

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, NOV. 29, E. M. 300.

Winter Lights in Silverton.

There are electric arc lights in Silverton this winter—and so there will be no sober necessity of falling off those board walks at the risk of legs and neck. Glory, Glory! Halleluia!

But this is not all. The old Liberal Church in Silverton is resurrecting itself, and has already undertaken discourses and exercises to be held on Sunday evenings at Liberal Hall. This will include the Thought Exchange where good discussions can be had, and good lectures and sermons when good fighting discussors cannot be found. They will get the best that can be got, and we must be satisfied.

There is a desire for a competent permanent lecturer, teacher and pastor; but in Silverton as well as everywhere else, he simply cannot be found. Preachers of the Gospel of Science and Humanity are like poets; they must be born, and then educated and made, and a bad or insufficient one is worse than none. Besides the Liberals are so liberal that they won't pay him, so he will have to work and find himself as he preaches, just as the Mormon apostles do, and just as the Apostle Paul did by his "tent-making," and Spinoza by his glass-grinding.

Until that living Jewell is found Silverton must forage on the rest of the world for its intellectual lights, and wait for its L. U. O. to equip and send out competent bearers of the Torch of Reason to

scatter the rays of Light and Truth.

The Abdication of a State.

The state of Colorado has become a disgrace, not only to itself, but to our Republic and civilization. The open and unopposed murder of Preston Porter by burning is a crime of the first magnitude; and the acquiescence in it by the officials and citizens of the state, makes every citizen a party to it, and leaves a foul blot upon Republicanism and our great Republic itself.

This condemnation can only be mitigated by the immediate return of the state authorities to the performance of their sworn duties, by the arrest of the parties to this crime, and their trial and punishment according to law.

On the face of it, there was no justification for this crime whatever. The criminal had confessed, was in the custody of the law, there to remain until he could be legally and formally tried and punished, as he certainly would have been at the next term of court.

Under these circumstances a lot of lawless persons determined to avail themselves of the personal grief and natural vengeance of the afflicted parents of the murdered child, to avenge one murder by the commission of another. This was from no necessity, but for the pleasure of a horrid Sunday Holyday sacrifice to the latent savagery and brutality that is but slightly veneered over by law and civilization in some people, and which used to be gratified by gladiator butchery, bullfights and burning of heretics and witches at the stake.

We happened to be passing through this disgraced state the Saturday evening before this burning. The train was practically taken possession of at Lima in the search for the victim supposed to be there in the custody of the sheriff on the way to prison. Every car and berth was inspected by the mobites and doors forced, even by breaking the locks. There were even forerunners on the train on its way to Lima. One of them seemed by his talk to invite other young men on the train to join the mob. He said: "Come, there will be some grand fun to be seen tomorrow, for we are sure to get him." There was no word about the necessity, nor any reason for this violence, but only the exquisite "fun" of roasting a human being to death, had taken complete possession of this demon in human shape; and as to him law, justice, decency or humanity had ceased to exist.

Before a few demons of this kind the great state of Colorado, the pride of the West, completely abdicated and prostrated itself. The Sheriff took the victim out on a

train which he knew perfectly well was to be mobbed. He never fired a shot or did a thing to prevent the taking of the criminal from his custody. He simply gave him up after a little hypocritical joshing. The governor had been appealed to and ignominiously declined to do anything to see that the laws of the state were enforced. He had taken a solemn official oath to see that the laws of his state were faithfully executed. But when the occasion of all others for his official action came he slunk away in the most disgraceful manner. How can such an official escape the crime and turpitude of violation of duty and perjury? Not a district attorney or a judge of the state did a thing, or spoke a word in favor of the constitution and laws they had sworn to defend and execute. In horrid mockery a Bible was given to the poor wretch to be read by the light of the fire, preceding that in which he was soon to be writhing in torture; and its leaves were then all torn out and distributed as souvenirs by his murderers. Precious keepsakes they must be!

Civilization demands that the perpetration of this crime be duly prosecuted and punished. Until the state of Colorado does this, she remains a disgrace to the whole United States—a shame to every honest, law-abiding American.

The Four Books to Have for Winter Reading.

At last we can say it—There are two books that every Freethinker, Liberal, Secularist—every lover of the truth and the right—in a word, every intelligent person should have, read, assimilate and quote until everybody who knows you, knows that you and the religion of Science and Humanity are standing on the solid, immovable foundation of verified Science. These two books are:

1. Prof. Ernst Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe," which covers cosmology and biology. (Published by Harper & Brother, N. Y. Price \$1.50.)

2. Prof. Lester F. Ward's "Outlines of Sociology," which covers the evolution of society and human history and affairs, which Prof. Haeckel does not undertake to touch at all. (Published by Macmillan & Company, N. Y. Price \$1.50.)

These books are the last chapters of the true human Bible—the shortest and the best now out.

Don't be misled by the name of Prof. Haeckel's book, for the name is the reverse of what it should be: it is really the SOLUTION, not the riddle of the Universe. The "Riddle" he refers to is the nature and consequences of the interstellar ether which is posited as the ulti-

mate of matter and motion, and which he calls the riddle for the next century to solve, and so he has misleadingly made it the title of his book, which explains what all the world actually is, up to that ultimate "riddle". There are some other minor matters to be looked over in this book, but they are merely spots on the sun; notwithstanding them, it shines out gloriously with the light of truth!

The ending of Prof. Ward's book is not as full or prophetic as it might be. We hope that the next edition will give us a fuller statement of the grounds of human progress, and the consequent better state of mankind that is to be. Meanwhile the reader must supply that as best he can. We know of no other small book that can take its place now; and unless a scientific sociology is read after Prof. Haeckel's book, that is utterly insufficient. It is like reading two-thirds of a novel which is never completed. Let us all join in a petition to Prof. Ward to give us his new edition soon. Let us hope that he will introduce it by a historical introduction like Frederick Harrison's Meaning of History; and also give us the basis of Human progress towards the Earthly Paradise, with illustrations at the end. Even if a few of those "fossil mosses" do not get catalogued in the Smithsonian Institute, we and all posterity will give thanks to this professor for the solution of the social world in which we now have to live, and the future in which we have to hope. That is now his true work, for he cannot live always, and it will be hard to find his successor as an exponent of individual and collective human TELESIS.

3. But until he comes to our rescue we may supplement his said "Outlines" by the historical sketch by Winwood Reade, the grand "Martyrdom of Man," already known to most Liberals, and which should be in every library and household. Our Liberal book friend, Fred'k Dahlstrom, 43 Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill., will send it to you for \$1.00, and the other books at the prices above named, or they may be ordered through the Torch.

4. One prophetic or apocalyptic book is also needed, and for that it is well to read Edward Bellamy's EQUALITY, which will cost \$1.00. It can be ordered with the above books. Have these four books of our modern Bible by your fireside; Enlighten them by the Midsummer and Tempest of Shakespeare, and Bayard Taylor's Goethe's Faust, WITH the ORIGINAL, if you can, get a TOUCH of German; and then thank them all that not even an Oregon rain or fog can wholly hide from your "inward sight" a glimpse of the Earthly Paradise, which is surely to be, and in which we may thus begin to live.