

Atheism and Agnosticism.

EDITOR TORCH OF REASON:

We find in your issue of July 8th. the following, to which we desire to make a few suggestions, as we cannot accept your statement that the existence of a God cannot be disproved: "We believe that atheism and agnosticism are both right. If we were asked the question 'do you believe there is a God?' we could truthfully answer 'no,' and this belief makes one an atheist. If, however, we were asked the question 'do you know there is no God?' we would answer, 'no, we do not positively know;' and this lack of absolute knowledge makes one agnostic."

While we fully admit it is impossible to prove there is a God, it would seem quite easy of demonstration that there can be no such thing as the Christian God, if any credit is given to the logic of reason. The first proposition is based entirely on faith without reason, and nothing but the fancies of imagination to support it, while the latter is as susceptible of demonstration as that one and one make two, or the geometrical proposition that the square, described upon the base of a right angle triangle, is equal to the sum of the squares described on the two sides. These are reasoning processes, based on self-evident truths, and must be correct, as they prove themselves.

The so-called pagan delegated to different objects supreme powers, attributes and authority. Each god within its own sphere being supreme. The Christian God combines all these attributes, powers and authority. He is the one supreme central source, commanding and directing all things from one central source, and from this central source all laws and all things pertaining to the universe emanate. This claim presupposes a common center, from which such directions come, and from which such laws emanate. If, then, there is no center there can be no central source from which directions come, or laws emanate, and the theory or claim of a central governing Christian God must fall by the very facts of the situation.

We believe it to be a self-evident truth that the universe is without limit. At least it is so admitted by those who are not blinded by prejudice, and whose minds can get beyond the limits of a forty-acre lot. To illustrate our position, we might, if possible, start from any point on this earth, and going in a straight line in any direction, at the rate of a billion miles a second, for a billion years and we would be no nearer the limit than when we started. There would still be a beyond, and there is no place at which there would not be a beyond. The laws of attraction and gravitation demonstrate there can be no limit. It is by these laws that all

so-called heavenly bodies are kept in place. If there was a limit, beyond which there were no such bodies, there would be nothing to hold the outlying ones in place, and they would fall into the next nearest, and the attraction having been withdrawn by the displacement of the first, they too, with their increase, would fall into the next nearest, and all would come together in one common mass at one common center. A common center is, therefore, logically an impossibility for that which has no limit can have no center. And as there can be no center, there can be no central source ruling and governing the universe, and from which all authority and laws emanate.

It is simply an impossibility, and from these self-evident truths, the conclusion is irresistible, there can be no such thing as a God ruling and governing the universe. The point where your university is located is as much the center as any other conceivable point, and any other conceivable point is as much the center as it. The simple truth is, the laws which govern the universe, and all things within it, are a part of it, and always have been. They are of it, and a part of it. They emanate from no central source, for there is and can be no central source from which to emanate. They operate only when conditions permit, and they create the conditions upon which to operate.

The Christian conception that God is an enlarged man, existing at some central point and commanding and directing all things is not tenable. It is contrary to known facts, and contrary to the logic of reason from known facts. Such a God is an impossibility. The proposition cannot be maintained by facts or reason. The wicked pagan had as much right to delegate these powers to any visible object their fancies might select, as the modern Christian to a fancied enlarged man.

Both are pure products of fancy, and the world is rapidly coming to know and understand this, and are looking beyond man-made Gods for the true solution of the problems of the universe.

CHAS. K. TENNEY.

Wisconsin.

That's right, Brother Fenny, let's talk about these things, and perhaps we and our friends may be lead to discover some truths.

We like your criticism, and are perfectly well satisfied that you are right in believing that there is no such being as a man-like god, or that there is one particle of proof of any god whatever. You see, we are atheistic. But when we talk of KNOWING, we have to admit that we don't know very much.

You say you BELIEVE it to be a

self-evident truth that the universe is without limit. But really, you don't know, and so you are somewhat agnostic. We cannot conceive the universe or anything without a limit; neither can we think of it with a limit. We cannot, therefore, conceive of a center; neither can we conceive of a thing without a center. We do NOT know, and we still must remain atheistic and agnostic.

Equal-Rights For the Boy.

If a man had a \$50 bull pup he would look after it carefully and not let it run around at night all over town. But if he has a boy it is different. He is turned loose at a tender age to go to the devil, and then people wonder where the great army of tramps, bums, dead-beats, loafers, gamblers and drunkards come from each decade. They are germinated from pure seed, gathered from our homes and sown broadcast on our streets and alleys. It may be that your boy is making a growth in this direction. At all events the boy ought to be given an equal showing with the bull pup.—

Ex.

Church Meeting.

There will be a regular business meeting of the Silverton Secular Church at Liberal Hall next Sunday. The principle business coming before the meeting will be the adoption or rejection of a resolution amending the constitution so as to conform with the State Union. It is of the utmost importance that all the members be in attendance so that an intelligent vote may be had.

As the requirements for membership now stand any one may become a member by signing the objects of the church, and no fees or dues are required. This does not appear to be a safe way, since the church owns considerable property and should, of course, be very careful in regard to membership. If the organization is worth belonging to at all, it is worth paying for and surely every true Secularist would be willing to pay a small membership fee and thereby assist in getting some funds into the Church treasury by which we can better carry on our work.

A MEMBER.

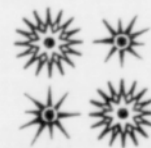
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