

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

Published Weekly by the Liberal University Company, in the Interests of Constructive, Moral Secularism.

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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.

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We request you to send us the names of Secularists who might become subscribers and we will mail sample copies.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 6, E. M. 300.

SHORT, BUT SWEET.

The following paragraph, from the Freethought Magazine, did us more good than either Brother Carter or Brother Green might imagine: "Thomas Carter of Idaho, in a private letter, writes, 'Give the Liberal University a lift when you can. I sent my two children over there last term and shall send them again.' Brother Carter, that is what we are constantly doing, and every Liberal ought to do the same."

How could we work here month after month if we had no encouragement? But our courage and hope goes up to the top notch when appreciating friends talk and act as if we were really doing good service. And, by the way, is it not a good plan for us Secularists to cultivate the habit of letting our friends know that we appreciate them? We have no sky heaven to go to after we die, and people are in heaven before they die if they are in good working order and know that their friends appreciate their work!

Thanks, Brother Carter and Brother Green; you and others we would like to mention are Secularists, according to the L. U. O.'s definition, and are helping to build an "Earthly Paradise" in more ways than one.

TWO ELEPHANTS.

In Siam they almost worship the white elephant. How silly! It takes their thoughts away from hu-

man beings who would be benefited by their love and adoration; it is stultifying; it takes much of their valuable time in supporting their royal pachyderm; the thoughts of the most devout must dwell almost entirely on the elephant—and what about Science, education, morals, inventions, civilization? They are neglected, just in proportion to the care bestowed upon the albinos; and if a worse state of things exists in Siam than in America it is because the Siamese are more sincere than their white brothers are in their worship of the great white throne and the wonderful white elephant stabled there. The people of the civilized(?) world have become much like the Romans were in the time of Nero. Not many really believed in the gods, yet millions pretended to, and the result of this hypocrisy was the downfall of the Roman Empire.

It has been said that "no nation ever outlives its religion." But we hope the United States, at least, will be a glorious exception; for freedom of thought made it possible for our brave forefathers to establish a republic in which a number of men and women have been able to think for themselves and not play the hypocrite either. If they save the nation, it will be because they have something better to "put in the place" of the old, false religion, and that is progressive, moral Secularism—the Religion of Science and Humanity.

BIGGEST CIRCUS ON EARTH.

Certain natures are more susceptible to the influences of the "holy ghost" than others, just like certain people are more "mediumistic." We should not blame people of our time for this weakness, nor should we condemn the holy virgins of the past. When the wonderful pictures of the most wonderful animals are pictured on the walls, barns and fences, and the band begins to play, children are apt to get excited.

The Christian circus has more rings, more clowns and more funny animals than any other show on earth. The leaders of this holy show go on Mr. Barnum's plan that "the people like to be humbugged;" and it does seem so at times, but it is not quite true. They are yet children in thought, and we all know that children are delighted with things that grown-up people would not pay two cents to see. So, as long as our race is largely made up of childish men and women, we may expect them to receive with great delight the holy ghost and other animals which the ringmasters (the preachers) exhibit. How delighted, too, are these children when the tumblers, decked with spangles, etc., enter the ring! What a farce! The animals which they claim are from a far-off region

called Hell and their birds of paradise are all "made up." "Bum," expresses the whole business. It's a big thing, though, and the children like it, and while they are young they must be entertained, we suppose, or they will sow too many wild oats; but when the human family reaches its majority, it will be better delighted, entertained and saved from wild oat sowing by the exhibitions of science. We have nothing to say against a real, good, genuine circus. The exhibitions of physical strength and suppleness show what can be done by constant practice, and a good menagerie is an excellent thing. It is of great educational value. But the silly circus of Christianity has always opposed everything of value to mankind through jealousy and greed.

Let us have more real circuses, exhibitions, museums, menageries, libraries, schools, art galleries, elevating contests and everything to make us more happy and enlightened, but let us, as fast as possible, "put away childish things" and not be so overjoyed to be so gloriously humbugged.

NEITHER DRUNK NOR FRIGHTENED.

The idea of an immortality for individual life is what keeps up all the Christianity, all the Spiritualism, all the Theosophy, and nearly, if not quite, all the superstition in the world. We of the L. U. O. are Liberal, not only in the sense that we are free from superstition, but we are also Liberal in the sense that we believe that all men should be protected in their right to think for themselves. We are friends to all and would fight for a Christian or a Spiritualist to have his right to his belief and worship; but we are progressive and aggressive in that we wish to save ourselves and everyone else from the evil consequences of the base fundamental errors of our semi-enlightened age. Now there can only be one truth—one right side to such questions, and to discover the truth and thus bring about harmony of thought and action would soon inaugurate a larger, a more perfect civilization. And as this idea of immortality is the giant bone of contention—the one thing that is directly at the bottom of the confusion and division of the human race from the family of empires to the members of families—it is very important that we absolutely settle the matter and all begin to work in harmony on the truth discovered.

But how can we decide this matter? Does death end all, or do we live on throughout eternity? Let us not be prejudiced either way, but let us think and not be satisfied with mere prejudicial belief (faith).

Where shall we go for help or a start in thinking? Surely not to a god, for we know, if we will be honest with ourselves, that we do not know that there is one. We can't very well look to any particular great scientist, for we all differ so much in regard to who is great and who is not. We can't consult our wishes in the matter, for certainly a desire to have a thing true does not help it to be really true. What shall we do? LET'S THINK FOR OURSELVES!

But we can tell our thoughts, and thus, by assisting each other to think, help discover the truth; and here are a few thoughts of ours. Use them if you can:

There is nothing in the universe excepting the matter of which it is made up, and of which it always has been made up. We can not put the finest point of a needle anywhere but it comes in contact with and pushes aside something—oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, ether—always something. All space is filled "chuck cram" full, and it matters not how attenuated or gaseous a substance is, it is something. Now this matter is always in motion. One manner of motion we call heat, another light, another electricity, etc. When a certain kind of motion stops in a portion of matter, another kind of motion always takes its place; for no matter is ever at rest. Changes are ALWAYS going on EVERYWHERE!

Matter, moving, causes other changes in the surrounding matter. Thus the whole universe of which we are a part is in a continual change. One of these correlate changes we call life. The highest (because the most complex) changes going on in the world are in the human brain. These changes we call thought, mind, or, if you choose, soul or spirit. After the brain material, four-fifths of which is composed of that wonderful compound of hydrogen and oxygen, called water, has changed and combined differently and is undergoing different changes, how can this change we call mind, soul, etc., still go on? It certainly can not, and death ends the process we call thinking. When the brain stops seeing, seeing certainly must stop; when it stops remembering, judging, and reasoning, the remembering, judging and reasoning must stop; and certainly a soul without seeing, remembering, judging and reasoning would be no soul at all. Isn't this proof that we are dead after our organs cease to perform their functions? If we have a wish to live after death, it is our "sacred" duty to change the foolish desire to the better one of wanting to completely live before death. The desire for immortality causes us to be dead while we are yet alive. We can not fully live here while we are living in thought somewhere else, and it is beyond our power of words