

Torch of Reason

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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, OCT. 18, E. M. 300.

Au Revoir.

After four years of work in the L. U. O., I found myself breaking down physically and mentally, and yesterday I concluded that the only possible way out of the wearing work of teaching eight classes, proof reading, editing the Torch and acting as president of the L. U. O., was to resign, and move to some other place. I therefore resigned. It hurt my feelings very much to do so, for the life of the L. U. O. is almost as dear to me as my own; and "where our treasure is there will our heart be also;" but I felt that to "die in the harness," which I probably would do in a few more months, was not a brave thing nor would it be of any benefit to the School. The members of the board, and others, however, did not want me to go; and it has been mutually decided that I retain the presidency, but drop all other work until I am fully recuperated. The board was also kind enough to assist me in securing a small tract of land joining the University grounds, and give me all the time I desire to dig, saw and hammer until I have regained my strength. This makes me happy, but my friends of the Torch of Reason will make me still happier if they rally to the support of the new, but well known editor, Prof. T. B. Wakeman, to whom we now gladly yield up the quill. Help him all you can and don't forget to "pray" for the L. U. O. and the speedy completion of the House that Jack is going to build. "Au Revoir, but not good bye."

J. E. HOSMER.

Step to the Front.

When the leader drops out, even for a time, there is nothing to do, but for the Soldier, Teacher or Editor next in order to step to the front and make the fight, or do the work as best he can. It is also the like duty of all interested to aid in every possible way. Thus suddenly called to hold up the Torch of Reason while the editor takes a necessary recreative vacation, let me ask all those interested in the Liberal University and the Liberal cause to put up their hands and means to sustain, and if possible, secure a general advance of The Torch.

President Hosmer had peculiar qualifications as a teacher and an editor, which made him singularly beloved by his pupils and readers. Those qualities cannot be transferred to the present editor; all that can be done is to show that they were appreciated by trying to supply their place as far as possible. To this end let me ask a more general contribution to our pages from friends and Liberals at large. Please to write to the Torch upon matters that will extend its light—articles not too long, but covering some distinct information, suggestion, or hopeful beckoning towards a better future.

Our paper is growing. It is indispensable to our University; and a great help to Liberal thought in the West. Help it now by your subscriptions, mind and pen. Never will we regret that we all stood together as a band of brothers and sisters in this emergency.

T. B. W.

Veritas Vincit (Truth Conquers.)

THE EMANICIPATIVE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE.

We can never be happy enough, —never rejoice enough over the little we do know. Of course there is an Infinity yet left for us to find out, or work on forever. But the little that man has found out about the world and himself is a mighty good deal, and VALUABLE, beyond price, when we put it to use.

The first invaluable thing we get from that knowledge is LIBERTY, Universal Mental Liberty (U. M. L.), that is, freedom from fear!

Ignorance is the mother of FEAR. Those who don't know, are always afraid. They wander about like those in the dark or blindfolded. They may walk off a precipice, or something terrible may hit them: they can't intelligently turn aside or dodge. So their fear and ignorance invented and still invents devils and gods, and tries to escape by bribes and prayers to them.

Thus ignorance is the mother of SUPERSTITION and of all sorts of spook religions. That word "religion" has been thus made utterly

bad in its first and vulgar meaning. We condense Webster's thus: "A belief in God and his revelation, and accountableness to him as the supreme being." But who knows or pretends to know about, or can tell how to account to, or influence this Supreme Being, Spirit or Spook? Why the Medicine man, Shaman, Priest, Pope, Pastor, Minister? So man has always put his "soul," his life, labor, property and heart in the keeping of some variety of these spook-agents, and been their creature. But these agents have been best fed and sustained by the robbers, chiefs, tyrants, kings and emperors. The altar and the throne are always a co-partnership, said Thomas Paine.

Thus Ignorance is the mother of SLAVERY—slavery of every kind; of body, of mind, of will, of labor, of life, of property, of wife, of children, of HOPE. Oh! slavery, manifold, multiform, wide as our race! "Though millions drink of thee, still thou art the bitter draught!" Even old Homer said, the day that makes man a slave, takes half his worth away. The other half is one of misery, or the tool of another's will.

In our great republic we rejoice grandly and justly, because body or "chattel" slavery has been abolished. But mark you, and never forget it, all of the other slaveries above enumerated substantially remain!

Our great campaign now is against the mental slavery of ignorance and superstition. Until Knowledge, Truth and Humanity take their place, all of the other steps and modes of freedom, progress and welfare, necessarily wait. What is the good or use of a will to a man who doesn't know what sort of a world he is in, or who believes it to be run by the will of a despot God for his own glory, under a supernatural revelation, and with popes and priests as his vicegerents? Thus the mental slavery of superstition—that is of theology, makes the whole world a vast prison-house, where freedom of the will and all other freedoms are but hell-producing, man-destroying mockeries and miseries.

There is no way out of all these slaveries, except U. M. L.—that is that every human being, as fast as it can be one, should get hold of the Scientific explanation and solution of the universe.

The Infinite ALL must take the place of the old theological personal tyrant God. Humanity and its welfare must take the place of the Christ who came to bring "not peace but a sword." (Matt. 10:34). The Emancipated and worshipped womanhood must take the place of the impossible virgin mother. The life and love of co-operative human beings must take the place of the unknowable "Holy Ghost," as

the sustainer and comforter of all. The Bible must take its place as a part of the literature of the darkened past of our race, and be succeeded by the best books, giving the true account of the past, present and future of the world and of mankind. When this is done man will find a true realizeable hope, as the mainspring of his free, co-operative activity. For the first time he will be a LIBERAL, that is, he will stand out in the clear, "emancipated, regenerated and disenthralled" by Universal Mental Liberty, which is "the Universal Genius of Emancipation." He will feel the glory of knowing that Truth Conquers, and has conquered. Where in the mean time can he find this saving Truth? We answer in "the knowledge which is of the most worth."

What is Taught at L. U. O.

Another article raises the question, "what knowledge is of the most worth?" Many have been the answers to that question. The old Religionists said it must be the knowledge of the will of their God, and of the way to gain admittance to his Heaven.

The practical philosopher of this world, like Herbert Spencer, says that the knowledge of most worth is that which will be most used, and best prepare one to equate and co-operate with and master his environment: that is, meet the world.

This last answer seems the true one if we include, as probably Mr. Spencer would do, the best and main effect of science, proclaimed by old Lucretius and accepted by general and more complete modern Scientists; that "the first knowledge" or Philosophy should be such a knowledge of the whole world as would banish the evils of fear and superstition; and thus leave mankind free and able to use all their knowledge for human benefit, and with the strongest human motives so to do. It is clear that this is the only kind and extent of knowledge that can remove or avoid the fatal evils of fear and ignorance to which we have alluded.

It is also manifest that this knowledge can only be attained by a course of education, not only entirely uninfluenced by the old theological religions, but decisively devoted to the making of this general and emancipative knowledge and solution of the world, and its consequences, the base of education and of the acquirement and use of all other special knowledges. It follows that a Liberal University is the only Institution in which this general education is possible. In all other Universities the theological traditions and their influences either dominate, or prevail to such an extent, that the results of the Scientific Solution of the world,