

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.....	56
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, AUG. 10, E. M. 299.

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

We are not sheep and fear no want,
For "labor conquers all".
To lie us down in pastures green
We do not care at all.

We are not led; we stand erect;
We'll have no souls restored.
We do our best to do the right—
The gods no more afford.

We fear not death nor evil men,
For fear is for the slave.
The staff of Truth and Justice's rod,
They comfort, bless and save.

A feast is spread; we all may eat
Of Knowledge's precious fruits,
The oil and wine in Science's cup
Change men from cringing brutes.

So we will love the good and true,
And forfeit freedom never;
Sweet homes on earth, with love divine,
We'll perpetuate forever.

PERPETUITY OF CHARACTER.

There are as many different characters as there are human beings, and yet, like the many flowers, these characters can be classified for the convenience of study. The two great divisions of the emotions are painful feelings and pleasant feelings, and as our wills and intellects are based on our feelings and largely governed by them, our characters are primarily formed by a combination of painful and pleasurable sensations. If happy, inspiring surroundings are sufficient to overcome our inherited weaknesses, or our inherited strength is sufficient to force our surroundings into serving our pleasure and service to the world, we are happy, and our characters may be placed in the first great division. Like begets like; pleasurable prenatal conditions produce pleasurable tendencies; pleasurable emotions produce characters of the

first class, and high, happy moral characters furnish one of the environments to beget like characters in others.

There are those whose natures are so bad that no amount of favorable conditions could make their lives count on the right side. Others there are who are born under such favorable conditions that no amount of adverse conditions seems able to defeat their influence for good. There are all grades and conditions between these extremes of inherited moral power and weakness, and there are many who are on an exact balance between the two. A word, an expression of the face may be the necessary weight to balance many lives for good or for evil, for one glance may decide an important action in one life that will influence others who in their turn will influence others, and so on ad infinitum. Thus have we all been formed, both in character of mind and body, and how important it is to the happiness of coming generations that the men and women of our time "act well their part". Are we hypocrites? then will the world see another crop of these pestiferous beings. Are we trying to lay up treasures for ourselves? Do we have gloomy, painful or brutal feelings? our actions will index our thoughts, and not only will our offspring, if any are so unfortunate as to bless(?) us, but those whose characters are affected by coming in contact with us, will have and produce the same. But the opposite also is true, and how glad the true lovers of our race are to discover that the great universal law is the survival of the fittest. Are we honest? who can measure our influence for good? When we make mistakes are we ready to make reparation and avoid their repetition? Have we the self-respect and self-control which alone can insure happiness? Are we trying to make the world better, and in spite of all inherited weaknesses and outside evil influences are we in harmony with the laws of nature and with nature's highest productions? If so, who can determine the boundary of our estate of good influence, though we be one of the lesser stockholders in the grand domain of the world's progress?

RESEARCH VS. BIGOTRY.

A Dutchman is represented as saying, "The longer one lives the more he find by Yesus Christ oud"; and it does seem that one can learn quite a good deal if he only knows how and really lives long enough. One of the most useful lessons, and perhaps one of the last to be learned, is one's own ignorance and incapacity. One is apt to think his own little judgment unmissably correct and any contradictory idea perfectly antagonistic to truth and

right. But the lesson of one's own fallibility once learned and the learner has reached a very desirable position in his evolution.

It is very evident that any system of training that will hasten this knowledge of one's own true mental position, is a great blessing to the world, and that any system which enhances the opposite, i. e., the obnoxious idea of self-infallibility and bigotry, is a very great curse.

Now there are two very distinct and opposite systems at work in the world. One is religion and the other is science. Religion knows. Its propositions are absolute. It holds that a god created the universe; that its holy book is infallible; that its savior must be accepted or hell and damnation will follow. The god of the Christians, wher the people were curious to know more about him, is represented as saying, "I am that I am". What would a soldier do, when on picket duty, on calling out, "Hal! Who goes there?" to one passing his way, if the reply came, "I am that I am", or the synonymous expression, "None of your business"? The son of god is represented as being equally impudent and evasive. When a young soldier of life's battle hears of Jesus Christ and tries to find out who and what he is, what a vague, unsatisfactory, confusing, contradictory explanation he gets. He is the son of the Great I Am, the son of a virgin, the son of a ghost. The more one follows such an example, the more bigoted, evasive and unscientific he becomes, but we are taught that these things are so and need no proof. They are not matters of reason; when we once hear them then we must believe them. Christians have ears, but hear naught but "Jesus and him crucified". They may talk of reason, but faith admits of nothing of the kind. "Jesus paid it all" and so their duty to their fellow men consists only in shouting the praises of Jesus. "What will you do with Jesus?" seems to be a species of argument that all the knowledge of facts can not disarm. Ignorance and love of ignorance is a hard fort to batter down.

Science rests not on the mere assertions of wise men and gods. The world is supposed to be round, but the most devout followers of Science would not feel hurt to find that it is square, nor would they persecute or boycott those who endeavor to find any of the present ideas of scientific men to be in error. Science is not organized bigotry, and if the world is to advance to a realization of its weaknesses and its powers, and to a position from which it can rapidly evolve to higher things, the young must be scientifically educated, unfettered by the rusty chains of the bigoted, superstitious, unscientific, reason-destroying religions.

GOD'S MISTAKES.

It is natural to suppose that a god would do a good job whenever he undertakes to do one at all, but what is one's surprise to find that even the great, big god of the Christians has in some ways made the most egregious blunders! In making man perfect and then damning him and his rit-wife for being so imperfect as to yield to the first snaky temptation was, perhaps, the first great mistake of this omnipotent power, unless his long, long, lazy sleep before the creation be counted against him. But we think that his laziness must have been hereditary, and therefore excusable, and so about eight days ago (you know one day is as a thousand years with the Lord), he woke up and began to make things, and he really did some pretty fair work as long as he confined himself to making worms, the beasts of the field and fowls of the air, but when it came to making men and women, we'll be blessed if he didn't make a flat failure. Adam would have probably been all right but the best part of him was gone after Eve was made, and he didn't seem to have the same moral backbone that he did before one of his floating ribs was unhinged from his spinal column, and, although the operation was detrimental to his character, the rib selected seemed to be a very weak one.

But the Lord's next great blunder fixed things up in such a way that we all have to run the risk of missing the glorious chance of ever even seeing this "great I am." In a careless moment he made the devil, and that did fix things. It seems to us poor degenerate Infidels that a ten year old child would have known better, but "thank God" there is no account of the devil having a wife made out of one of his ribs, and so it is better than it might have been. After considerable trouble with man, woman and the devil, God made up his mind to publish a book, and not having yet learned the art of printing with the linotype, he decided to skin some of his surplus beasts of the field and write with a stick on their skins; but it takes a god some time to get fully awake, and so he sat back on his dignity and rested, while his servants, Moses, Jeremiah, Job, David, Solomon, John, Paul and other priests, wrote the book for him.

Ah, here is where God made one of his most fatal mistakes! His book was written in such an idiotic fashion, that scholars have been working for ages trying to find out what it means. Then again, after it is perfectly translated, it seems a poor miserable excuse as a guide for his aggressive, fallen creatures who have eaten of the tree of knowledge. If the Word of God is the word of a god it should be all sufficient for the directions of his creatures through this "vale of tears," but it is not a safe guide in anything. Take away our Secular books, inspired by the love of truth, and what would we be but holy barbarians, worshiping a barbarous god at the mandate of barbarous priests and kings?

The Bible is not a safe guide in