

# BLUE GRASS BLADE

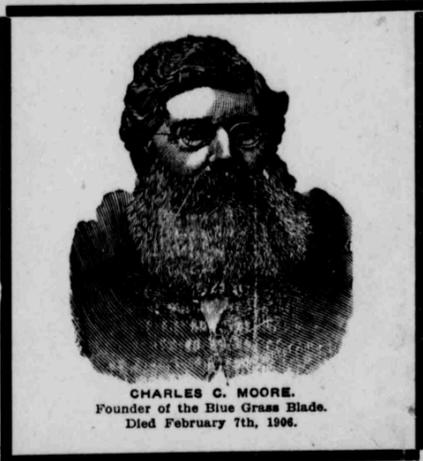
A. T. Parker  
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WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

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CHARLES C. MOORE.  
Founder of the Blue Grass Blade.  
Died February 7th, 1906.

JAMES E. HUGHES - Editor and Publisher

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## EDITORIAL

Truth alone means freedom.

That which is true cannot be evil.

A little thought and a little kindness accomplish more good than gold.

Virtues must have their complements, else they become like vices. The just man must also be generous, else he is hard. The generous man must also be just, else he is weak.

Every day we have opportunity to make our own life a bridge upon which another may pass over to something that he could not have attained by himself.

Bigotry has quailed beneath the ringing blows of Freethought, dogmatism has become more humble and the priesthood has well nigh forgotten to prate of a hell of fire in which the unbaptized souls of babes forever burn. This is what humanity owes to Freethought.

Religion is but the ridiculous garment which the ignorant has weaved about so-called Omniscience. The wise man and philosopher will not mistake the machinery for the principle, the wretched train for the priceless cargo of thought it may contain.

Every recorded miracle is a mere myth, the founders of every religious cult were but mortal men, and the writers of most of the so-called sacred books were only scheming priests. Let this be understood and the Christian religion is stripped of its tattered vestments.

Most preachers assume, or would have the people infer, that they are more sacred than Christ and that God Almighty has taken them into his especial and private confidence. America is too much cursed with a grand army of Me-and-God creatures, who

would, if invested with plenary power require heretics to recant on pain of death. Happily for humanity, Freethought has drawn the fiendish fangs from the wolf of religious fanaticism and it can now only tug at its chain and growl. Instead of fixing their eyes constantly upon the kingdom of the God the preacher, the priests are chasing the almighty dollars and fighting for political preferment and advancement.

The professors of modern Christianity are the intellectual heirs of those who poisoned Socrates on an idle supposition and who refused to consider the Copernican theory, lest they got an idea into their fat heads that would fracture their theological hats.

The aristocracy of brains differs from those of birth and boodle as the stars differ from a fire-fly. Intellect is the brightest star in the educational firmament of humanity and its glory is shed upon the coter's child, even more than upon the scorbatic offsprings of monarchs and of millionaires.

## WE NEED MORE SUBSCRIBERS.

Friends, this an oft-told tale, but we are in need of more subscribers to make the Blade the success it deserves to be. Were the Blade's editorial management capable of earning a livelihood from the Blade's patronage, instead of being compelled to turn to other sources, it could be made a still greater improvement and accomplish still greater good for the meritorious cause of human liberty. What the Blade needs is single attention. To properly look after its editorial work, its make-up and welfare, requires the entire time of its editor. This he is unable to give, because of an insufficient support. Could we double our subscription list before the end of the present year, it could be done and the Blade could be made the best and most interesting Freethought paper in the entire country. We have the will, but we lack the means. One new subscriber sent in by each present subscriber would furnish what is needed. Now the question is can you do it? Will you do it? The issue is before you and it depends altogether upon you.

## SOCIALISM IN THE FRENCH CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Friends of the collectivist principle of socialism may find real enjoyment in the gallant contest conducted by M. Jean Jaures in the French Chamber of Deputies, his battle with Clemenceau over the ideals of the Socialistic propaganda.

Judging from the press reports it was an oratorical clash of unusual brilliancy, a duel of political and economical principles between the virtual head of the French government and the veteran socialist chief. It was the latter to whom the German government paid an extraordinary compliment by prohibiting him from speaking in Germany on a memorable occasion lest he disturb the minds of the German people.

Jaures forced the issue with an interpellation as to the attitude of the Sarrien-Clemenceau ministry toward labor, in which he positively reasserted the soundness of the collectivist principle in socialism. The interpellation was accepted and a day named for the debate. When it became known that Jaures was to speak the French republic crowded into the chamber and he was given an ovation. At this moment the climacteric for socialism in France had come. For two hours, it is said, he held his auditors spell-bound by the elegance of his diction, his intonation, his gorgeous imagery and flights of lofty ideals. It is described as prose poetry delivered in a grand tone, the voice of an organ. On this occasion Jaures declared that the communication of all products of labor in a perfect commonwealth formed the only capable solution for the evils of society.

Doubtless the Jaure's speech has had an electrical effect upon the cause of socialism in the French republic, for his great weight of moral character, his good heartedness and his human sympathy, gives him a prestige that adds lustre and strength to his oratorical ability.

Although the leading articles in the symposium on organization have already been published, the columns of the Blade are not closed to any further discussion upon such a subject. It is too important a question to be abandoned at once. The discussion should be continued until every Freethinker has had his or her say. There is plenty of time and when all have fully spoken then we can determine what action should be taken. The Blade invites further articles on organization. The Blade would like to see an organization of which every Freethinker could be justly proud and point to it as a factor in the development of the race. No organization that is to possess and exercise any influence upon society can be successfully built in a day, but now is the time to begin considering plans to that end and ascertain whether or not such an organization can be built and maintained in America.

The dangers upon which our good ship of state is drifting, in these weak, piping times of peace, arise not in foreign courts and camps, but are conceived in iniquity by the law pampered plutocrats and brought forth in sin by the political bosses of the country. Fire the bosses and the plutocrat loses his power.

## RELIGIOUS INVASION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK.

Did any Freethinker doubt the necessity of an active, energetic and ambitious Freethought organization, let them now turn to New York and observe the force and power of a movement recently set in operation to secure by law the reading of the Bible and the imparting of religious instruction in the common, public schools.

Angels and ministers of grace, defend us! Not content with their million dollar edifices, their sectarian schools and colleges, to say nothing of the thousands of Sunday schools dotted over the land, legal enactments are now sought to convert the little, red school-house into religious institutions that the young may be educated in the fear and terror of a vengeful God that the priesthood may be guaranteed a continued support from future generations, fearful lest the agnosticism of the age overwhelm and destroy them.

The movement, which is backed by ministers of all denominations and votaries of widely differing sects, has for its object the passage of a rule by the Board of Education, providing for such religious instruction in the public schools as shall be pleasing and acceptable to a majority of the Christian sects. This must be met and fought by the rationalists of that great metropolis. It is their duty to offer all the resistance of which they are capable. Of course there is a possibility that there would be no "agreement" upon the particular text books to be used, but when we stop to consider that there appears to be a union of accepted antagonistic forces to accomplish a common purpose, that possibility becomes too remote to be deserving of consideration. The movement is designed, solely, against what they are pleased to denominate "Godless public schools," and the proposition promulgated is to have in the curriculum of the public schools a provision for one lesson each week on the "great truths that are accepted by all denominations." In order to successfully and completely deceive the members of the Board of Education ament their real motive, it is further suggested that "a lesson in moral philosophy be given twice a week." Religious instruction and moral instruction to be given at different times. What a bluff! Every doctor of divinity in the land claims that there is no morality worth the having except that which they claim is contained in the Bible, and this would mean three Bible lessons each week upon the "pretense of teaching religion once and moral philosophy twice.

The fact that morality is not dependent upon religion may be inferred from the published statements of those who are advocating the move. Bishop Greer is quoted as saying: "There must be moral and religious training among the children of our public schools, if we expect to continue to be a righteous nation." The very expression "moral and religious" placed in the conjunctive is a tacit admission of their absolute independence of each other. In other words, what is moral is not necessarily religious, and what is religious is not necessarily moral. This view is reported as being supported by Rev. Dr. Atterbury, a Presbyterian Bible-banger who also recommends the preparation of a religious text-book for common use in the schools. Rabbi Mendes, a Jewish priest, also gives encouragement to the movement and is said to have declared that "this generation is irreverent and irreverence leads to immorality." Father McMillan, of the Paulist Catholic educational brotherhood takes the same view but with an eye to business rather than the public good, he very cautiously suggests that "on account of religious differences we shall have to be very careful in preparing a text-book."

Reading between the lines one can readily perceive the motive that is under the whole movement. Simply a union of forces against a common foe and to secure a perpetuation of their religious dogmas and offices at public expense. The "irreverence" of the age complained of simply means a general disbelief in the existence of a personal God. This growing disbelief is rapidly undermining the church citadels, wresting from them the unholy political power they have hitherto enjoyed and want to use for personal profit and aggrandizement. They clearly recognize that the mental attitude of the age, one of the potent results of education, is antagonistic to church influence and power, that the fires upon their unclean altars are slowly but surely dying out, and that the very structure of Christianity is undermined, weakened and partially destroyed.

Why, then, this combination? Simply this. All denominations profess a belief in God and the efficacy of the cleansing power of the Blood of Jesus Christ. These are the doctrines to be taught. The inculcation of such mental moonshine is calculated to benefit all alike. Once get these doctrines firmly implanted in the minds of the children and some sect is duly bound to reap the benefit. Religious differences, which will still continue, is to be relied upon to furnish a prorata distribution of the sectarian adherents.

If the Board of Education is wise it will refuse to adopt any such rule as that proposed. To engraft such a system upon the public schools would be a distinct violation of the provisions of the federal constitution, but in all probability, these advocates of sectarian faiths feel that there is considerable power and force in that political shibboleth, "Of what use is the constitution between friends?" Again, if the Freethinkers of New York be wise,

if they are alert to their own interests, they will take immediate steps to effectually resist this threatened encroachment upon their rights and privileges. Are there not enough Freethinkers, i. e. rationalists, agnostics, liberals, and atheists in that seething city, to put a bold front on the matter and fight it to a finish? Surely there are some Davids ready to meet these Goliaths of Gath and with the slings of truth hurl a veritable Gibraltar of sound argument against such illegal purposes.

Don't wait until it is everlastingly too late. Get to work now and be prepared to meet the orthodox foe. If the Blade had the means at its command it would take up the cudgel in defense of the people's rights and prevent, if possible, this sectarian invasion of the little, red schoolhouse of America.

Here is an instance wherein a powerful and active organization of Freethinkers could render valuable service. Here is an evidence of the need of such an organization properly supported. Here is an evidence of the almost criminal negligence of Freethinkers in failing to be prepared for just such emergencies. The Blade makes strong utterance because it feels strongly upon the subject. There is nothing to be gained, nothing to be understood by saying one thing and meaning another. If we are to maintain our rights as sovereigns of this republic, it is time we get a move upon ourselves and prepare to meet organization with organization. Single handed we are overthrown one by one. United we are a rock against which the powers of hell will battle in vain.

## RELIGION AND CRIME.

The oft-repeated assertion that religious teaching subserves the highest and best moral influences, was delivered a powerful body blow in the city of Lexington, Friday, July 6th. On that day James Pearsall, a young negro, was legally hanged for an unspeakable crime against an old and imbecile woman, and like all others of his clan, he died in the firm belief that through repentance he had been redeemed and, consequently, it is only one step from the gallows to eternal glory in the New Jerusalem.

That the readers of the Blade may fully understand the situation, the following is taken from the published report of the hanging as given by the leading newspaper of this city.

When the service was ended, Rev. Oglesby turned to Pearsall and said:

"If you have a statement you want to make now is the time for you to make it. Do you want to make any statement?"

"Yes, sir!" replied the doomed wretch.

"Then you can make it now. If you want to make any confession of guilt or innocence it should be made now as you are soon to confront your God."

With this injunction the doomed man faced the crowd and in a scarcely audible voice said:

"I want to thank Mr. Wallace, the jailor and others for treating me so nice. I want to thank the death watch for being good to me. I have had no trouble with any of them."

Here Pearsall faltered. The words seemed to choke him and he appeared unable to proceed further, but indicating that he had not finished, Rev. Oglesby spoke words of encouragement to him and said:

"Tell the truth. The Lord wants you to tell the truth."

Pearsall spoke a little louder and replied:

"I have been in this jail for seventeen months, and I have never had a cross word with anybody. I am going home now. I want to meet you all in heaven. I am going home."

"Are you prepared to die?" was asked.

"Yes, sir. I am saved and redeemed."

"Are you innocent of the crime for which you are to die?"

"Yes, I am innocent."

"Do you make the statement in the presence of God?"

"Yes, in God's presence."

"Very well, Pearsall, the end has come."

What truth there may be in the expressed thoughts of the culprit as above quoted, there is but one inference. That inference is that the surest and safest passport through the Pearly Gates is by the gallows route; that it is better, and your chances for heaven are greater, to be born a negro rape-fiend than to be born an Ingersoll or a Paine. Should the Blade's editor be presented with a free ticket to a front seat near the throne with the understanding that eternity had to be spent in the company of such a bestial brute, it would be declined with thanks and a preference expressed for more congenial society even though the climatic conditions be unfavorable.

Here was a man, convicted by a jury of twelve men, of the foulest, the blackest crime known to human society, actually confessing to a belief that he was a fit subject for heaven. If his confession was true, why hang him? If he is fit to associate with the angels in highest heaven and sing hosannas about the throne of the Most High, is he not also a fit companion for men? Did the mere fact of hanging him transform him from a vile sinner to a virtuous saint? Is a creature unfit for earth fit for heaven? Saved and redeemed and yet unfit to

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