

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, JUNE 14, E. M. 300.

WHAT SHALL THE HARVEST BE?

"Sell all that thou hast and distribute it unto the poor," saith "the book" in one of its fables. But how many Christians are following the divine instruction? Would it be wise to do so? If not, then Jesus was not wise; and if so, his followers are very unwise; and if mistaken in this respect, how easy it would be to suppose that they might possibly be mistaken in the whole story about a god, a virgin and a holy ghost. If rich men would follow Jesus' advice they would soon be poor and then another exchange would be necessary; but if all would use their surplus, as some are really doing, to make conditions such that there would be no poor so low in the scale of humanity as to accept gifts, all would soon feel ashamed to offer alms to a fellow-citizen.

Jesus, or the priest who wrote the story, and all the people of that crude age seemed to have no conception of any better social condition, on earth at least, than the poverty-stricken on the one hand and the extremely rich on the other; and these doctrines of the so-called son of God have petrified the world. They have turned the active, progressive living tissue of society into an orthodox fossil. No one can imagine the evil of our time which comes directly from basing society on the old rotten principles of an ignorant, superstitious age.

To consecrate one's all to the cause of humanity is certainly a wise thing to do. But to give our

lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor to this great cause of all causes, is somewhat different than selling all that we have and distributing it among the poor. To help an unfortunate brother into a position in which he can help himself, and in turn help the helper or some one else who needs help, is certainly a noble act; but it is nothing to be compared to the far-reaching work of throwing one's whole weight against the spears of the enemies of mankind, thus making way for liberty. It is nothing like using one's whole fortune of energy, knowledge and coin to tear away the decaying prison-walls of the old world of superstition, crime and hate, in which the world still finds itself, and planning, laying the foundation and at least beginning to build the jasper walls of the New Jerusalem of Secularism. The noble men and women who have worked in the past have had less advantage than we. They almost thought alone; they wrote in solitude and in danger; they worked while bowed down with the weight of the heavy chains of social ostracism, and many times with the actual iron chains of the law galling their limbs. But today there are many of us; we can think together; we can write what once would have been rewarded with death sentence; we can speak without fear and even call God a priestly earth-worm, with which the "fishers of men" catch suckers.

But between the dark past and the bright future, we stand in the twilight of the present, and whether we shall use the advantages we now have and at once begin to realize the beauties of a glorious morning, or whether we shall let the work our noble Freethought predecessors so bravely inaugurated die for the want of men and women as interested, as faithful and as noble as they, all depends upon what we are or what we become. The many, or, comparatively speaking, the few who now know the truth and realize that for humanity to longer wait for the "home over there," or to put nothing in the place of the old system, is simply suicide for our race, can with the advantages we now have, if they only will, become a cyclone that will level every old, decaying dogma and spook religion to the ground.

These ghostly figures must be removed. They stand like tall, dead, fruitless trees, which have had during some great forest fire the life burned all out of them. They will decay in time, but it may be too late even for our race, but if removed now by the magic of science there will be room for a more verdant growth, whose leaves will at once be for the healing of the nations. Shall we remove them? It takes momentum. We have a nucleus of the storm that is already being felt. Let each help raise the

wind! Then, when they are blown up by the roots, our work is only begun. We must burn up every old spook notion, root and branch, and come back to mother nature and be taught as her children always should have been taught—to plant the seeds of truth if we would not reap the poisonous fruits of falsehood. "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" But the ground must be prepared by the bright new implements of science first. Ah! there is work ahead! The harvest may truly be plentiful, but as yet the trained laborers are few.

AID FROM A HIGH SOURCE.

We are surprised, delighted and enthused to find that the Mr. Spencer of Brighton, England, who some weeks ago sent us a money donation for the Ingersoll Chair, is no other than the world-famed Herbert Spencer, the great philosopher. In a recent communication, Mr. G. J. Holyoake writes: "My friend, Mr. Spencer, who sent you a subscription, is Mr. Herbert Spencer. It is an honor to your University to receive his support."

Friends of the L. U. O., our institution was never more highly honored, and personally we feel that our reward for "hewing to the line" in the advocacy of our honest thought is great indeed.

Mr. Spencer to us is the personification of scientific truth, and Mr. Holyoake, the father of Secularism, personifies the humanitarian part of our noble Religion of Science and Humanity. When such men as these have so earnestly endorsed our Liberal University, how can it help becoming a great, grand, glorious go? Everyone admits that "nothing succeeds like success," and the help of Herbert Spencer and George Jacob Holyoake is success in itself. Let us follow up our victories with victory!

A "TOUCH OF REASON".

Ridicule is good for patients who are unable to reason, for it often stimulates the mental liver to throw off some of its bile (gall), if nothing more; but whenever a superstitiously sick mental stomach can assimilate a dose of reason it is always best to administer it, being careful to give it in small doses at first, for it is rather rich for those who have taken nothing but faith since they were born (at least since they were born the second time).

Some dear brothers in Christ and some nottingites try now and then to get us to take a dose of ridicule. They call our paper "Touch of Reason", or "Torch of Treason", etc., but such medicine as that does not act as a narcotic on a real Freethinker. Most Infidels have learned to take great doses of such without being poisoned at all. But

here is a "touch of reason"—try it, dear Christian:

You ask us what better guide we can find than "God's holy word". Well, in the first place, the Bible is not the word of a god; and in the second place, there are no gods. (Of course we are fools for saying so, but let it pass.) But let all this go as mere assumption on our part, as we haven't space to give our reasons for making the statements, and proceed with our "touch of reason".

It is acknowledged that we can not serve two masters, and if we serve a god in heaven, doesn't that take our hearts (minds) away from Humanity and the things of this life, and isn't that an injury to our race? Would not such a doctrine necessarily degenerate us and make the people of the world unfit for earth and unfit for any kind of a heaven? "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." Would this make people, as conditions are now, well-to-do, or would it lead them into poverty, and does not poverty lead to crime? All is vanity, saith the preacher. Is it really so, or is life real and earnest? Which idea is the better guide? "O think of the home over there!" sings the Christian, and he gets his inspiration from his good-god guide-book. But should we think of an imaginary home to the neglect of the real home here? Is it not true that where our treasure is there will our hearts (minds) be also? Can we afford to neglect making this life a success?

And now in conclusion, remembering that we are not trying to reason—just trying to give those a "touch of reason" who are too weak for a full dose, let us ask, what could be worse as a guide for one's life than a book which is so full of such false ideas as are mentioned above, that teaches the abominable lies we call miracles, that is full of obscene stories which, when separated from the book, are not allowed to pass through the U. S. mails, and that teaches the cruel, unjust and unlawful doctrine of the INNOCENT suffering for the sins of the guilty, and the fearful, mind-destroying, priestly-hold-up doctrine of an eternal damnation?

DONATION DAY FOR THE LIBERAL UNIVERSITY.

The Liberal University is in great need of funds, and as a "day of prayer" would be behind the times, we have concluded to appoint July 20, 1900, as a Day of Donation.

We earnestly request every Liberal in America to send us a remittance on that day, if it is no more than twenty-five cents. The name and address of each donor, with the amount given, will be published in the Torch of Reason. "In union there is strength."

Address, J. E. HOSMER, President L. U. O., Silverton, Oregon.