

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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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. 31, E. M. 299.

MOTHER.

Our mother has just arrived in Silverton from far away Wisconsin, and the editor is so happy that he can scarcely think of anything to write nor force himself into the editorial chair; but one of the lessons which mother taught us was the valuable one of "duty," and so we will endeavor to say something about the subject that is uppermost in our mind.

Children, as a rule, do not appreciate their mothers as they might. This is owing to various causes. Many times it is on account of inherited weaknesses of the child along lines of love and regard; sometimes it is the mother's lack of knowledge of how to secure the respect of the child; often it is on account of the bad example of the father; and many times it comes from the natural carelessness of childhood. But no man who has not had a very bad mother, or one who has not been very much biased by very bad environments, can think of mother without feelings of the deepest tenderness and love, and especially is this true when conditions have robbed one of the presence, interest, and love of a kind and ever sympathetic mother.

What is the lesson we all may learn from these facts? Is it not that while we have a chance we should do, and help others to do all in their power to make the mothers happy? Should we neglect to teach the young the great value of mother's love, and our great duty to reciprocate that love? Should we not put in our time teaching love for the ones whom we know will

appreciate it, and the ones whom we know deserve it, rather than spending the millions of dollars and wasting much of our mental and muscular tissue in supporting and propagating a religion of love to gods and sons of gods? Ah, Secularism, the religion of this life is the religion that will make obedient, loving children and happy loving mothers. The old theories have done their worst, and men have made much profit and honor(?) for themselves by drawing our minds away from the real things of our earthly home to the fancies of "a far away home of a soul." Mothers, fathers, and children have been neglected for the virgin mother, the father God and brother Jesus, until we are not what we might have been; but in spite of it all there is yet left enough leaven of love in the world to leaven the whole lump of humanity if we will only awaken to our duties and our privileges.

Oh, mothers! Oh, fathers! Oh, children! Let us learn Secularism; let us practice Secularism; let us teach Secularism — the religion of love.

WE MUST KNOW CONDITIONS.

Our experience in the work of establishing the religion of progressive, moral Secularism shows us one fact which, if now taken advantage of, will yield abundant fruit for humanity. This fact is that many whom we Freethinkers suppose to be rank orthodox believe just as we do. In a late conversation with one whom we supposed to believe, we find that her Christianity consists in nothing more or less than doing right and helping the world to become happier and better by the dissemination of scientific wisdom. This friend does not believe in an eternal punishment; she does not believe in a man-like God; she thinks she knows as much about spirits and a future existence as any preacher, and acknowledges that she knows nothing about such things. Such people have been prejudiced against our work, not alone by interested preachers, whom they know would go out of the business if it was not for the money there is in it, but they judge us by that element of reckless immorality that has largely represented the cause of Freethought.

The world can never be made much better by the ignorant ranting against orthodoxy, while the ranters' lives of impurity and reckless condemnation of things true, and dear to the good are allowed to prejudice the very purest and best elements of society against our cause. We must know these conditions. We must condemn the evil practices of so-called Freethinkers; we must be careful of antagonizing good, honest people by personal severity, and we must enlist their help by kind, earnest,

but aggressive presentation of our principles. In fact, we must know conditions and act wisely, or "the good time coming" will be long delayed, and we will have lived and labored in vain.

AN INSULT TO THE DEAD.

A spirit medium now claims to have the power to deliver lectures which are dictated by our dead champion, Robert G. Ingersoll. This making capital of Mr. Ingersoll's death and his millions of friends' misfortune is an occupation which seems to us worse than the worst grave robberies. And yet is it not as reasonable, as legitimate and as beneficial as what the ministers of Jesus Christ have been doing for all these years? They preach and pray to the people every Sunday, and teach the little ones that Jesus, who died years and years ago, is yet alive and is pleading with his father for their souls; that they (the ministers) have the power to reveal his will, and in prayer (a sort of trance) they talk with this departed savior. And if an honest Jesus Christ ever lived we feel certain that he would not thank these scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for using his name in such a detestable speculation, any more than Mr. Ingersoll would sanction the spiritual charlatans who now make stock of his death.

Let us not be afraid to condemn and root out every species of superstition, wherever it be found, and verily this has the "ear-marks" of a species that has driven many into the dark corner of religious insanity.

For the Torch of Reason.

The True Religion.

BY IDA DEDRICK.

There are as many different ideas about what true religion consists of as there are different ideas of the hereafter. My idea of true religion is this: to live right because it is right and because we will enjoy living much better by living clean, true lives than by living for our own selfish desires and ambitions, and covering it up with what the world today calls religion. If a man must be frightened into doing right, what reward can he expect? If I had a child that would never mind me without a whipping, I think I should not feel like rewarding him when he had obeyed, and I think he would not feel kindly toward me, even though he did obey when made to do so. When we stop and think of all the bosh about eternal punishment and eternal glory, we see that they are only toys with which many people are frightening or bribing their consciences. They live either in the hope of one or the fear of the other, but a life lived so as to better humanity makes peo-

ple more kind to one another; makes us ready to respond to the slightest call for help from our fellow men, and this is what I call true religion. It is not how many times we attend church, nor how many prayers we say, nor how much money we pay, nor how much we rail at the sin and wickedness of the world. All of these put together can never make the world better or happier. We might as well never have lived at all if this is the work we expect to do. The time spent in prayer better be improved in taking a few flowers to some sick friend, or in reading some good book. The money paid to support the minister in preaching his suppositions of immortality better be used in sending some poor child to school. Don't we feel better, and are we not doing more good, than when sitting down with a long face and saying, "O Lord, pity the sick and the poor"? Yes, indeed, true religion is doing, not sitting down and asking some one else to do what we are too lazy to do ourselves. Church members today are asking a god to do what they ought to be doing themselves. True religion is the religion of humanity. With this religion we can accomplish much. It is not necessary to be a church member — far from it. There is less true religion in the churches than outside of them. True religion consists of love of truth, purity, kindness, bearing one another's burdens, making a heaven of this beautiful world, and if we learn the lessons of this religion we will be sure of one heaven any way; and if there should, by any hook or crook, be a chance of finding one in the hereafter, so much the better, and if by chance we are doomed to eternal punishment, such as the preachers talk about, we will have had one heaven any way and fooled the old fellow after all.

Ingersoll Memorial Number.

The Freethought Magazine for September is an "Ingersoll Memorial Number." It contains original articles on Ingersoll from Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Charles Kent Tenney, George Jacob Holyoake, B. F. Underwood, Judge C. B. Waite, David B. Page, Susan H. Wixon, G. W. Morehouse, Helen H. Gardener, Prof. Daniel T. Ames, Daniel K. Tenney, Prof. Hyland C. Kirk, Rev. Minot J. Savage, James A. Greenhill, and by the editor and assistant editors. Also the proceedings and speeches of the great Ingersoll Memorial Meeting held in Chicago, and the best likeness of Ingersoll that has ever been published. This number of the magazine is printed on heavy book paper and bound in linen paper covers, with black border. For sale at Torch of Reason Office. Price 15 cents.