

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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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, SEPT. 13, E. M. 300.

TO THE HONEST SOUL.

Full many a flower the poet minds have seen,
And gems of beauty from thought's ocean bring;
But, honest soul, with purest love serene,
To thee, the sweetest flower, to thee I sing.

Thou may'st in childhood form or manhood dwell,
Thou may'st in aged womanhood be found;
But, dearest one, it matters not to me—
I worship thee; I kiss "the very ground."

Some "love to sing of Jesus by the sea,"
And some, weak mental forms of gods adore;
But, loved one, thou art "all in all" to me—
I am thy slave and sweetheart evermore.

We are sorry that our catalogues have been so long delayed, but overwork and inability to get help is the reason. We hope that all who can possibly come this year, both young and old, will not be kept away on account of this delay. Come! We need every ounce of help and every ounce of influence you can give.

In 1883 an attempt was made to establish a Secular University at Moline, Ill. Some talk of establishing one at Newark, N. J., about the same time, and an actual attempt at Liberal, Missouri, are well known facts to the older Freethinkers of our time. Why didn't they succeed? We know; and this knowledge is helping to build the L. U. O., which will open its doors October 1st for the fifth year of its existence, with greater hopes, brighter prospects and a better assurance of a grand success than

seems possible after so short a fight. We are in good health and spirits; our enemies are on the run. Give it to 'em!

The story of the attempts to start a Secular University and our final success, blossoming into the L. U. O., is more interesting than anything else we ever read. Some one should get all the data and compile its history. It is a very significant fact that many who were the most interested nearly twenty years ago are the ones who, not at all discouraged by past defeats, are helping make the L. U. O. a success. Real Freethinkers never give up. Some of the old war-horses are dead, to be sure, but when we read Courtland Palmer's little poem (on the first page of this issue), there comes to our mind a new meaning to the words and a new reason for saying: "Though he were dead, yet shall he live."

A BAD MISTAKE.

Many people think it is too late for them to accomplish anything of importance. This condition of mind is bad, and as quickly as possible, no matter what our conditions, we should reverse it and see that the very reason for not doing anything worthy of a citizen of the greatest age and the greatest nation that the world has ever known, is this same very bad condition of mind. If one once see that things are right; that he is neither too old nor too young to begin in earnest on some great ideal work—then the conditions are at once changed. "One world at a time; this is the world and now is the time."

L. H. Anderson says:

"To each of us a message comes, whenever we are prepared to receive it. To every individual a revelation is given which can not be absolutely translated or understood by any other human being. If we fail to receive this revelation it is because our individuality has been suppressed; because our powers are still dormant.

There is no time in life when this fact may not be recognized and acted upon for our ultimate success. It is never too late to be the greatest we are capable of being.

Ulysses S. Grant was comparatively unknown at the age of forty; at forty-two he was one of the most famous generals. James Watt learned German at eighty-five. Humbolt was ninety when he completed his "Cosmos." At the age of eighty-six Tom Scott began to learn Hebrew. Homer was old and blind when he wrote the "Odyssey." Dr. Johnson was seventy-eight when he wrote "The Lives of the Poets," which is considered his best work, and after he was fifty years old Noah Webster studied seventeen languages."

Whether the impulse to do something worthy of our manhood or womanhood may be called an inspiration or not is a question, but it is certain that to many there

comes a time when life is at its full. We Secularists should wake up if we wish to succeed. Each individual's success, and the great benefit that every free, successful life gives to our University, our cause and to the world is at stake. Now is the time to act! Let us do and dare!

MARGINS.

The following paragraph, quoted in the August number of Secular Science and Common Sense, impressed us very much:

"Life is almost wholly made up of margins," said James A. Garfield years ago, in an address to the students of Hiram College. "The bulk itself of almost anything is not what tells. That exists anyway. That is expected. That is not what gives the profit or makes the distinguishing difference. The grocer cares little for the great bulk of the price of his tea. It is the few cents between the cost and the selling price, which he calls the margin, that particularly interests him. Is this to be great or small is the thing of importance. Millions of dollars change hands in our great marts of trade just on the question of margins. The same thing is all important in the subject of thought. One mind is not greater than another, perhaps, in the great bulk of its contents; but its margin is greater, that's all. I may know just as much as you do about the general details of a subject, but you can go just a little further than I can. You have a greater margin than I. You can tell me of some single thought just beyond where I have gone. Your margin has got me. I must succumb to your superiority."

This idea is true of schools as well as of individuals, and if we wish the L. U. O. to succeed, we must look out for the margins.

The organized forces of superstition have, in the past, been more careful than we have about "making everything count" for Jesus. We must be in earnest; we must write songs of praise to what we adore; we must get enthused; we must have schools; we must be better than the Christians; we must have "a greater margin" than anything else on earth, and we will surmount every difficulty and the world will be saved for Humanity.

How hopeless the task of the early Liberals appear in comparison with ours. When they were not hunted like wild beasts, they were looked upon as such and did not have half the privileges we have. Our University could not have existed a few years ago, but now, if every Freethinker will work and look out for the "margins," we will, in a few years, capture the whole civilized world.

Our Religion of Science and Humanity is RIGHT; the old religions are WRONG. All we have to do is to prove this to the people of civilized countries and they will convert the rest of the world very rapidly, for ours is the natural religion

and will spread many times more rapidly than Christianity. Let us enthuse! We have a great work to do. It can be done if we will work and not forget the "margins."

TIME AND SPACE.

Whatever gives us a better understanding of our environment, makes us better able to overcome obstacles and to utilize things to our advantage. Of course it is useless to ask our readers which it is that gives us a better understanding of our environments, Secularism or Christianity, for we all know that the miracles of Christianity only stultify and confuse, while the great Secular "miracles" of Science are continually revealing to us, and cultivating in us, the very things that we need to know most.

Science gives out no such silly propositions that "a thousand years is but a day with the Lord," nor that at one time, before time was, an eternal God commenced making time by setting lights in the sky, one to rule the day and the other the night. No; the emancipated do not try to think of a beginning for the universe. It is, as far as we know, eternal itself, and needs no such arbitrary hell-making, devil-begetting creator as the old priests made "out of whole cloth." But Science has, through its discoveries of the laws of gravitation, laws of falling bodies, laws of mechanics, etc., taught us to measure time; it has shown us, by its revelations of geology, the vast eons that have passed since the genesis of life upon our planet; it has given us the art of printing, which reveals to the minds of millions the doings of other times, thus giving us the great advantage of comparison; in short, it has cultivated the idea of time and its value in the minds of men until they have a power above that of primitive man that is simply indescribable in its benefit.

It has been said that Science has annihilated space, but this is only one way of saying that Science has given man power to better understand and overcome it. Christianity, with inquisitorial fierceness, fought against such revelations as Galileo and Bruno gave to the world; but, in spite of all, the world has gained their ideas. And how this has broadened and given power! The Science of Astronomy gives us the idea of immensity of space. This idea becomes part of us, and we are greater, more immense in thought than were our ancestors, and better able to survive than those of our time who still cling to the old, narrow ideas of earth, with heaven above and hell below. Science, in giving us the telegraph and telephone, has not benefitted us in a commercial way alone. The greater