

**National Convention.**

To the Secularists, Freethinkers and Lovers of Liberty in America:

The Annual Congress of the American Secular Union and Free-thought Federation will be held at Washington Hall, 70 E. Adams St., in the city of Chicago, Ill., November 18, 19 and 20. The object of this Congress is to transact the regular business of this association, to devise plans for better organization and for the prosecution of its work during the coming year, to advocate the complete secularization of our government, to disseminate a knowledge of the principles of Free-thought, and to enable Liberals to become better acquainted with each other and to unite them in a closer fellowship. The purposes for which this association was organized were never more pressing. Its work must be both defensive and aggressive. We must defend our institutions against the attacks that will undoubtedly be made upon them by the theocratic National Reform Association and its allies. We must prosecute with increased energy our fight against the exemption of church property from taxation, the employment of chaplains, religious instruction and ceremonies in our public schools, Sunday laws, religious tests and proclamations, appropriations to sectarian institutions, donations of government land for Roman chapels and donations of government money to Methodist Book Concerns.

As a result of our war with Spain it is probable that Cuba, Porto Rica and the Phillippines will become a part, or be under the protectorate, of our republic. If so, we must demand that in providing for their government the widest religious liberty be secured for their inhabitants, and that no partiality be shown to any church. To accomplish these purposes Liberals must unite and co-operate for their own protection and the extension of intelligence, Free-thought and liberty. We therefore urge Liberal thinkers everywhere to attend and to contribute to this Congress. We shall strive to make the sessions interesting and profitable to them. Able speakers will address them, inspiring music will be rendered, and fraternity and good cheer will abound.

Funds are needed to defray the expenses of the Congress and carry on the work of the society. Its usefulness has been impaired in the past by a lack of funds. This should not be allowed. Christians contribute annually an average of \$10 each for the support of their church. Is our cause less worthy of support than theirs? We have no right to be indifferent to its success and withhold from it our support. We owe a debt to the heroic men and women of the past who labored and suffered that we

might have a greater freedom than they enjoyed. They sowed, we reaped, and we in turn should sow that others may reap again. In no better way can we discharge our obligations to these dead pioneers. We owe a duty to our living workers — to sustain those who are opposing religious superstition and ecclesiastical tyranny. We should encourage them and aid them. If all would do their part the victory would soon be ours. The battle of Santiago, it is well known, was won because every soldier did his duty. Supposing that in the midst of the battle a portion of the army had withdrawn, or stacked their arms and left their comrades at the front to face alone that hell of shells and bullets. We owe a duty to posterity. We should strive to make the future better than the past has been.

We can leave our children no richer legacy than an enlarged domain of intellectual liberty, the only sure foundation of our liberty. We hope that every Liberal will respond to this appeal at once. Every dollar will be faithfully expended to advance the cause. Send your contributions to the treasurer, Otto Wettstein, Rochelle, Ill., or to our secretary, or to the editor of this paper.

J. E. REMS BURG, Pres.,  
Atchison, Kas.

E. C. REICHWALD, Sec.,  
141 S. Water St., Chicago, Ill.

**Liberalism Checked.**

"That settles it," said Tom Chafin, who attends a fashionable New York church, but is said to be very close, while he is ostensibly pious; "yes, that settles it," he repeated.

"Settles what?" asked his wife.

"Settles the question of our having chicken for dinner on Sundays. I have just been reading that the clergy are filled with alarm because liberalism is creeping into churches. Now, the dime I've been putting on the plate every Sunday goes for chickens from now on. If the preachers are kicking about liberalism in the churches I'll quit being liberal. That's all there is about it."

**Club Rates.**

The Weekly Oregonian is the best newspaper published in the Pacific Northwest. The subscription price is \$1.50 per year. We will give it, together with the Torch of Reason, for the exceedingly low price of \$1.75. You will get two papers for a little more than the price of one.

Remember, if you send us the names and addresses of 25 of your Liberal friends and acquaintances, we will make you a present of a copy of the Torch of Reason Song Book No. 1. This will only cost you a few minutes' work and a 2 cent stamp.

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