

## Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, E. M. 299.

### ALL ABOARD!

We concluded that the best route for bicyclists is via Arlington, where we could take the train for Silverton. This route led us through Caleb and to the home of our friends, the Barnhouses. Here we again accepted their kind hospitality, and early Thursday morning started "cross lots" to Twickenham Ferry on the John Day.

The road after we left the main road was simply awful. A grade of miles and miles, that no bicyclist could ride, led us up, and up and up. The heat was intense and water scarce, and so we were obliged to travel very slowly. Once in awhile we came to a spring that only needed digging out to furnish our dry lips and throats with the necessary moisture. Finally we reached the top, only to find that miles of down grade, too steep to ride, lay before us; so the holding-back process commenced, and continued till our corns ached and our toes blistered.

But it wouldn't do to die way out there, with no priest or preacher to administer the consolations of their holy (full of holes) religions, and so we staggered on till a fine ridable grade was reached, and down, down we flew toward the John Day.

The scenery down this canyon surpasses anything we had yet seen. Great mountains of basaltic rock, formed of huge fruit-cake-looking elevations, with their corresponding terraces, seemed to be the general plan of mother nature's work along this narrow winding gorge. At one place, where the passage was so narrow that the

great rocks seemed to entirely block our way, we dismounted and gazed with wonder at the beautiful scene. One must see such sights as these to fully realize the vastness of the changes that have been and are still going on in the earth's crust, and through this he may be led to catch glimpses of the universe and the workings of the mighty inherent forces of the matter of which the universe is composed.

At Twickingham Ferry we found Mr. and Mrs. Helms, who have been subscribers to the Torch for sometime, and of course we receive a hearty welcome. A good supper and breakfast, a good night's rest, and a donation to the cause gave us a fresh start in the morning.

The history of the previous day began to repeat itself. Up grade, walking in the burning sun, we toiled on till we were overtaken and asked to ride by one who proved to be a Freethinker, and is now a reader of the Torch. Yes, God or some cause more real, sent Mr. Ed. Horn to the mountains after a load of wood, and so the Secular pilgrims had a ride nearly to the top of the long grade; and didn't they spin down the other side to Fossil, the county seat of the new county of Wheeler, and then toward the little village of Mayville, where, at about 9 o'clock p. m., they found shelter and rest for the night at a neat little inn.

In the morning Mrs. Hosmer's face seemed to be swelling, and long before we reached the top of a six-mile grade, on our way to Condon, her usually indomitable spirit (nothing supernatural) seemed to weaken, as was evinced by a little tear which the editor noticed winding its solitary way down her now badly swollen cheek. From this on we moved slowly, the spouse wheeling both wheels and stopping frequently to rest and discuss the question of how, when and where we caught the mumps. We reached Condon, ordered a mump lutch and oyster soup at a restaurant, and engaged a livery team for Arlington, forty miles away. This is a pretty little city on the Columbia River, and on the O. R. & N. R. R.

We rested over night, took the train for Portland, and reached that city at 8:30, fifteen minutes too late to catch the S. P. train for Woodburn. We did not wish to expose our friends to the mumps, so we put up at a hotel and waited for the evening train. It was dark when we reached Woodburn, but we wanted to get home where we could rest our weary bones and Mrs. Hosmer's big cheeks, which were swollen by this time to serio-comic proportions. We were a little worried about her catching cold, but it was a beautiful moonlight night, and by wrapping her in a lap robe, she enjoyed the ride as well as anyone could who had

eaten nothing for so many hours. We arrived at the Liberal University about 12 o'clock at night, and glad indeed were we to get home, although we had had in many ways a very successful trip, and met with many friends, who are interested in our work to the degree of assisting us by writings, by conversations with others, and by financial support.

And here we are, ready to begin work on the greatest institution that the closing scene of the 19th century has brought close to the footlights of the world's ever interesting drama. And our success is not due to a spook, Santa Claus in the sky, but largely to our new found friends in Eastern Oregon, to whom we tender our hearty thanks for their many kindnesses and "swear" to them by all that's good and great that we will never give up the fight for constructive moral Secularism, until the last superstitious dog(ma) is hung, or until the matter of which we are composed begins to take its place in other whirlpools of the eternal atoms of the universe.

### THE REMEDY.

People are what they are, not because it is an allwise God's plan to have them thus, nor because they have fallen from an original state of perfection by listening to an Evil One. They are not good nor are they bad; they are what they are. They might be much better and they might be much worse. They have been more ignorant than at present, and therefore more sinful, and in the future they will probably have more knowledge, become more wise, and therefore be less wicked. If the priests and preachers, now damned in the hell of an outraged conscience, dared to whisper what they know to be true, the people would grow wiser and better very rapidly; but these Scribes and Pharisees of the nineteenth century are between two fires, and the one they fear the most is the hell of poverty and unpopularity. Most of them would become Robert Ingersolls if they could, but they know that their abilities will not permit, and it is the "safe side" to be sure of a living near the slimy shore of their biblical mud flat. And here we find them, poor mollusca that they are, some dodging into their mud holes at your approach, some spouting their muddy water at you as you pass, some closing up their hard shells, and others crawl-fishing about in a most comical manner in order to escape the attacks of reason. Condemn and blame them we must not. They are thus developed. Can an Ethiopian change his skin? Can a leopard change its spots?

And if we are wrong in our work of pointing out what we consider

the sore places in God's chosen ones' characters, that humanity may be benefited thereby, no good god will condemn us or allow us to suffer for our mistake, for none of us can change our moral skins or spots; we must and will follow our strongest impulses, which are only modified by our environments.

The devout will continue to pray until there are no religious devotees; the hypocrites will pray standing in their synagogues and on the corners of the streets as long as hypocrites exist and there is something to be gained by their performances; and we scoffers will continue to scoff until the time when there is nothing to scoff at, and that time will not come as long as superstition has such a hold on the human family. Worshippers, hypocrites and scoffers are all, under right conditions, worse than useless, and nothing can bring about right conditions except Free-thought, knowledge, science, wisdom; and Secularism embraces them all.

For the Torch of Reason.

### A Trailing Dress and No Pocket.

BY ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

Behold the fashionably dressed woman hastening down the street to catch a car. In one hand she has her umbrella, pocket-book, card case, fan and pocket handkerchief, and with the other hand resting on her spine she holds up her trail. Reaching the car, she drops her skirt, seizes the iron railing, and endeavors to step on; but just then the car starts and she falls to the ground, scattering her possessions, and spraining her ankle. The ever courteous sons of Adam pick her up and her belongings, and bear them for repairs to an adjoining drug store.

This is a real picture of what happened to one of my unhappy acquaintances, who has been lame ever since. The present dress of woman is inconvenient, ridiculous, and inartistic. When fashion decided that the skirt was to be perfectly smooth in front, the pocket was necessarily sequestered in the gathers at the back, but when the decree went forth that the skirt was to be smooth all around, the death-knell of the pocket was heard throughout the land. Behold the hats towering up a foot or more above the head, with laces, bows of ribbon, flowers and feathers pointing in every direction, looking more like the headgear of an Indian chief than that of a daughter of a modest Puritan. If fashionable women had any sense of the comical, on meeting each other they would burst into a roar of laughter.

The worst of all this is, that all classes of women follow this example. Professional women, teachers, those in the various industries, and