

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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

T. B. Wakeman.....Editor

P. W. Geer.....Manager

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.

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, DEC. 13, E. M. 300.

The New Century of Liberalism.

Liberalism is called to a new step of progress, a new birth for the new Century. Its first national organization was the American Liberal League, at Philadelphia, at the great Centennial, 1876. During the 25 years since that time it has had a checkered fate of moultings and transformation. Its next Congress is to be held at the City of Niagara Falls, consonant with the great American Fair, which is to inaugurate the new century for Americans at Buffalo next fall. For to do so, the mayor of that city has kindly invited, and the late Congress of the Freethought Federation and Secular Union at Cincinnati unanimously accepted the invitation.

From the spirit of that Congress and the general sentiment of many leading Liberals we have talked with since, in traveling from New York to Oregon, it is manifest that a new Era of Liberalism, the Third Degree, the Degree of Organization, will be entered upon at its next Congress. These degrees of Liberalism—three in number, were commented on at the Congress, and have been quite fully explained in The Torch. They are simply the natural stages of Liberal evolution: The first is that of awakening, inquiry, exploration, etc.—in a word, the stage of FREETHOUGHT; the second is that of conviction, that the

theological solution of the world and of Man's lot and fate therein is NOT TRUE, and the inquirer becomes emancipated, that is, a true Liberal—one freed from all of the churches, spooks, dogmas and creeds of the past.

Here he stops and rejoices awhile by way of celebrating his independence. But he is human and soon finds that he cannot enjoy his liberty nor secure its permanence without its triumph through the co-operating liberation, help and joy of his fellow men and women. This grand and indispensable result can be attained only by organization, and so he becomes a Liberal of the Third Stage or Degree—an organizing, constructive building Liberal. Not only free himself, he is convinced that the great use and glory of his life will be found in educating and making others so.

For a quarter of a century the Liberals of America have wandered in the wilderness, and struck down the idols, and blown away the spooks of the old creeds. Now is the time for them to become Masonic, i. e. building Liberals, putting up their real homes in the new world, the "promised land" of Evolution, in which they are to settle, and their children to inherit the "Earthly Paradise" to be.

This means that the old Liberal societies, however called, must be revived and recruited, and new auxiliaries must be formed wherever two or three, or FIVE can be got together as a nucleus of the NEW LIFE. In this way the next Congress will be largely one of actual delegates, that is a REAL Congress, as the original intention was. Then Liberalism can show its numbers and will be a power in the land. The rights of Liberty will be respected. The education of Liberty will become a fact. The greatest glory of an American will be to say I am a LIBERAL, "out in the clear," with a soul and a life that is my own!

Political Genuflection, Amusing and Otherwise.

Archbishop Michael Corrigan, the head of the Romish church at New York, has been over to consult his Holiness and obtain his instructions about the management of affairs in that great state, and this republic generally. He also went down to Naples to see with his own eyes the annual "miracle" of the "liquification of the blood of Saint Januarius." This is a notorious old fraud. On his return he announced a reception, to which politicians were invited. Both of the great political parties put in a splendid delegation as it were, of their leading bosses and workers, judges, etc; for not to be there meant a loss of votes.

When they were all thus cor-

raled, the Agent of his Holiness let them know that the Pope would inform them that their salvation depended upon their obedience to Mother Church, and their work for its interests; and then he wound up with a detailed description of a "miracle," the "liquification" aforesaid. He assured them that "it was a miracle." All acted, if they did not express, their approval.

The affair was a brilliant success, and both parties in New York are staunch friends of "the Church," by means of its workers, and they expect political as well as religious miracles in their behalf, if they faithfully serve its wishes. The effusive account of this political reception in the newspapers has brought a broad smile of amused disgust to the face of every true American who saw it. But it must be met with more than a smile?

Bad News From Home.

While we were hopefully speeding homeward over the broad plains of the West; while we were laughing at the Papal genuflection of those fairly out-witted politicians at New York, similar news, far other than amusing, strikes us from our Oregon home on the other shore of the great, and we hoped free Republic. Every reader of the Torch must have been struck dumb with wonder, at the announcement in our last number, that State School Superintendent Ackerman had sanctioned the reading of the Bible and the Lord's Prayer as part of the exercises of our public schools.

This is a matter of extreme seriousness. We will not rush into hasty comment or condemnation. We will hope that there is some mistake about it. Only the documents, the "best evidence," can convince us that such is the fact; for we know Superintendent Ackerman, personally somewhat, and by reputation well, and we thought that he would be the last man in the world to do this thing.

If it is a fact every Liberal, every friend of religious liberty, and of a Secular republic, has no alternative. This is the entering wedge that means the destruction of the Republic. It has been tried over and over again in nearly every state, and it must not succeed in Oregon. It is in violation of the constitution and laws of Oregon, and of the constitution of the United States. See Amendments 1 and 14. Religious freedom, and "immunity" from religious imposition is now a Constitutional right of an American citizen by virtue of the United States Constitution, of which no state law or official, not even a schoolmaster can deprive him.

But the price of Liberty is eternal vigilance. Please to send the documents and a full statement of

the facts to The Torch. Immediate legal action may be necessary, and only effective when taken at once.

L. U. O. Abroad.

The presence of the Business Manager of L. U. O. and of the Editor of the Torch, at the Secular Union Congress, and on the route, has made The Liberal University a fact to thousands who never realized what it meant before. We find that the great mass of the Liberals are solid for Liberal Education and stand by our University as at present the most worthy and decisive exponent of it. They will stand by us. Every Liberal organization in New York gave us active approval in words and means.

Friends every where! We appreciate your earnest kindness and support. We cannot reply to you all as you deserve, and as we would like. But we will make that University a substantial Liberal Success, and on less means than any other University has ever succeeded upon. Take that as our answer!

And when that success is assured the success of the Liberal Cause is assured. When the True, Scientific Solution of the Universe is made the basis of life, individual and social, all other Educational Institutions must line up to that Truth, or become back numbers.

Then every Liberal will be respected as the embodiment of honesty and truth. Nothing will add more to that respect than to find his name on the Roll of Honor, the list of the first founders and supporters of L. U. O.

Prayer and Bible in the Public Schools.

The decision of Attorney-General Blackburn authorizing the Lord's prayer and Bible reading in our public schools under penalty of suspension and expulsion, has aroused such a storm that one would suppose that it would be abandoned at once out of respect to a manifest public opinion and wish.

In the last Torch we gave an admirable editorial against the whole business from the Portland Oregonian, the leading newspaper of our state, which abundantly represents the great business and secular masses—probably two-thirds of our people.

In this Torch appears from the Oregonian of Dec. 2, the important letter of the Rabbi, Rev. Dr. N. Mosessohn, who represents the Hebrew people within our borders. Next Torch will contain the voice of our Catholic fellow-citizens, and then the Liberals and others will follow, with practical suggestions as to the way out.

We are pleased to see that Superintendent Ackerman is not really