

Call for the Congress of 1897.

TO THE SECULARISTS AND FREETHINKERS OF THE UNITED STATES:

You are hereby requested to meet in convention at Hardman Hall, in the city of New York, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 19th, 20th and 21st of November.

Friends, we shall meet in this Congress under favorable conditions. The times are auspicious. Heresy is becoming popular, even in ministerial circles. The spirit of Secularism is pervading our ecclesiastical institutions, our literature, our whole social life. Religion, giving way before continual bombardments and repeated assaults, has abandoned the strongholds of dogmatic theology, and is seeking refuge in the fields of humanitarianism. It may be that it is in this way that it is gradually to disappear—by becoming absorbed in broader phases of thought and action.

In the meantime we must continue the work before us. It is important that Freethinkers should combine. With so many examples around us illustrating the power of organization and of combined effort, it would be the height of folly in us not to have the benefits of such methods. There are important questions demanding our attention. The God-in-the-constitution amendment was again introduced in congress at the last session. Our National Association, with its allies, fought this amendment before the congressional committees, and for the time being defeated it. The amendment has been reinstated, backed up by a petition which is claimed to have attached to it the names of millions of signers. We must meet the conspirators again this coming winter. The people must be aroused to the impending danger and educated in the principles of liberty and justice. The Sabbath question and that of the bible in the public schools also require consideration. The efforts of bigotry and intolerance must be thwarted wherever possible.

In our discussions there should be the broadest latitude in the expression of opinion. There must be absolute freedom, subject only to such regulations as may be necessary in conducting the Congress in an orderly manner, and with due regard to the rights of all the members. Let us meet and consult in a spirit of friendship, of conciliation, and of cordial co-operation. If we do this we shall have a grand and glorious Congress, from which we shall retire refreshed in spirit, confirmed in our convictions, and stimulated to more effective action and to greater achievement during the year to come. C. B. WAITE, Acting President. E. E. REICHWALD, Secretary. OTTÖ WETTSTEIN, Treasurer. T. B. WAKEMAN, New York, J. B. REMSBURG, Kansas, FRANKLIN STEINER, Iowa, PEARL W. GEER, Oregon, Vice Presidents.

A Suggestion.

It will be in order for Brown University to again demand the resignation of President Andrews, for the reason that in an address to the students of the university, on resuming his office, he affirmed his belief, founded upon personal observation, that in the east the Crescent was in the ascendant over the Cross, that Mohammedanism was gaining more than Christianity. Upon other authority it is stated that Mohammedan and Buddhist missionaries in America and Europe are making more converts than Christian missionaries are making in Asia and Africa.—Ex.

The Privileged of The Earth.

Mrs. Besant finds that Madame Blavatsky foretold the troubles through which the Theosophical Society is passing, but this unfavorable "cycle" is to end next year, certainly before the end of the century. "This society," Mrs. Besant says, "is the ark of spiritual truth," and those who do any sort of work for it are "the privileged of the earth." It reminds us of the glorious reign of the saints on earth, which was always going to begin, though somehow it never got a real start. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said Jesus. "We are the salt of the earth," says Mrs. Besant. The one is as accurate, and modest, as the other.—Freethinker.

A Broad Departure.

A New York dispatch says it is reported in high official circles that Archbishop Corrigan has been negotiating with Superintendent Jasper of the public schools for the affiliation of parochial and public schools in that city. He has offered, it is alleged, to turn the Catholic schools with their 70,000 children, over to the municipal school authorities, provided he is permitted to give an hour's instruction daily to the Catholic children of the public schools. This is the stipulation. He makes no other, either as regards text books or teachers. It is said many other metropolitans are anxious to adopt a similar policy if it meets the approval of the apostolic delegate.

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