

Ruled by Orthodoxy.

Editor Torch of Reason:

I am pleased to see in my old days, the progress which is being made in Silverton.

I hope the plan of organization and teaching will be pushed to the fullest extent of the society's ability. The field is large and the harvest abundant if it can only be captured and gathered in. There are in this place Freethinkers enough to organize, and run a church and Sunday school that would exercise more influence than any one (probably any two) of the orthodox churches here, but I am the only known infidel in the place.

But it would probably be an utter impossibility to effect an organization here, so great is the fear of orthodox persecution. It has injured me: injures me now, and does undoubtedly injure others more or less. But that is only a greater reason why we should organize. Orthodoxy persecutes most, those who fear it most, and the weak and defenseless. The orthodox devil is a coward, and like an Indian or a wolf, seldom faces a courageous and able antagonist. Square contest in the open field is not the fort of orthodox christianity. But I have neither ability nor means to expend in the work in Turner, or I would treat myself to a missionary racket; and it would make a racket here. But success would mean a good deal of improvement in the future lives of the young people.

The gentlemanly and lady-like conduct of the Silverton Secular students is as it should be, and it is to be hoped that the teachers turned out by your school will teach similar conduct wherever they go.

Come to Turner and see the contrast under religious teachers. One always knows when it is recess or "school out" by the Comanche yell, and shouting, screaming, scuffling, stone throwing, quarrelling, impudence, profanity and even obscenity, which is the order along the walk to and from the school house and even on the campus; and ladies and even men who like to go along undisturbed, not infrequently wait until the hulliballoo of the pupils is over before passing along that street, or take another street to avoid the uncivilized racket which pours from the Turner school house.

There has never a known Freethinker taught school here; the teachers having mostly been Methodist and preachers at that; and the present one is a Methodist preacher's wife—very pious.

If secular teachers can't improve on such a way of doing they ought be ashamed of themselves. Yet the parents are as much to blame as the teachers. It is hard to civilize at school, those born and

raised in uncivilized homes. Especially so with an apathetic if not uncivilized school board. But no infidel can get on the school board at Turner.

School work is the work for Secularists to turn their attention to, not only to counteract pernicious religions and also partisan political teaching, but to hold in check the tendency to the manipulation of the school fund from the children's interest to the church interest, support of preachers, etc.

It is hardly fair to the children that of the public money appropriated for their education, five or ten dollars per month in excess of a reasonable teacher's salary should find its way into the church hat; but that such is often the case, I believe is sufficiently evident.

F. S. MATTESON.

Some Corrections.

Editor Torch of Reason:

I have just been reading an article in the Torch of April 8th entitled "The Exodus of the Jews," by H. D. Burrows, wherein I found the following mistakes, which I thought should be corrected:

1. Reference is given to Genesis 15:13, where God is said to have given certain promises to Abram, and which Mr. Burrows says happened 1913 B. C., which is correct according to Bible chronology, but he then says the above date was "just 257 years before the flood began." This is a mistake for Abram did not live before the flood. See Genesis 7:7. According to the same chronological references the flood commenced 2349 B. C., making the above referred to conversation between God and Abram to have taken place 436 years after the flood instead of 257 years before.

2. Mr. B. next refers to Genesis 47:27, giving the number 70 of Jacob's household that entered into Egypt, and stating that this happened "706 B. C., just 50 years before the flood began." This is a mistake; it should have been 1706 B. C., and 643 years after the flood.

3. Again Mr. B. refers to Noah and "the greatest zoological collection on record in the year 1656 B. C." It should have been 2349 B. C.


The rest of the piece as far as I can see is correct.

MICHAEL JOHNSON.

Vale, Ore., April 16.

Room in Heaven.

The Freeman says: "It has been estimated that 750,000,000 of the family of man are heathen, while Protestants number only 30,000,000." And then, "a large number of the nominally Christian are really ungodly or godless." This is rather a poor show for a faith with divinity at its back for near nine hundred years.



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