

# Torch of Reason

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T. B. Wakeman.....Editor  
P. W. Geer.....Manager

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THURSDAY, DEC. 6, E. M. 300.

## THE CONGRESS.

The Liberals of the country are to be congratulated upon the decided success of their congress at Cincinnati, which adjourned on the 25th, inst. Difficulties, complications and limitations which have long repressed and limited the Liberal cause were swept away, or placed in the way of being outgrown by regular amendments of the constitution, so as to secure the success of the great objects which were contemplated at its organization in 1876, the Centennial year.

Prominent among these will be the representation by delegates from auxiliary Unions, Leagues and Societies of the American Secular Union. The first thing to be done in order to set the Liberal cause upon its feet in this country is therefore to revive those Unions or Clubs which have been, and to organize others where possible, and to sustain them by sufficient means and attendance. The Torch and its subscribers will certainly not be behind others in that work.

Those who can lecture or teach acceptably must prepare for that work, and be ready to take the field. Who will announce the first League Union or Club, in this revival of the great cause, which takes a new spring of life from this congress? Let us hear from you, for a prize awaits you.

## The Three Degrees of Liberalism.

No address before our great Congress excited more marked attention, than that in which the three natural degrees of Liberalism were announced and explained.

1. The Freethought Degree is the first, in which the awakened victim of superstition and ignorance begins the enquiry after religious truth on the Scientific, evolutionary method in the place of the old authority of Revelation. This is his era of exploration and discovery of the New World of New Life of Mankind on Earth.

2. The Liberal Degree is the next. In it the inquirer has followed the method of Science until he has actually landed upon and explored the New World until the desire to be founded upon the Truth about the World and Man as it actually is, becomes the dominant purpose of his life. He gives up all of the illusions of the past about Gods, Devils, Spirits and Spooks, and determines that he will be their victim, dupe and fool no more. That is, he becomes a true Liberal, that is to say, a liberated man (Lat., liber, free), one emancipated from all of the faiths, revelations, creeds, churches and spiritisms of the past and present. He is "out in the clear," and so happy in so being, that he can hardly express his joy. He is ready to live, land or sail, in the new Era and its New World ever more!

3. The Secular or Constructive is the Third Degree. In that the emancipated hero determines to make himself felt for something in the new and glorious New World of Liberty, Science and Humanity. He stands firmly upon its great laws of Astronomy, Correlation and Evolution. He takes an account of stock, and discovers that he cannot be a man except in perfecting and using his relations to the world and his fellows about him; and that evolution shows that if thus regarded and perfected, they lead to an Earthly Paradise, to begin now in each emancipated heart, and to go on increasing in strength, volume and grandeur, far exceeding the old impossible, mirage, sky-parlor heaven, and even our power of prevision and expression.

Think how dark and bloody the world was A. D. 1500, E. M. 1. Think of the discoveries and progress since made!

Think, what the world will be 300 years hence? As we live and work to make that "Earthly Paradise," let it shine backwards into our hearts so that we begin to enjoy it now. That Shining backward is our HOPE, based upon KNOWLEDGE (not Faith), and inspired and sustained by LOVE, the fountain and mainspring of life.

## SAINT INGERSOLL.

CLARENCE S. DARROW ESQ., AS  
"DEVIL'S ADVOCATE."

The Freethinkers, Liberals, and Secularists of the United States have just closed one of their most successful Annual Congresses at Cincinnati. One of its striking features was an Ingersoll Memorial Meeting" at the Grand Opera House, which was intended as an Apotheosis, or at least as a sort of a Secular Cononization, of their great leader. The proceedings, indeed, were quite as regular as an up-to-date trial for saint-hood would be in the Romist church.

The first father (Pater Primus) to open the case for the proposed Saint Ingersoll was his old school-mate and life-long friend and associate, Dr. S. W. Wetmore, of Buffalo, who from personal experiences of a lifetime, brought the proofs of the natural (divine) endowments of the deceased, and of the beneficent and glorious uses he had made of them in the development and defense of the new Secular church of Liberty, Science and Humanity; Had he not made the New Era of the New World known to all men, and brought great multitudes by the miraculous charm of his heart, brain, tongue and pen, to enter that New World, and there to live, ever rejoicing in the joy of Liberty, the light of Truth, and the love of Humanity.

To sustain this claim the venerable father produced a most singular innovation; a new facility in the trial of saint cases to which we reverently but earnestly invite the attention of His Holiness, of Rome, and all future candidates for saint-hood; for without it no such trial will hereafter be complete. It seemed like a cross between a brass cannon and the mightiest horn of Gabriel, and it shot words instead of balls. And those words were the actual words and voice of Ingersoll in his natural voice, so that he spoke by and for himself in the very tones by which his great victories had been achieved—for it was a superlative graphophone.

The judges in the body of the house could not restrain their applause; they seemed ready to acclaim him as the second great Secular saint of America, Thomas Paine being always accounted the first. But to make assurance doubly sure, the learned and careful Dr. Foote presiding, called upon the ex-judge, C. B. Waite, the well known author of "The History of Christianity up to the year 200," to sum up and give his opinion. This most learned, expert and experienced judge held that within the ancient church, the case for saint-hood would be clear; and he asked that within the New Secular church of the New World, America should enroll the name of Ingersoll

as a sacred name to be followed with trust and reverence, and to be blessed by all coming generations of men!

Up went the approving shout of the Judges, like the acclaim of the angels in the heaven of Milton.

But alas! America is the land of "glorious uncertainty," not only of the law, but also of the result of an election, the verdict of a jury, the saint-hood of the living—and worst of all, of the dead.

There was an ominous pause, for "The Devil's Advocate" had yet to be made; no saint-hood in the old church is possible without that. We learn in Faust how the soul of every human is a prize-fighter's ball buffeted back and forth by God and Devil, in what is called his "life;" and the Devil's interest cannot be known, nor extinguished until he has heard.

He was duly called. He appeared by his Advocate, and when his Advocate's name was announced, a murmur of surprise swept through the court, for it was none other than Clarence S. Darrow Esq., one of the leaders of the Chicago bar. Some said "he seems like Webster—is he a 'Daniel come to judgement?'" Others said: "No Webster's heart was tough, slow, and at last flabby and dull. The heart of Darrow is tender, gifted with the divine power to feel and to suffer—so that it seems to touch your own, as its pulsings vibrate through a voice gentle and limped and sweet. It is the voice with which Tolstoi must be read if him you would see and understand."

The first sentence proved all this for those who heard are not likely to forget these words: "It is difficult to speak rightly of a man, be alive or dead. We are much inclined to say worse of the living than they deserve, and when they are dead we are apt to say much better of them than they deserve. Ingersoll was one of the greatest men of his age, but he was not perfect nor free from mistakes."

Gradually he proceeded to develop and specify the imperfections and mistakes which were a bar to saint-hood under our new and human dispensation. Never did the Devil select a more dainty, delicious, and yet more dangerous advocate; for he had selected not one of his own imps, but an over sensitive angel, whose tears over the miseries of the world dimmed the clear sight which alone can foresee the means of their removal. He had chosen the sentimental, philosophical anarchist, who by night "runs with the hares;" in many a reform meeting, to show them how to escape "the hounds" with which, as a necessity, driven, versatile and crushing lawyer, he himself "hunts by day."

So the Devil will miss again. For this advocate at heart only means to win by compelling this