better things were in store for us. We reached the Shrum ranch and received a hearty welcome. Wherever we find subscribers to the Torch of Reason we find friends, and at the earnest invitation of these workers, we stay over one day and rest our bicycle-weary limbs. This was one of the happiest days of our lives. Rest was what we needed, and the heavily-loaded breakfast, dinner and supper tables, laden with all the good things of an Eastern Oregon ranch, the pleasant strolls, seeing and learning many new things about irrigation, the cultivation of alfalfa, rearing of sheep, etc., all conspired to make our stay at the Shrum's a memorable one. The one thing that pleased us most was our trip to "the cave" and our geological studies of the rocks. What great changes have taken place on the earth's surface since animal and plant life have existed! We found layers of rocks made up entirely of ground-up shells. This shows that this high and dry country was under water at one time. Midway between the top and bottom of a very high cliff of metamorphic rock we found the petrified remains of a log, about one and one-half feet in diameter. Other discoveries show that this sparsely-timbered country was probably covered with a heavy forest at one time. How we would like to stay in this wonderful little valley for months and study the great stone-book of nature! But no; duty calls us on, and early next morning, after receiving hearty invitations to come again and a goodly donation of cash for the University, we turn our freckled and sunburnt faces toward Mitchell. About 2 o'clock we reach a fine, large, white house, surrounded by trees, flowers and gardens, where lives a man

who believes in working for a heaven here on earth. Here we ate as only hungry bicyclers can eat, received financial aid for our University and moved on. Mr. John Allen is a Secularist, indeed, and, although of no relation, puts us in mind of our friends of the same name in Silverton. He is a great sheep man, although he does not wash in the blood of lambs, and shears at present 14,000 of these woolly clothiers.

On Bridge Creek there is no bridge and the water flows very swiftly over a rocky bottom, but we boys take off our shoes and stockings and carry the bikes across the sharp stones, cutting our feet and causing some queer expressions of voice and face. Charlie, Mrs. Hosmer's brother, and her worst half made a chair of their hands as we used to in our "childhood days of yore" and carried our better half slowly, but surely, across the surging water. Thus we journey on, stopping on every occasion to talk Torch of Reason to the people we meet. We met many friends and secured a number of new subscribers. And here we are at Mitchell among enthusiastic Secularists, with a fine prospect for a large audience in a good hall.

THE WORLD'S CHILDHOOD.

The analogy of the life of the individual and that of the race is interesting, and especially so in the study of our weaknesses. The child's weak limbs cause it to go on all-fours as did our animal-like ancestors, and when it can stand erect and walk, it is with tottering steps. But the most interesting study for the student of mental science is the comparison of our mental idiosyncrasies. Sense perception is the original source of all knowledge, and it is the first power of the child's mind to be developed. Seeing, hearing and feeling, with but little memory, conception, classification, and less judgment and reason, characterize the child's mind as it does the lower forms of life. The very earliest mental faculty is feeling and all know that the very lowest forms of life have only this power, but as the various lengths of waves of the great universal ocean, continually breaking upon the sensitive bodies of early forms, produced the organs of sight and hearing, so in our individual lives, only in a much shorter time, are these and other organs developed.

The tiny hand of the little child reaches for the moon, and the tiny minds of our childish ancestors reached out to grasp the solution of the mighty problems which entered their mind's eye from far beyond their grasp. Like children crying for the moon, our ancestors cried for a knowledge of the earth, of their own origin and destiny, and

their wisest among them, the priests, like many ignorant parents, carelessly told them false stories or threatened them with the dark closet of hell to silence their troublesome questions.

The child diseases of our race were as dangerous and as troublesome as our own youthful contagions, and they lasted much longer. We have outgrown many of the diseases known as superstitions, but still the germs of some of the worst ones continue to dwarf and degrade people of the highest development. Yesterday we were like naked children, playing on the beach of human existence. We are still young, but neatly clothed, and with glowing cheeks and glittering eyes we are searching for the simple pebbles of common sense along the shore. When will we reach the prime of life and, with well-equipped mental apparatus, learn to wash from the soil of nature the gold of eternal truth?

L. B. Silver, a prominent citizen of Cleveland, Ohio, and a well known Infidel, died a few days ago. The press, in reporting his death, said nothing about "the horrors of an Infidel's deathbed," but stated plainly that Mr. Silver's death was not attended with any great suffering, and that just before his death he "told those about him that he wanted it known to all that he died as he had lived—an unbeliever in the Christian faith." The next preacher you hear declare that Infidels always die a horrible and repentant death, just knock him down with this instance.

Our business manager, last heard from in New York city, reports success even greater than he anticipated in his work. The Eastern Secularists take quite an interest in our work in Silverton, and are proving it by generous help. A highly encouraging report may be looked forward to at the close of Mr. Geer's tour.

The clergyman who imagines that Jesus went up into the physical heavens can never tell what he has been doing since he went away. There is nothing taught in heathendom that is more absurd, ridiculous, superstitious, illogical and unreasonable than the modern Christian conception of the ascension of a physical, human form into the open space of the whirling worlds of modern astronomy.—[Flaming Sword.]

Let pure modern morals be taught in the schools in place of biblical instruction. Teach children that morality is wholly independent of theology, and its claims enforced, not by Sinai, but by usefulness.—[Robert C. Adams.]