

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..... | 50 |
| 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, OCT. 19, E. M. 299.

REFUSE.

There is a pathetic story told by the refuse matter that is left in building our great evolutionary and revolutionary Freethought educational institution.

There are bits of timber that are only fit to burn and furnish heat to the workers as they work. Then there are the odds and ends that will come handy for outbuildings by and by. Here's a brick; there's some slacked lime, and there a fancy shingle that for some reason has not yet been worked into the body of our great movement. Rusty nails are occasionally seen. They were bright and shiny and were all ready to go into their places to help hold a board, or a lath, or a bracket, but the power of the world of selfishness—a great attraction to some—pulled them away, and there they lie, mingling with the useless clods and debris.

But still the building goes on. The time that a good worker would waste in picking up a lost nail is worth many times more than the nail itself. And so it is with the human material out of which our cause is being built. We love to think of the beautiful, genuine material. Some are like the heavy timbers of the framework and do their share in supporting the whole structure; then there are the boards, the lath, the shingles and the nails. There are the windows, i. e., those through whose thoughts we can see things on the outside as they are. Is it useless to say, "Let us be careful not to be thrown into the refuse heap, but to become part of the

material out of which the real, true structure of the new religion of Science and Humanity is being built"? It will certainly do no harm, and so let us say it to all. Let us take some part, if ever so humble, and help everyone to be as useful as he can in this great and glorious work of the true redemption of man. To be sure, there will be the refuse heap; we cannot avoid it. Some will drop into the cellar of orthodoxy after they have been purchased (not by the blood of Jesus) for the grand structure, and some will get lost entirely. Some will, like rusty nails in the wrong place, pierce the feet of the workers and cause them to limp as they work, but these are nothing, after all, but the debris, the refuse, the odds and ends; and although they are entities in fact, they are non-entities as far as construction is concerned and can no more hinder the growth and ultimate victory of our cause than the rusty nails, the splinters and the bad knots that annoy and are rejected by the builders of the Liberal University can stop its flag from waving in the gentle breezes of the great Pacific.

THE FIRST AND LAST TORCH.

Not having faith in an after-death heaven, we are very anxious to do all we can for that which we love here while we have a chance, and while we can see its effect. Then, not having any god to appeal to, we must appeal to a power that we love and respect, and which we believe can help us to be good and to do good. This power is humanity itself. Thus, by becoming Secular we lose nothing, excepting an ignorant, false hope, and gain everything worth having, and our desires, our hopes, our labor, our every thought is turned toward being happy, doing well and doing good now; and, instead of making ourselves miserable and a nuisance to others by trying to believe, and working to get others to believe, something or be damned, we, in a perfectly normal and sane condition, go to work to make a happy home—a heaven for the angels coming every day to occupy it. If we are born right and trained right we will enjoy this unselfish work much more than "saving souls for Jesus", which means nothing but a sort of fanaticism which has been stuffed into us from "way back", and which, ever since we were born, has been before our minds' eye.

An, what grand possibilities open up to the individual and to the world as they "come out into the Clear"! Like our lowly ancestors when they found the use of fire would frighten away the wild beasts, so we can use the torch of our reason to drive away the beasts of superstition that have frightened

and devoured and robbed us of our happiness.

It seems almost impossible that we Secularists are first to discover the instrument with which to conquer the worst enemies of mankind, but so it is, and as we bear the torch aloft, frightening away the gods and ghosts that still lurk around the campfires of civilization, we cannot help comparing our work with that of those ape-like men who first learned the use of a burning brand to frighten away the cave bear, the hyena and the tiger.

Let us make our ancient relatives a visit. Do not be ashamed of them; they were not made of dust and a rib, nor have they disobeyed a god. They are true men and women now; they have reason, and they have learned how to build a fire. Do you hear them chattering to one another as they gather the sticks? See them as they stand around the fire and enjoy its genial warmth. Do they love each other? Do they love their babies? Yes, indeed they do. But see the glaring eyeballs of a carnivorous monster as it creeps upon them! Hear the warning cry (a root of modern language) of these animal-men, and see how quickly those glaring eyes disappear in the darkness when the glare of a torch approaches. They have learned that their enemies cannot stand fire. What a great step that was in the civilization of man! How long it is since that time, and yet how short! How much we have learned! How much we have to learn! How many enemies we have conquered! How many, many wonderful things we have invented! But, oh, think of the great Secular future! Brothers and sisters, we are joint heirs of all the progress of the past; let us take stock in the wonderful, the freed, the beautiful, the happy future Commonwealth of Man.

Relation of the New Faith to the Old.

Continued from 3d page.

dall; under Comte it appears as the Positive Philosophy, and he has many who follow him in this, if in nothing more. To John Stuart Mill it appeared as the Experimental Philosophy. Dr. Strauss describes it as the New Faith, in contrast with the old. Herbert Spencer presents a new and later phase as the Synthetic Philosophy; our own John Fiske calls his phase the Cosmic Philosophy, which suggests the great fundamental work of Humboldt—The Cosmos.

All of these names are good. The Philosophy is new, positive, experimental, synthetic and cosmic, and in the progress of its growth many more will be its names and phases, and many more its distinguished scientists, philosophers, advocates and promoters. And

probably each will regard his own phase as the particular form and name the new faith, or new philosophy, should assume. But Science is a constant growth. She lives ever by devouring her offspring, like old Time and Saturn, and so she renders every "system" antiquated as soon as it is well made. Humanity is greater than any of her servants, and includes them all, but can be identified with none, for she is free from all individual limitations. Therefore it is that the new faith can never become a personal religion. Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, Mohamet have their common successor in the great Humanity, of which no individual, however good or beautiful, can be but an insignificant part. The "complete Positivist" and Humanitarian is not the one who follows a system or an individual with complete subserviency, but the one who most cheerfully learns and recognizes the true, where or however found, in order to do the good, where and however he can.

To individuals there is hardly room to refer at all.

Of those who have passed into the immortal world two stand forth as prominent founders of the new faith, the German poet, Goethe, and the French philosopher, Comte, were the contrasts of each other, and may be, if rightly used, the supplements of each other. He who can best combine the free growth of the one with the method and social purposes of the other, will be our completest man. Their works are an inexhaustible storehouse of suggestions in and toward the new culture.

ORGANIZATION.

It might seem to those unfamiliar with the subject that nothing would be easier than to secure the union and co-operation of those who have been touched by the breath of the "new life." But, in fact, nothing is more difficult. It is said that the tendency of the course of life and education of all pioneers is toward individual action, liberty and self-reliant independence. And then, also, the service of Humanity seems to "function itself." It requires no special church nor organization. The whole world is its temple by the "Time River"—the blue its dome, and the duties of life its ever present worship.

Again, all attempts to found special organizations have been imitations of Catholic or Protestant ecclesiastical governments, and the placing of the new wine into such old bottles has generally resulted in the ridiculous loss of both.

For this reason, Strauss, in his valuable epitome of the "New Faith," discourages the attempts of reconstructive Liberals to organize, but advises them to throw their individual efforts and influence upon society, the government, human and scientific tendencies, and cul-