

## Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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J. E. Hosmer, ..... Editor  
P. W. Geer, ..... Manager

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### WHY WAIT?

It is always well to be cheerful, and even a little optimism may be allowed, but we must always try to know the truth, for the truth alone can make us free; and, as the twentieth century dawns upon us, we are forced to believe that this is indeed a very superstitious age. It is not as superstitious as the past perhaps in many respects, and yet it is very, very superstitious. Wherever we look we may find people by the thousands and millions who believe in gods, spooks and spirits of all kinds and descriptions and who will leave no stone unturned to defeat our plans. We who are truly free are scattered about in this slave-pen of contentious religious fanaticism and are thus enslaved ourselves, with not even the comfort of each other's society. When we see the political powers coming before the slave-drivers, the clergy, and so many who, after being freed from superstition, yet kneel to public opinion and greed, we feel that those who are truly free ought to get together in some place on the earth's surface, enjoy each other's society, each other's work and the great benefits which would come from our united efforts. Why can't this be done? Are we as free as we might be, and are we really doing as much good for our cause as we can while it is yet day? We must remember that for the individual the night will soon come, when no man can work. We of the Liberal University have started our work here with the hope that we might soon furnish a place where at least

many of the emancipated might come and work together. And what could be more appropriate or more beneficial as a start toward freeing the world than a Liberal University? Science is our life. On it we must build or our work will be in vain. We have started right; and now are there enough who will help us follow up our success and complete the school and the wonderful work for liberty that it already portends? Now is the time when our work needs friends and the help which friends alone can give. "Why do you wait, dear brother?"

### STAY ON THE TRACK.

The idea that to be a Liberal means only to "believe as one chooses and let every one else do the same" is an absurd and injurious mistake. To be a Liberal is to be one who is free, as the Latin word from which liberal was taken signifies. Free from what? Why, the thing that holds the people in slavery today—superstition. And when a wise and good man is free it is natural and right that he should try to help his brothers and sisters to escape the slavery which, in his free state, he can see is so stultifying. Now the main trouble with many so-called Liberal attempts have been that the promoters have had no definite plan by which to be guided. They switch off on to this side track and then on to another, until their "backers," and even themselves, don't know "where they are at," as our Oregon senator said. As individuals we all have different ideas on the various questions of the hour, but as promoters of a great cause we should be careful not to get side-tracked, and run into a jungle as dark with the moss of ancient ignorance, and as dangerous from the reptiles of mysticism, as the very one from which we are trying to pilot our Christian friends. Liberalism does not mean to go and do as you please whether it is right or wrong. It means freedom from error, and those who are really free will do all they can to help free others.

We who are building the Liberal University have a DEFINITE PLAN. We are not drifting, but rowing, and now that we are incorporated, our plan definitely outlined, and our stock divided in such a way that no one can by his or her mistakes interfere with the general workings of the institution, we can not be side-tracked as was Girard College, of Philadelphia, but will now do one of the grandest pieces of work for the coming civilization that was ever done. Let us "stick to our text," fellow ministers of the gospel of Humanity; let us "hew to the line"; let us not be "side-tracked"; let us "lay aside the weight of sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race which is set before us".

### Childhood's Festival of Joy.

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istent of and by themselves. They were the realities and wild imaginings that set off a jewel made more precious by the contrast, and which was thought to be unreal or invisible without them. The dark, wild sea of agony made more precious ONE little island of the blessed. Such island must have been seen or divined, or those horrors never could have left life sustainable.

As Shelley says it:—

"Some green isle needs must be  
In the dark, wide sea of misery;  
Or the mariner, worn and wan,  
Never thus could voyage on  
Day and night, night and day,  
Drifting on his dreary way,  
With solid darkness, black  
Closing round his vessel's track!"

That green isle was SOCIAL LOVE, and the two main festivals it adapted to make it beautiful were the "Yule-tide," and Easter, the Saxon goddess of Spring. If you search through the New Testament you find, as in no other religion, that "green isle," that living motive of SOCIAL LOVE, which it made a new element in Sociology, and which became the invincible soul of Christianity, and which because it (by natural selection) is immortal, Christianity has now bequeathed in an enlarged form to Humanity, her successor!

Two passages where this higher motive is manifested are notable:

"A new commandment I give unto you: That ye love one another."—John 13:34.

"And now abideth Faith, Hope, LOVE (Greek, agape), these three; but the greatest of these is Love."—1 Cor. 13:13.

This social or communal (originally Jewish tribal) love, is the germ of the great HUMANITY of the new heaven and earth on this planet; and SCIENCE, as evolution, snatches this jewel out of the "surging of the ages" (Brandung der Zeiten), and makes it the treasure of not a limited religion or sect, but of the whole race. This was the meaning of Goethe, that this Love conception having been inherited and extended to the race, its decadence has become impossible. "The [racial] Christ that is to be" is one of the evolutionary outgrowth of the TRIBAL Jewish, sectarian, Christian, limited Christ that was; but the God-man will be soon recognized as the myth Science proves it to have been. Christianity is a sect and cannot make this expansion of itself to Humanity. Its "angels" did not say, "Peace on earth and good will to men!" The original Greek is "Peace on earth to men of good will!" i. e., the Christian believers—the rest were damned. If all men had been meant, Christianity and its "scheme of vicarious salvation" would have been needless then as now. Such a conception was then evolutionally impossible, and would have been the suicide of Christian-

ity at its birth. Humanity was THEN not possible.

But now, since these things are so, what results? Why, we have not only the death of a lot of ugly myths, which is a pleasant funeral, especially when we find all of the beneficent Ideal they covered incarnated in a reality; but also we have the proper time, season and Sun in which, and whereby, to recognize and celebrate the birth and incoming of this higher reality. HUMANITY, the REAL CHRIST, has now reached its majority and become of age. And this fact is the proper substance of the new Festival of human joy, adumbrated not only by the Christ-child myth, but by Isis, Osiris and Horus, and many myths of mother and child away back in the depths of the ages. Of course, as the individual is the epitome, or in embryology the microcosm of the race, so the great Humanity is the unfoldment of the individual, and both begin with the birth of the child as an individual fact, and also the continuous and REAL race-symbol. The human mother-instinct had divined that before Science came to prove it. Hear how prettily Rev. O. B. Frothingham, who not long ago joined "the Choir Invisible," opens up this Christmas child-myth in his sermon on this "Festival of Joy," as follows:—

"It is a circumstance to be noticed that the advent of the sun has been from the earliest times represented by the supernatural birth of a little child. It is Devaki with the child Krishna, Maya with the babe Buddha, Juno with the infant Mars. The Sun-god was depicted as a hero, a deliverer from the bondage of nature [and now of superstition]. He was Hercules, Apollo, Mithras. Paintings of great antiquity, found on the walls of Indian temples, represent the mother and child in the very spirit and design of Perugino and Raphael. In particular one given in Creutzer's Symbolik represents the incarnation of Vishna in a way that might have served as the original for the great Catholic masters: The mother sits under a canopy with the divine child on her knees. Their heads are surrounded by the nimbus of glory, the aureole. A worshipping female brings offerings of fruits. A group of animals is near. A table with lamps and sacred vessels is hard by. A charming bit of landscape appears, seen through an open window. The virgin's emblematical veil falls down over her shoulders. An expression of complete peacefulness, serenity and heavenly elation is visible on all the forms and countenances. A lovelier picture never proceeded from the hand of artist. The picture of the Christ with his virgin mother takes its place in this large mythological gallery. There it rightfully belongs. It was con-