

be apt to find the best way to work, and our cause will move on very rapidly.

The ministers of the gospel(?) of Jesus Christ have very successfully used ridicule in their work of keeping their little ones in subjection, and if the same weapon is now turned upon them in order to awaken thought and a stronger love for the truth, they cannot complain. We are "almost persuaded" that the "conclusion of the whole matter" is, that we should use reason in our work of Secular salvation when the patients are not too far gone, but when necessary purge the patient with the powerful, purgative pill of ridicule.

A Challenge.

Our friend, the Methodist brother worker in this city, took occasion, according to a reporter, last Sunday evening, to attack his Infidel friends by showing what great things he and his have done for the world, and of how little account Infidels are in God's great plan. It seems that he has been trying to investigate the work of Infidels, but he has met with very little success, not having yet discovered anything worth mentioning, excepting the Liberal University, which, said he, with appropriate expression, "is the only institution of the kind in the world". This is true, but it does not necessarily follow that Infidels have not built many schools and done very much other beneficent work, and it seems that our God-fearing friend is trying to injure our school, rather than trying to get at the facts.

He also stated that he could respect an Atheist who is honest in his belief, but who, instead of putting stumbling blocks in the way of others, would keep his belief to himself. This is what we have claimed all along. The preachers care but little what the people believe if they will only keep still and help support their church. We had a personal experience which confirms this idea. The minister, who had charge of the church of which we were once a member, begged of us to stay in the church anyway, no matter if we did not believe in the creed. He said that many who then belonged did not believe it, but that it was far better to work in an organized body for righteousness than to be trying to work alone. We admit his argument did make us feel somewhat lonesome, but it also made us feel indignant, and we told him that we would not play the hypocrite for him nor any one else. This made him mad, and he talked very earnestly to the young backslider before him, but we were beyond the point where priest could frighten. In his defense, we wish to say that he was one of the best and most conscientious ministers we ever met. His mistake was not so much

his as it was that of the beastly theories which had been pounded into him from childhood and forever clinched at a theological seminary.

But to return to our subject. We would like very much to have our friends, yes, and enemies, if we have any, have the opportunity of coming closer, if possible, to the truth than any of us have yet arrived, and, as the said minister of this city has made the statements above quoted, which were intended as an injury to the cause we so much love, and for which we labor without ceasing, we hereby challenge the said exponent of Christianity and any assistants he may choose to public debate, either through the columns of the Torch of Reason or any other periodical mutually agreed upon, or from the platform of the Liberal Hall or the Methodist church of this city. The question for debate may be, "Resolved, that Christianity has done more for civilization than has Infidelity," or any other question pertaining to Christianity or Infidelity. A marked copy of this paper will, on publication, be sent to our Christian brother, and we hope that we may have an honorable, conscientious contest that may prove profitable to all concerned, and to the upbuilding of truth and righteousness.

Another Move.

Another step forward has been taken since the last issue of the Torch. The step referred to is our move from our rented home to our permanent one on the University grounds. Here we are, and now we can do much better work in superintending the building and getting ready for our long campaign.

Now let every one enlist. Bring your weapons to our arsenal. Come, this is the garden spot of the world, and a better battle field could not be found. Our enemies are entrenched behind their works which they have been years in constructing, but which will crumble like a child's house in the sand if we can only give up the old method of bushwhacking and organize our forces. NOW IS THE TIME for us to fight if we expect to catch a glimpse of the coming victory.

A Bible Excuse for Drunkenness.

A man arraigned in a New York police court recently for drunkenness made the somewhat novel and startling defense for himself that he had only been following the directions of the bible. On being asked what he meant by this, the accused called for a copy of the bible and read the following passage from Prov. xxxi. 6-7:

"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty,

and remember his misery no more."

The incident, it is said, "made quite a sensation", and the man was discharged.

Tenth Annual Convention.

The Tenth Annual Convention of the Oregon State Secular Union will be held at Wagner, Oregon, three days, beginning Sunday, July 3, E. M. 298. This is the first time a convention has been called to meet in this part of the state, and a splendid time is anticipated. The first day will be devoted to exercises at the grave of Katie Kehm Smith, and the second day to the celebration of Independence Day. A full program will be announced later.

PEARL W. GEER,
President.

Silverton, Or., May 5, 1898.

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