

Torch of Reason

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THURSDAY, NOV. 8, E. M. 300.

Unite The Liberal Press.

There are few things more important than the presence of the Liberal Press of every variety at the Cincinnati Liberal Congress.

Let it be there by its papers and publications and by its editors or some one to represent them and to speak for them. Some plan should be devised and there presented to have the Liberal papers become more co-operative and helpful to each other. As it stands now they are like the Sultan's children. It is the interest of each to kill all the others, or to swallow them alive. Their real interest is to enlarge the Liberal reading public, so as to have good pasture and support for all. Suppose the reduced price of subscription for more than one paper be recognized and extended to this effect. Books or papers obtained or subscribed for through the Secretary of the A. S. U. should be at a discount anyway and that discount be increased in proportion as more than one paper is subscribed for. Thus it would be the interest of the readers to subscribe for more than one paper, and to get up CLUBS to subscribe for as many as possible for common reading. At the same time it would be the interest of all editors and paper owners to have other papers subscribed for and to succeed, for in so doing each would share in the common benefit, by their own increased circulation. Secretary Reichwald, at Chicago as a center, and the Liberal publishers could certainly make this plan effective.

But if possible, suggest a better

way, for we must, in some way, stop the plan of growth by eating each other up. The first duty of every Liberal is to subscribe for, and circulate Liberal literature, and this he can do best by clubbing with readers and publishers.

Liberal Work and Hope.

We referred in the The Torch, under date of October 24, to an important editorial in the New York Truth Seeker, which seemed to be a sort of wet blanket for our Cincinnati Congress about to be. It seemed to show that the last twenty-five years of Liberal work, centered in our congresses had not accomplished much.

We replied by showing that the said Liberals had accomplished a great deal by placing a dam across the on-rushing stream of Theocratic aggression; and then diverting its arrested and stagnating waters into new and useful channels and the irrigation of fruitful deltas.

We are pleased to see that the Truth Seeker of Oct. 23, entertains very much the same view after all.

It says in substance that this winter the "God in the Constitution fellows" and the Sabbatarian Theocrats will be before Congress and the state legislatures, for a revolution of our government from the "Consent of the Governed" to their "God," and "His Holy Day," that is to THEM, and FOR all of the appropriations of pelf, plunder and power they can get,—for they "inherit the earth."

The Truth Seeker intimates rightly, that all of these attempts will be taken as unopposed and largely consented to, UNLESS there is a decided Liberal opposition, representing the Secular spirit that founded the government, and the real wish of the masses of the people now.

The Truth Seeker says that this has been done by the Liberals continuously since 1876, and of late, especially by President Putnam; and that now provision must be made to have it continued, and of course, as effectively as possible.

Now this is a very important business affair, and a practical reason for making this congress to be in fact, what it is theoretically, to-wit: a great representative body. For however great or small it may be, it is the only organized body that stands up for the Secular foundation upon which the Great Republic rests, and squarely opposes the efforts of the Gods and Devils and their "ministers" who would undermine and overthrow it. This Congress then, is the nucleus which represents the whole American people, as to their deepest interest, and most precious rights. There is really no other body to speak for them! "Why

don't they speak for themselves?" Do you ask? We answer: what is everybody's business is no body's; and that is more than doubly true when Religious and Theologic dures, abuse and social ostracism etc., etc. falls, often in ruinous doses, upon every single person who dares to speak up for our Secular Republic, as against the grasping Gods and Churches and their zealot owners and slaves. Only the few who are brave enough, and clear enough to be heroes dare to do that alone. In so doing, they must stand together, while they stand for, and represent the whole republic, and the silent masses who are really for it—but who dare not or cannot speak!

For this grand reason, let the next Congress be sustained in a way worthy of the great Secular cause it represents. To do that will take time, money and some sacrifice, but these are the only means by which anything great and good can be done for the Republic and Humanity. They can be served in the only Secular Congress as effectively as on the battle field!

Secular Transformation.

We have said that the great service of Liberalism in this country has been not only in damping up and arresting the inflow of Theocracy, which would destroy the Republic, but also in the further beneficent work of diverting its old miasma breeding sloughs and pools into bayous and healthy channels for navigation and irrigation.

This great service of Liberalism to the world was not alluded to when the Truth Seeker was showing how little the Liberals had accomplished; but it is included in its editorial of Oct. 27, on "The God in the Constitution Fellows," where it says: "We are sorry, extremely so, that the prospects of making a simple SECULAR HOLIDAY, out of the religious Holy-day called Sunday, is much dimmer than this Theocrat would have us believe." Then it also says: "There is fortunately a tendency to relegate the Bible to its place in literature as one of the many expressions of man's superstitious nature; but that is the principal gain the world has made in recent years along the lines the Theocrat follows."

We are glad to find these sentences in the Truth Seeker, for they illustrate what we meant by the great progress of Liberalism in the "diverting or bleaching out, instead of the destructive and Iconoclastic methods."

For instance let us apply this method to the Sabbath and Religious Holy days. Just as the Truth Seeker says, instead of the Hebrew or Puritan horror of a Sabbath, we would have a general and a human

holiday very much as we now have on Christmas. The only law needed about it, would be one making it a general holiday, so that no manufacturing or large employing business could be legally done—making it a "dies non" for all such purposes, like New Year's Day. If anybody interfered with the equal right of others to keep the day as they preferred, they might be arrested and fined for disorderly conduct or making a nuisance of themselves. Thus all of the "Sabbath laws" would disappear at once, and the day would become a public holiday for "reading, rest and recreation."

So with Thanksgiving Day, the law might declare it to be the last Thursday of November, and a public holiday, as above suggested for Sunday. There would be no more awful and humiliating proclamations from political and religious hypocrites,—and what a relief that would be to the honesty and moral sense of the Community? Jefferson's example would thus become a law and a relief.

Then those farces called chaplains might go too, under a general law, providing that the army and navy regiments and vessels should be provided with sufficient advisory secretaries, or other officers to act as instructors, friends, advisors and letter writers, as the men might need or wish, so that no real benefit to the service would be lost. As to legislatures, as they exist "by the consent of the governed," and for their will and benefit, a chaplain to inform them of the will of a "king" somewhere, seems too great an inconsistency and impertinence to be continued.

As to the Indians, let us entirely drop the farming of them out to Christian Sectaries, and see that they have practical Secular education and supervision, so as to make good civilized people of them or their children, as soon as possible.

As to the Bible, the only law necessary is to keep it out of the schools and public institutions. Then let it be discussed and explored as a part of the past superstitions and poetic literature of the world, and soon the old notion of infallible inspiration etc., etc. will become too absurd for anything but a pitying smile.

As to the churches, they should pay their taxes like other property, or be used at least to some extent, for public and Secular purposes, like school and other buildings. It is absurd to have the many millions of dollars thus invested in these buildings untaxed, and yet standing idle except for a few mumeries on one or two days in the week. Let us have a law that will make property that is held away and in disuse, and yet protected and untaxed by the public, put to some public use.