

like the bubbling of a wave on the breast of the sea. It flashed from the fulness of his being. His oration was like a thing of life. Every part was fitly joined together and moved with accordant thought. There was no catastrophe in the evolution of his magnificent ideas, whose streams swelled to ampler tides, and bore his hearers almost unconsciously to new and astonishing views. Even the orthodox began to applaud. The power was irresistible. It was the force of truth, but truth presented with the dazzling splendor of a picture. It was truth flowing from the heart of a man and not from dogmatism. It was truth radiant with passion, bursting into quick and scintillating light. One could scarcely believe that the smiling and dimpled orator, so gay, so cordial, with the keen sword of a Saladin, light and airy like a feather, was hewing down, with the strength of the hammer of Thor, the venerable and gigantic superstitions of the past. He was not the ideal iconoclast, severe and dark-browed, and threatening like a thunder-cloud. He was like a May day, full of glittering and beautiful fancies, and did not seem to bear within his bosom the weapons of such enormous destruction. Not until he ceased did we know how far they had been borne. It was a dramatic surprise to look back and see what realms had been passed. Ingersoll's eloquence was like the modern railroad. It bore one over vast tracks to the other side of apparently impassable mountains, where prospects hitherto undreamed of burst upon the sight. At the close of his oration, everybody was with him. They saw as he saw and felt as he felt. By the power of an infinite sympathy, he compelled allegiance to the hitherto unrecognized truth.

If one for a moment left the orator and watched the audience, a most interesting picture was revealed. It was seen like an ocean tossing from "grave to gay, from lively to severe." Now, ripples of smiles swept over it, then there was a billowy break of laughter, then there was silence as some great thought unrolled, while tears glistened as the pathetic music of his voice touched the fountains of affection. Every word was felt as if a great play was being enacted or some mighty opera sung.

"Well," said Moccasin Bill, as they went out after the marvellous oration, "this is simply wonderful. I am satisfied as I never was before. If there ever was such a thing as getting religion, I've got it; for I could holler as loud as the Methodists for very joy. I've been on the mountain top."

"If such a speech as that doesn't give a man faith, I don't know what does," said Charlie. "I never respected human nature as I do now, or felt there was so much

worth living for. They talk about Ingersoll's destroying. How false! He gives a thousand times more than he takes away. He gives a clear sight. He pulls away the curtains hung by the priests, painted and daubed; and shows the genuine drama of human life. He takes away the skeleton, and the full-blooded man appears. Even if he didn't build, I'd rather live outdoors than in the gloomy caves of superstition."

"But he does build," said Burnham. "He only dissipates fancies. The infidel is the only builder; for he alone deals with facts, which he does not undertake to demolish. He breaks the images, but the material he uses for better purposes."

"Don't you know," said Paddie, "that people like to dwell in fancies. They had rather fancy they are going to heaven than really know that they are going, and they call that man iconoclast who puts knowledge in place of fancy."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

For the Torch of Reason.
Current Events.

The "Christians" have been howling and pawing the air over the massacre of Armenians. They have worked up sympathy enough to almost plunge the countries interested into war. After all it was but the outgrowth of damn fool "mission work." Some Christian society sends a fanatic (no others go) to some "heathen" land to try to overthrow their form of government, or to at least dictate its policy, and the people after sizing up the mouthy and brainless local agent of an invisible deity, very properly refuse to allow him to tear down a moral condition with which they have been contented for 2000 years and set up a new and comparatively untried article.

The great religious syndicate then cries out for "protection" for this aggressive vandal who is turned loose upon an inoffensive people unused to our ideas of civilization. I, for one, would prefer to have our government draw the line between protection to an American citizen who is attending to his own business and one who is meddling with the customs of other countries. There are none of us who would think it a hardship to go to war to fight for the release of a citizen maltreated, but a whole lot of us object to being sent to face a foe to save the live of a damn fool crank who, by his incessant meddling and old woman's curiosity, has got into trouble with some government.

These Christians beg money every time they get an outsider in their "tabernacle" and then use it to brow-beat the men to whose generosity they are indebted for the means to procure food and raiment, and consign them to "hell fire." Ingratitude is not the smallest of their misdemeanors, nor is it fitted to head the list—where malice,

envy, bigotry, fanaticism and tyranny are found in the line.

I have taught school for twenty years in Iowa. At our last teachers' meeting, held in a church, our county superintendent asked a "brother" present if he believed reverence could be taught in our schools without the use of the Bible and the repetition every morning of the "Lord's Prayer." The brother, of course, said, "No, I do not." Mr. Superintendent then gave us to understand that other things being equal he would fill the schools with "professors," thus placing another premium on hypocrisy. My wife, daughter and myself all teach. Before any of us will carry the so-called gospel banner we'll go to the poorhouse. The accursed cowardice of this age is lamentable; business men, professional men and others who do not believe the orthodox story are found cringing before the "chariot of fire" afraid of losing a nickel.

There sat numbers of teachers and others who are personally satisfied that the superintendent himself is a narrow, bigoted, vicious, unfair and arbitrary crank, and yet not one except myself called him down. Lord, you ought to have seen his look. Cotton Mather, Paris, or Phipps couldn't have beaten the look of malevolent determination to crucify me at the earliest possible date.

When a man who doesn't believe orthodoxy, puts a nickel in a church coffer, he has in him the necessary qualifications, if coached a little, for a devilish scoundrel, inasmuch as policy could alone dictate the act.

I like the Torch and would remit the price but my fight in the cause at home keeps me too cussed poor to take a bad cold with any assurance of keeping it. R. BRITTON.
Griswold, Iowa.

The Torch Shines.

Editor Torch of Reason:

Please find inclosed 25 cents for which please send the Torch of Reason three months to the inclosed address of a friend of the cause.

I am reading the Torch every week and think it is just the right paper to open the eyes of the people who let the ministers pull the wool over their eyes. If they would only read the Torch it would put them on the right trail to freedom and liberty.

The majority of the people in this country are very liberal in their views and if we had some one to give a few good lectures on science and morality, I think we could start a large organization and do good liberal work through this part of Idaho.

I will work for your paper and get all the subscribers I possibly can. Yours for freedom,

OLAF SORENSON.
Council, Idaho.

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