THE TORCH OF REASON, SILVERTON, OREGON, JULY 26, E. M. 300 (1900.)

#### For the Torch of Reason.

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#### Excommunication.

BY MRS. M. M. TURNER.

ist in Prof. St. George Mivart tri- have no right to interfere with umpbed over theology " for he was excommunicated by Car- wields a great influence in preventdinal Vaughn.

ly excommunicated. The undeni- gallows, but stop when they think able provocation for this was un- of punishment without end in the doubtedly found in that portion of future. his last novel, 'Resurrection,' in which he openly attacked the orthodox Russian Church. He rejected the entire doctrinal framework of the Christian scheme of discuss, or even to think, until their redemption. He had little faith even in immortality. He declared that the sum of all the evil possible to the people, if left to themselves, could not equal the sum of the evil actually accomplished by the tyranny of church and state.

"No priest is to absolve him or give him communion, nor is he to be buried in consecrated ground."

Absolution is a farce, communion is a superstition, and one piece of ground does as well as another; consecration is nonsense. Count Tolstoi can easily do without any of these things, as his reason must prove to him.

tion curses the individual in all of the organs of his body and their functions in the name of God and the angels; curses him up hill and down dale; it turns every man's hand against him, as part of religion. One's own mother, before Science had to some extent civilized following from Huntington, Conn.: Roman Catholicism, dared not openly feed her starving, excommunicated son. It destroyed the sanctity of life. It is not religion, but a tyranical interference with religious freedom and personal liberty.

They discredit the Bible, they believe orthodoxy to be mere superstition, but they say it does us no harm; and its followers find great pleasure in the hopes it gives them "The biologist and the evolution- of future happiness. Hence we

their cellet; besides, the Bibie ing crime. Criminals, they say, "Count Tolstoi has been recent- have no fear of prison bars or the

> All this is absurd, and shows the narrowness and shallow-mindedness, of such people. They have refused to investigate, to read, to minds, like the shallow pool, having neither inlet or outlet, have become stale.

Is it right to encourage people in believing and teaching myths and superstition, simply because it gives them pleasure to do so? Is ignorance bliss? Is it better to allow people to be ignorant than to undertake to educate them? If it is, then let us turn all our institutions. of learning into churches and let ignorance reign supreme.

As to the influence on criminals, while the hope of heaven, or fear of hell, may have prevented some crimes, Christianity is justly responsible for its thousands. And to say that man can not, or will not, This ordinance of excommunica- do right without such an influence, is placing ourselves on a footing too low to be worthy of the name of civilization.

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Science is relieving the human reason of the shackles with which Christianity has bound it; when it is fully aroused to the beauty and holiness of the truth of Science, which all of the various theologies cannot prevent, Romanism will find this ordinance of excommunication a dead and useless thing, of which they must eventually be utterly ashamed.

l or the Torch of Reason.

## Stale Freethinkers.

BY R. L. HICKMAN.

It is an old saying .that, "Still waters run deep." While this is very true in some instances, we very often find a very shallow pool of water which is still, because it has no outlet, and in this case the tugging at its chain. water soon becomes stale.

We have in our midst today a class of people calling themselves compared to these shallow pools. I his carriage and driving off.

# Dog Trees Enumerator.

The New York World prints the The Rev. H. L. Hutchins, one of the religious census enumerators sent out by the Connecticut Bible Society to learn what proportion of the state's population attends church, took his statistics under difficulties yesterday afternoon. On reaching Walnut Tree Hill, a rural district of Huntington, he started to enter the dooryard of Mrs. Georgiana Hurd.

"I know you! You can't question me! You're a public nuisance," came a voice from a window. There was a rattling of chains behind the house, and a large bulldog dashed out at him. The Rev. Mr. Hutchins, though sixty-seven years old, was on the fence in a bound. Perched on the top, with his feet jammed between the pickets, he beseeched the woman to call off her dog. The latter was leaping up against the fence to reach the clergyman's trousers.

Mrs. Hurd's daughter, Miss Lydia, appeared. She seized the dog's chain and tried to lead the animal away, but it refused to budge. Then the Rev. Mr. Hutchins calmly drew forth his portfolio and plied Miss Lydia with his list of questions, which she willingly answered, the dog all the while

The questioning completed, the clergyman suggested that the chain be fastened to the fence. The dog was thus held, and the Rev. Mr. Freethinkers, who may justly be Hutchins lost no time in entering THE TORCH OF REASON, THE TORCH OF REASON.

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