

Reminiscences.

FELLOW INFIDELS:—

Circumstances beyond my control will prevent wife and I from treating ourselves to the pleasure of being personally present at the Liberal University commencement, but I believe that the Oregon branch of the Matteson family will be worthily represented by our daughter Katie. By her we are present "in spirit and in truth."

I had been quite a number of years an Infidel before I heard any one publicly speak in advocacy or defense of anything which called in question the fashionable superstition—religion—of the day.

I believe that a disposition to doubt accepted dogmas in religion, politics, social problems, etc., and to think and investigate for themselves is inherent in the Matteson blood. It certainly is in my own immediate family, and I trace this characteristic through the family of my father to my revolutionary blacksmith grandfather, who, in the Continental armory at Peekskill-on-the-Hudson wrought arms for

"The old Continentals
In their ragged regimentals,"

to fight the British with; and by inference to my old great-great-grandfather, who came impiously from old London, England, to piously help John Winthrop, Jr., to found the town of New London, in New England. Those old Puritans were the Freethinkers of their day, according to their light, if they didn't allow their kittens to play, their boys to whistle, or men to kiss their wives on Sunday. But I never expected to live to the day when I should see Infidelity, and all that that word means, publicly proclaimed, much less to see it taking the form which it now is.

When I learned that Putnam was to lecture in Silverton, I resolved that the twelve miles of distance which separated me from that town, should not prevent me from hearing it, for I felt that if I could only hear an able man publicly proclaim the thought of my mind, I would be ready and willing to die. So wife and I went to Silverton; and we heard it and more.

Was I willing to die? No, indeed! I was better pleased with life than ever before. Die! Me? Why, I wanted to live a hundred years! I never before understood the Christian longing for the "new birth." I, too, wanted to be "born again," and live another lifetime longer.

And while at divers and sundry times my "faith has been weak," and I have been harassed with "doubts and fears" regarding this Secular movement, my "fears" have vanished and my "faith is strong" when I see the movement culminating in the form of an educational institution—a Liberal University.

I have an "abiding faith" in the works of the "brethren and sisters" at Silverton, and now I would like to be "born again" a number of times and live a thousand years longer. To die is not to "gain," just now.

And here allow me to repeat a "prophecy," which I have made before, and upon which I am willing to risk my reputation for foresight. It is that this movement will prove to be of greater portent and wider usefulness, and greater advance toward a higher plane of civilization and enlightenment than did the so-called "reformation" of Luther, Malancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and those old Freethinkers of their day, who kicked against the ecclesiasticism of the then dominant superstition, the church of Rome.

We are today the successors of those old time stalwarts as they were the successors of the Christ and Paul and the Apostles. And from this institution, whose fourth opening you celebrate, like a prolific mother shall come other schools, colleges and universities, and from them again still others, until they will "cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep; and all shall be bro't to know them, whom to know aright is life"—worth living, the building of a new republic; and science and civilization shall reign, and all the ghosts of the ancient superstitions—holy or unholy—shall "cover their eyeless sockets with their fleshless hands and fade forever from the memory of man."

Press on, fellow Infidels; "weary not in well doing; for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not. Suffer not your mouths to cause your flesh to sin; for it is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than to listen to the songs of fools;" and

"To patient faith the prize is sure,
And only to the end endure;
The 'cross' shall wear the 'crown'."

Patience, brothers, and courage! The "new dispensation," now opening, has a better future in store than the old superstitions and priest rule.

"Rah! Rah! Rah! Zip! Rah! Boom! Liberal University; give us room!"

Respectfully yours,
F. S. MATTESON.

Wants a Finger in the Pie.

DEAR FRIENDS:—

I feel that I can not let such a great and good undertaking as that in which you are now engaged pass without giving it some assistance myself. I, therefore, subscribe for two shares of stock in the Liberal University Company and enclose \$20 for same.

Sincerely yours,
L. M. MACOMBER.

Lennox, S. D.

There is as much greatness of mind in the owing of a good turn as in the doing of it, and we must no more force a requital out of season, than to be wanting in it.—Senecal.

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