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Francis Ellingwood Abbot: Free Religionist

The Toledo Episode, 1869-1873

By Gardner Williams

1. *The New England Years*

Francis Ellingwood Abbot was a missionary of the doctrine that, in 1870, was called by some Free Religion and by others religious "Radicalism." This meant a church with no authoritative creed. The members were invited to believe what they thought was true, and the minister was there to inspire them and to help them in their thinking. It was understood that the basic moral, spiritual, and religious truths could be discovered and validated only in human experience. A tradition of this sort of religion had been created before the Civil War by Ralph Waldo Emerson and by Theodore Parker. Both of these men had been nurtured in Unitarianism, but had to get out of that church because it would not stand for such things. These men were mystics. They believed that spiritual truths were known by direct intuition in human experience.

Abbot thought that experience was the basis of religious knowledge, but not intuitive experience. He said that rational and scientific interpretations of experience give us the ultimate truths by which we should live. He too had to get out of the Unitarian Church. He spent a large part of his life trying, through the Free Religious Association and through his magazine, the *Index,* to make that denomination accept his ideas. In the end it began to accept some of them, but without giving him any recognition or honor or employment. He was deeply disappointed by this and also by his inability to get a regular job in a University where he could teach this philosophy. His whole life was a fight and he lost every major battle. He committed suicide at 67, in 1903, when he had no more fight left in him. But, without realizing it himself, he did much to help win the war for present day religious liberals in various denominations, especially the Unitarian and Universalist.

His Toledo adventure (1869-1873) was typical of his entire career. He strove for truth and spiritual freedom as he understood them; he won a few devoted friends, above all Albert E. Macomber; he made bitter enemies; he got into debt; and, in the end, he was forced to leave.

I shall outline his entire biography,[1] and then elaborate the story of

his four years spent near the mouth of the Maumee. He was born and brought up in Boston. His father was a school teacher. The family tradition was austere and scholarly. He went to Harvard and received his A. B. degree in 1859. He was married the same year. He attended Harvard Divinity School, but graduated from Meadville Theological School (Unitarian) in Pennsylvania with a B. D. degree in 1863. In his studies he became vividly impressed with the ideas and the career of Theodore Parker who died in 1860. However, he looked to science and reason for the principles by which men must live, whereas Parker had looked to intuition.

Abbot began his ministry as a Unitarian in Dover, New Hampshire, in 1864. He attended the Unitarian Conference in New York in April, 1865,[2] where the conservatives secured the passage of a motion establishing the dogma that Jesus of Nazareth was King, Lord and Christ. Abbott took no active part in these proceedings. In October, 1866 he was the leader of the left wing forces in the famous "battle of Syracuse" which occurred at a Unitarian Conference in that city. There Abbot sought the repudiation of the principle adopted the previous year. He was really fighting for free religion without any theological creed at all. He failed to win over the convention. Hence, in May, 1867 in Boston, he led in the formation of the Free Religious Association, along with William V. Potter, Octavius B. Frothingham, and Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, all Unitarian or ex-Unitarian ministers. Abbot was the dominant figure in the Association until about 1890, that is, as long as it was a dynamic force in American culture. The purpose of this Association was to convert Americans in general, and the Unitarian denomination in particular, to the cause of Free Religion. By about the 1890's the American Unitarian Association was mostly converted to a creedless religion, but the Free Religious Association was gradually forced out.

In 1866 Abbot tried in vain to secure a position as professor of philosophy at Harvard. In 1867 he failed to secure a similar position at the new Cornell University.[3] He was a bit too heretical. By 1868 he had come to the decision that Free Religion required not only the repudiation of all official creeds, but also giving up the names Unitarian and Christian, and cancelling all official connection with institutions having those names. Religion should be universal, not sectarian. It should utilize the insights of the prophets of all religions, as well as those of secular thinkers and scientists. And it should serve the welfare of all humanity.

Abbot's first step in the application of his mission came when he persuaded his Unitarian Church in Dover, New Hampshire to change its name to the "First Independent Religious Society." A minority objected and secured a ruling from the State Supreme Court that the church could not hold its property under the new name.[4] His friend, Chauncey Wright, one of the Harvard scientific-philosophical group which also included the pragmatists C. S. Pierce and William James, advised him to compromise and keep his job, but he was not a compromising sort of person. He resigned in October, 1868. His fight was widely publicized. The story of it became well known in Toledo, Ohio, where also there was considerable interest in his ideas as expressed in articles he had published in the North American Review (July and October, 1868) then edited by James Russell Lowell. In the spring of 1889 the leaders in the Toledo Unitarian Church decided to invite Abbot to be their minister.

2. *Founding the First Independent Society of Toledo.*

In 1869 Toledo was a bustling, growing town of 35,000 people, among which were many leading individuals who believed that the city had a great future. Unitarians had been in evidence there for some time. The earliest recorded Unitarian activity was in 1837-38 when services, announced in the *Blade,* were being held at a so-called Unitarian Chapel in the then little community of 1200 population.[5] In 1855 Theodore Parker lectured in Toledo. In 1856 the Western Unitarian Conference (founded in Cincinnati in 1852) sent Reverend Ritter to Toledo to propagandize. In 1860 a liberal religious group bought a church building on the corner of Adams and Superior where they held regular services as the Unitarian Society of Toledo. By 1868 it was popularly referred to as the Unity Church. It had visiting ministers from 1860 to 1863. It had to sell the church building in 1863, and it met in various halls from 1863 to 1868 under a regular minister, Stephen H. Camp. In 1868 or 1869 he resigned and went to the 3rd Unitarian Church in Brooklyn, New York, where he stayed until his death. As a result of Camp's resignation, the Unitarian Society of Toledo was looking for a minister in the spring of 1869, and, as we have noted, became interested in F. E. Abbot.

Albert E. Macomber carried on the correspondence for the Society. He wrote to Abbot at Dover, New Hampshire, in late April or early May, 1869, and apparently so did the Reverend Camp. His letter and Camp's are probably not extant, but Abbot's reply, and other letters by Abbot,

together with other documents relative to Abbot's work in Toledo, are now in the files of the First Unitarian Church in Toledo.

In his reply to Macomber, Abbot left no doubt as to the radicalness of his views. In a letter, dated May 12, 1869, he said in part:

I never expected to receive another invitation to carry on the work I love best, and have hardly recovered from the surprise occasioned by your and Mr. Camp's letters. If left to follow the free suggestions of my own conscience and reason, there is no work in the world to which I would more gladly devote myself than to the ministry demanded by this progressive age. But I am not contented with the partial freedom which satisfied many who call themserves radicals; and, in obedience to what I deem an instinct of self-respect, I have trodden a path which I had supposed was leading me forever out of the ministry. Your invitation makes me hope that I have been mistaken in this. If your people are willing to make half as great sacrifices for religious liberty as I have been called to make, there is no life I should prefer to that of a free public advocate of American religion . . . if I can be a minister, not of Jesus, but of humanity, I am ready for the work.

You seem so well acquainted with the general character of my course hitherto, that I need enter on no explanation of it . . . If your society is resolved at all events to retain the names Unitarian and Christian, and to listen to no absolute independency, I must say, somewhat sadly but very firmly, I am not the man you seek. But if you are . . . not afraid to hear why I regard the shaking off of all sectarian names and connections as of profound practical consequence, then I shall be glad to submit to your judgment the terms on which I can honorably continue to preach . . . if you still choose to be Unitarians, we may at least part good friends; or if you are willing . . . to take a more advanced position, we may yet work together for years in the cause of free religion . . . California has not gold enough to tempt me to connect myself, as its minister, with any Christian society. It would be neither right nor decent for me to do so. But if you are as radical and free as your letter leads me to hope, I think we may agree together that the only manly position is aloof from all denominations.

I believe that the Society which first takes distinctly and intrepidly

the ground of Free Religion will be a tremendous power throughout America. It takes pluck and nerve to adopt it; but every man of such a society will be proud to have been a member in it, if he lives twenty-five years. I have taken the only ground that is absolutely free, and wait till the world moves forward to it. A single man though I am, with but two or three friends at my side, the power of ideas makes me stronger than the whole Unitarian denomination. Do not suppose that for an instant I could think of any compromise, any concession to expediency. I could better afford to go to the almshouse, than budge an inch from my position. Do you really want such a man to occupy your pulpit? If you do I rejoice that so much courage has been born in my native land; and whether I am fit to do your work or not, such a man you will surely find.

Abbot made his uncompromising stand even more apparent in his second letter to Macomber written from Cambridge, Massachusetts on June 23, 1869:

I design to write, if possible, a couple of lectures on Socrates, while in Toledo, to complete a course of three lectures on the subject. If desired, I will deliver a few lectures in the evening on various topics . . . What you say about the prevailing tone of your society is very encouraging to me, and removed many misgivings occasioned by Mr. Camp's letter. He and I apparently aim at objects somewhat different,—he at the welfare of a society, I at the welfare of humanity in general. I trust that what I must say and do will not be inconsistent with the welfare of your society,—but . . . I took it for granted that you were willing to have me propose a course which may possibly develop some differences of sentiment in those who listen. Your frank letter confirms me in this expectation. I can hardly doubt that Unitarian influences will be brought to bear to prevent the society's taking the only ground I believe tenable by thorough radicals, and I expect the same opposition I have always thus far met from those who love sect more than truth. I was struck with your remark "Mr. Camp does not know the temper of his people as well as he ought, perhaps." It is almost always so with ministers, and may well be so in his case. For myself, I trust the people, and am willing to abide the result of an appeal to the best and bravest that is in them. If the times are not ripe for the stand I recommend

well and good,—I can afford to wait indefinitely but not to compromise one whit.

Being without popular gifts of oratory, I understand that my success as a speaker is dubious; but I covet no success due rather to a fascinating manner than to an intelligent and intrepid devotion to ideas. It hardly seems probable to me, after my repeated experiences, that any society will boldly plant itself on Free Religion; but your letters show me that here and there, at least, are individuals, who do value truth for its own sake, regardless of its effect on organizations.

Abbot came to Toledo early in July and preached to the Unitarian Society on Sunday mornings. He told them what he thought Free Religion was. They sat in judgment and, on the basis of his performance, elected him minister on August 22. His seven sermons, delivered from July 11 through August 15, are printed in the second to the seventh numbers inclusive of the *Index*,[6] the magazine which was started January 1, 1870 under his editorship. There was nothing obsequious in his approach. He made it a condition of his appointment that the church change its name to the "First Independent Society of Toledo."

The church was quick to acquiesce. At the August 22 meeting they adopted the following resolution 39 to 18:

Whereas, The "National Conference of Unitarians and other Christian Churches" in the Preamble to its constitution adopted at New York in 1865, *professed faith in Jesus of Nazareth as King, Lord and Christ, thus making a virtual creed its bond of union; and voted down by a large majority the proposition made at Syracuse, in* 1866, *to abolish this creed and reform the Preamble; and at last won the consent of the minority in New York, in* 1868, *to the retention of the preamble as it stands . . . .*

Resolved, That we regard this action as inconsistent with the great principle of spiritual freedom,

Resolved, That we regard it as our duty to make earnest and emphatic protest against all such ecclesiastical encroachments upon the liberty of the individual.

Resolved, That our corporate name be henceforth changed from

"The Unitarian Society of Toledo," to the "First Independent Society of Toledo."

Resolved, That the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association be requested to erase the name of this Society from the list of Unitarian churches in the denominational Year-Book.

The minutes of this meeting state further that "the Society also extended a call to Reverend F. E. Abbot, late of Dover, New Hampshire, to become its minister for the ensuing year. Upon this question a large affirmative vote was given with but two votes appearing in the negative." These two votes were to be heard from later.

Abbot's letter of acceptance of September 1, 1869 was as forthright as his letters to Macomber. He made it quite clear that the Toledo church was taking a most radical step. He addressed it to Messrs. T. M. Cook, H. L. Holloway, and M. A. Scott, trustees of the Society. In this letter he said in part:

By the brave and frank action to which you allude . . . our society . . . severs its connection with the Christian Church, and plants itself on the broad platform of natural and free religion. It thus proves its faith in those great spiritual forces of the universe which manifest themselves in human nature and human history; and fearlessly commits itself to the grand current of modern thought and life. As the first popular verdict pronounced on the conflicting claims of Christianity and of Free Religion,[7] the late vote of the Society marks a new epoch and begins a new era, and I count it a high privilege to be permitted to work with you in the cause we have mutually espoused. If, rising to the height of the occasion, we shall follow implicitly the leadership of our ideas and turn a deaf ear to all narrow and timorous expediencies, I have as deep a faith in our ultimate success as I have in the being of God. So far as my ability extends, I will serve you by serving truth and freedom, righteousness and love; and, by this self-conservation to universal ends, I trust we shall find ourselves daily greatened in heart and life and beneficent influence on the world.

Certain members did not like Abbot's extreme heterodoxy, and some thought he was rather queer. A minority claimed that the voting on August 22 did not fairly express the sentiments of the Society, so another

meeting was called for September 17. It was officially established on the books of the Independent Society that ninety-nine persons in all were entitled to vote. Seventy-five of these were present on September 17, and many non-members dropped in. They had a long debate on whether they should reconsider employing Abbot and adopting Free Religion. Before the vote was taken, according to the minutes, "A respectable number of persons, among whom were many strangers, as well members of the Society, retired from the room. The number of members who thus retired, or remained, but declined to vote, was thirty-two." The vote was unanimously against reconsideration, with seven votes by proxy and forty-three in person. It is thus apparent that a bare majority of the total membership voted to uphold the original contract with Abbot. The minutes of this meeting are signed by T. M. Cook, H. L. Holloway, M. A. Scott, Trustees of the Society, also by H. E. Howe, Treasurer, and A. E. Macomber, Secretary.[8]

It is thus seen that from the very outset Abbot was not successful in keeping his congregation together. The opposition to him which appeared in the August and September meetings of the church led to a secession movement and the establishment of another church. The seceding minority proceeded to form the Unity Church Association which remained within the Unitarian fold and secured a former Universalist minister, Reverend Charles Cravens, to be their pastor. This man was a Shakespearian scholar. His wife was a poetess. He held services in various places. In 1873 he was in the old church building on Adams and Superior; and possibly he was at Adams and Tenth for a while. It turned out that he did not disagree with Abbot on anything except the importance of staying in the Unitarian denomination. But he was no crusader. In 1873 his group faded out. He lived in Toledo all his life, performing Unitarian marriages and funerals until 1886 when A. G. Jennings revived regular Unitarian services in Memorial Hall Annex at Adams and Ontario. Unitarian services have been continuous in Toledo since then. Reverend Cravens delivered the oration in 1893 at the laying of the cornerstone of the new Unitarian Church of our Father, at Prescott and Ashland.[9]

Even with the congregation that was left to him Abbot was not a success as a parish minister. He would not consent to spend all of his time on the work of the church. He would not call on people or do the usual pastoral work. He told them so on September 2 at the first church serv-

ices after his appointment. And certainly Abbot was not successful in setting up a permanent church home. The congregation had been looking for one for years. It had apparently been building, or at least planning a building, at Adams and Tenth Streets in the summer of 1869.[10] But when it was completed, the Society was unable to swing it. Macomber owned it in 1872, and soon thereafter transferred it to the new University of Toledo. For a time, in 1870, the Independent Society met in the Lyceum Building. In 1871-1872 it met for a time over the United States Express Office on Summit Street at Jefferson, also in Walbridge Hall at 160 Summit, and in Odeon Hall on St. Clair Street. By 1873 it, like Cravens' group, had ceased to hold meetings. It paid Abbot $2,000 again for two years and after September 1872 it paid him nothing.[11]

No, Abbot's great purpose in coming to Toledo was not primarily to minister to Toledoans. He had a much larger and more universal purpose: a determination to serve all humanity. He proposed to do this by editing a weekly magazine to be called the *Index,* which should promote the cause of free religion throughout the world. He said that the idea was first proposed by David R. Locke, editor of the Toledo *Blade.*[12] Probably Locke made the suggestion during Abbot's trial period in July and August, 1869. Abbot was obviously enthusiastic. He was supposed to support himself by preaching to the Independent Society week-ends, and to edit the magazine without pay during the week. This was kept secret from the Society before he was hired, but he announced his plans soon after, and no one seems to have objected at the time.

Locke was a versatile genius. As a newspaper editor in Findlay, Ohio, he wrote the Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby papers, which satirized the South during the Civil War. He was also an independent critic of traditional theology, though he did not write much about this. He had joined the Methodist Church in order "to relieve the fears of his prospective mother-in-law."[13]

As for Abbot's project, Locke called himself a pillar of the church, an outside support, and he made that support very substantial. He offered up to $3,000 for the first year of the *Index,* and again $3,000 the second year. A prospectus was issued November 1, 1869. The first number came out January 1, 1870. Four months later a partnership was established to operate it comprising Locke, Abbot, Macomber, and M. O. Waggoner, a lawyer.[14] The articles of copartnership, written out long

hand, are now in the files at the Unitarian Church. They designated the group as The Index Association. Macomber, as well as Locke, made considerable financial contributions to support the magazine.[15] In April, 1871 the Index Association was incorporated in order to secure financial support from more people and to ease the burden on Locke and Macomber. The men who bought stock at the start were Locke, Macomber, Abbot (he must have paid for it in services), Calvin Cone, H. L. Holloway, Guido Marx, Edward Bissell, H. E. Howe, E. P. Bassett, W. C. Fiske, P. H. Bateson, and J. M. Ritchie. Each was to pay in 10% of the amount of his stock every year. This plan was worked out by Macomber, and was modelled somewhat after the system of the Building and Loan Associations in Toledo.

There is much of interest in the three volumes of the *Index* which were published in Toledo. Abbot, of course, used it to propagandize the principles of Free Religion. In each issue during 1870 there appeared the Fifty Affirmations of his faith. The outstanding of these affirmations are:

(1) Religion is the effort of man to perfect himself.
(2) The root of religion is human nature.
(18) Jesus probably stands at the head of all the great religious teachers of the past.
(19) But he was unenlightened in claiming to be the Messiah.
(29) Liberal Christianity is the highest form of freedom within Christianity.
(33) Free Religion has been growing at the expense of Christianity.
(36) Free Religion is faith in man as a progressive being.
(37) The ideal of Free Religion is the perfection of man.
(38) The means of Free Religion is education.
(39) The great law of Free Religion is the still small voice of the private soul.
(40) The great peace of Free Religion is spiritual oneness with the infinite One.
(43) The cornerstone of Free Religion is faith in human nature.
(44) The great institution of Free Religion is the coming Republic of the World, or Commonwealth of Man, the universal conscience and reason of mankind being its supreme organic law or constitution.
(47) The spiritual ideal of Christianity is the suppression of self

and the perfect imitation of Jesus, the Christ. The spiritual ideal of Free Religion is the free development of self.

(50) Christianity is the faith of the soul's childhood; Free Religion is the faith of the soul's manhood. In the gradual growth of mankind out of Christianity into Free Religion lay the only hope of the spiritual perfection of the individual and the spiritual unity of the race.

Abbot brought many famous names into the columns of the *Index*. One of these was Charles Darwin. A pamphlet called *Truths of the Times,* containing an article by Abbot called "Modern Principles: A Synopsis of Free Religion," was widely circulated, and eventually was read by Darwin. The famous biologist wrote to Abbot saying that he (Darwin) accepted these principles with only a few reservations on minor points.[16] Another "name" was Henry Ward Beecher who wrote in the *Index* for April 13, 1872 that he was surprised to see material of this nature so ably expressed although he (Beecher) did not agree with it. Still another item is a letter from W. H. Herndon,[17] Abraham Lincoln's law partner, insisting that, contrary to certain statements in Holland's *Life of Lincoln,* the great emancipator rejected most orthodox theological ideas, including special creation, miracles, and revelation. Herndon says that Lincoln called himself an infidel, and that, while in New Salem in 1835, he wrote a book attacking Christianity, which his employer, Samual Hill, burned up so as to prevent Lincoln's anticipated political career from being ruined. Many of Abbot's sermons to the Independent Society, as well as his lectures in Horticultural Hall, Boston, and elsewhere, were published as leading articles in the *Index*.

Abbot's days in Toledo were numbered. He had seen his local church, or "association", split so that neither the Unitarians nor the Associationists existed as a congregation. He was soon to leave Toledo and take his *Index* with him.

The *Index,* as we have said, was not a financial success in spite of the generous help of Locke, Macomber and the others. However, there were those who belived that it could be made so. The Index Association had a business agent named Asa K. Butts who sought to get control so as to make policy changes aimed to obtain more popular approval. Butts was able to convince two of the trustees, Calvin Cone and Edward Bissell, that Abbot was not competent to manage the magazine. Of

course, it did not pay; its circulation was small and Abbot had no intention to engage in promotional ballyhoo. Moreover, Abbot was not willing to change its policy, as, for instance, to stop its attacks on the stodginess of the Unitarians in order to help make it pay. In the summer they would go very deeply in the red, but Macomber said he was willing that they should do this, for it would in some measure recoup its losses in the fall and winter.[18]

Macomber and an assistant editor, A. W. Stevens, took Abbot's side. Abbot resigned the editorship in March, 1873 but, with Macomber, continued to control the paper by being the majority of an executive committee, and directing Stevens who kept his editorial position. They prevented the Board of Directors from ousting the executive committee by staying away from board meetings and preventing a quorum. In June, at the second annual meeting of stockholders, Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Unitarian minister in Newport, Rhode Island, came to Toledo armed with enough proxies from absent stockholders to outvote Cone, Bissell, and Butts, and to re-establish Abbot and Macomber in complete charge. The pamphlet called *The Inside History of the Index Association* was the prepared statement which Abbot presented at this meeting in his own self-defense.

Had there been a few more people in Toledo like Macomber, the *Index* might have stayed here and flourished. In the midst of the controversy with Butts, Bissell and Cone, Macomber had issued a pamphlet in which he said, "I trust we all mean, by our contributions to the Index Association, that a brave, earnest and able man shall be enabled to conduct a paper worthy of the aims of his faith, and that no cheap commercial spirit shall now come in to fetter his pen or clog his action." But there was only one Macomber, and Abbot knew it. He would not impose longer on his generosity. Without a church, without a salary, and with his magazine deeply in debt Abbot in 1873 left Toledo for Boston, where he hoped to revive the *Index* in more congenial financial, as well as intellectual, circumstances.

But the faith of Macomber followed the faith of Abbot even in separation. Without trying to pressure Abbot, Macomber offered in 1874 to pay off Abbot's debts, if he wanted to wind up the *Index* and quit. But the crusading Abbot would not quit, and his letter of May 20, 1874 to

Macomber explaining his choice to fight on to the bitter, tragic end is touching in its depth of sincerity:

> *And now my dear, generous friend, I come to the last part of your letter . . . Do not think me blind to the exceeding generosity of your proposal to turn over to me the balance of your stock in case the* Index *is now discontinued. That would amount to* $1050—*what a big sum to my little pocket-book! How it would tide me over the difficult period from my present to my future avocations! Ah, I do appreciate both the nobleness of your friendship and the magnitude of the assistance to me in a time of great probable want. I read your words with a rush of blood from my heart: for I know how hard money comes nowadays and how easy (!) it is swallowed up in the quicksand of debt. But the great exaltation I felt was in* you. *I saw the depth and sincerity of your love for your old friend, and felt new joy in having the right to call you mine. Shall I tell the whole truth? I did waver a little. I half hesitated whether to accept your offer, and let the* Index *go down peaceably to its grave, or whether to fight on and wring success out of the difficulties that beset it. Well, dear Mac, I am going to fight on. No self-interest or selfishness of mine shall ever be the cause why the* Index *fails, if fail it must. Nobody knows, or will know, or needs to know, all that the paper has cost me; but I have put my hand to the plough, and look not back. I am as doubtful as you of its ultimate fate . . . there are many hungry hearts that still look to it for food—many blinded eyes that need the light it brings (in a tallow candle fashion, perhaps, but that is better than nothing). And how would I ever be at peace with myself, if I knew that my own advantage tempted me to consent to its death? . . . Besides, why should you assume the task of making good losses of mine? That would not be right. And then I have made up my mind not to take money presents for my own use at all, till necessity compels me to do so to save my family from starvation. While health holds only I will pay my way, and spend no regrets on myself. I am willing enough to be poor, if I can only defraud nobody out of his due by my poverty. Debt does distress me; but I think I can get out of it by and by with economy. So, dear, true friend, take my heartfelt blessing for your love, and let the tears in my eyes be my answer to your offer.*

3. *Sequel and Suicide*

Let us note briefly the main events in Abbot's life after 1873. His personal friends included C. S. Peirce and William James, the founders of the pragmatic school of American Philosophy. Abbot was, in 1873 and 1874, a member of their Metaphysical Club to which also belonged Chauncey Wright, John Fiske, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, the son of the poet, and justice of the United States Supreme Court. In spite of Abbot's contacts with pragmatism there was no tincture of it in his thought.

From 1876 to 1878 he was president of the National Liberal League[19] which was formed to achieve and maintain the complete separation of church and state, and to fight a constitutional amendment which proposed to make Jesus Christ the ruler of the nation, and which would have given to the Bible the status of a constitutional document. The League tangled with Anthony Comstock, fundamentalist and puritanical United States Postal Inspector, who was out to suppress religious scepticism as well as pornography. The League broke up in 1878 in spite of Robert Ingersoll's best efforts to effect a compromise when one faction opposed all actual or proposed governmental restrictions upon human inter-communication, while another, led by Abbot, endorsed Comstock's effort to prevent the mailing of pure pornography. Abbot merely opposed the efforts of the Post Office Department to exclude scientific studies of sex problems and criticisms of religious orthodoxy.

In 1880 Abbot decided he could not handle the *Index* any more. It just did not pay, and friends were too hard to get. He turned it over to the Free Religious Association which ran it very ably until 1886, when they too decided that they could not afford it any more.

Undaunted, Abbot turned to the teaching profession. He had been studying in the Harvard Graduate School, and received his Ph.D. in philosophy in 1881. He then sought an academic position, but never secured a permanent one. He lectured some at the Concord Summer School of Philosophy. He tutored boys preparing for college and ran a preparatory school in Cambridge until 1892, when he received a legacy which enabled him to retire. In 1887-1888 he taught philosophy classes at Harvard for Josiah Royce who was having a year off in Germany. When Royce found out later what Abbot had been teaching, he published in the International Journal of Ethics (October, 1890) the state-

ment that Abbot "was an incompetent pretender in philosophy, without logical ability or historical scholarship."[20] The *Journal* would not publish Abbot's reply to Royce but Abbot had this privately printed and circulated.[21]

His wife died in 1893 and thereafter his daughter, Fanny Larcom Abbot, born in Toledo in June, 1872, kept house for him.[22] Later on she became Mrs. Ralph G. Wells. We may note here that two sons also grew to manhood. Evergnies Abbot, a lawyer, was born in 1862 in Meadville, Pennsylvania, and was the author of a book entitled *Justice and the Modern Law,* (Houghton Mifflin, 1913). Edward Stanley Abbot, M. D., born in 1863 in Beverly, Massachusetts, was a psychiatrist. Four other children died in infancy.

Francis Ellingwood Abbot wrote a number of books. His *Scientific Theism* (1885) is an expansion of a lecture he delivered at the Concord School of Philosophy. It is the most intelligible and reasonable of all his books. It was important enough to be translated into German.[23] He summarizes his theology on pp. 208-210 of the American edition. He says that the universe is an infinitely intelligent, wise, and perfect personal Absolute Spirit, God, who expresses infinite love and holiness. He says that the proof of this is long experience, reason, logic, and science, and is not *a priori* (or intuitional) as the transcendentalists thought. Another book is *The Way Out of Agnosticism* (1890). This is the gist of what he taught to Royce's classes. Its publication is what drew the fire from Royce. His last book was entitled *The Syllogistic Philosophy* (1905). It is a careful and detailed exposition of everything he had tried to teach before. It was published two years after his death.

Abbot commited suicide in 1903 as soon as he had completed the manuscript of his last book. He placed some flowers on his wife's grave in Beverly, Massachusetts on October 23, 1903, which was the tenth anniversary of her death; then he stretched himself out and took poison.

Abbot made some fearful mistakes for which he paid dearly. The chief one was his contention that free religion must repudiate Christianity. But he was a major figure in the development of a tradition of intellectual descrimination in American religion. He has been unduly ignored in Toledo and elsewhere. He deserves a full-length biography. Here is a task for some interested scholar.

FOOTNOTES

1. F[rancis] A[lbert] C[hristie], "Francis Ellingwood Abbot", in *Dictionary of American Biography,* (New York, 1928) vol. 1, pp. 11-12.
   See also Major Lemuel Abijah Abbott, *The Descendants of George Abbott* of *Rowley, Mass.,* (Boston, 1906), pp. 686-688, 840-841.
2. Stow Persons, *Free Religion, An American Faith* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1947), p. 17.
3. Christie, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
   A. E. Macomber, *The Unitarian Church in Toledo, Ohio,* 1860-1923 (Toledo, n.d.) p. 5.
4. Hale vs. Everett, 53 *New Hampshire Reports* 1.
5. Toledo *Blade,* December 6, 1837; March 7 and 21, 1838.
6. Volumes 1-3, published in Toledo are in the Toledo Public Library. Volumes 4-11 were published by Abbot in Boston. In 1880 Abbot turned the magazine over to the Free Religious Association which brought out a New Series, Volumes 1-7. It ceased in 1886. Cornell University and Meadville Theological School (Chicago) have complete sets. Oberlin has all but Volume 1 of the New Series. The University of Michigan has the old series complete.
7. However, Free Churches had previously been established in Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1853 by Rev. Samuel Johnson, a mystic in New York City, by O. B. Frothingham in 1865; and by Col. T. W. Higginson in Worcester, Massachusetts. These Worcester folks were locally called the Jerusalem Wildcats. See Persons, *Free Religion,* pp. 17, 26, 27, 30-31.
8. The original long hand minutes are in the files of the Unitarian Church in Toledo.
9. See Macomber, *The Unitarian Church in Toledo.*
10. Clark Waggoner, *A History of Toledo and Lucas County* (Toledo, 1888), p. 602.
11. Francis Ellingwood Abbot, *The Inside Story of the Index Association; A Report on the Recent "Index Troubles" made to the stockholders of the Index Association at their Second Annual Meeting in Toledo, Ohio, Jan.* 7, 1873 (Toledo, 1873) p. 53; Persons, *Free Religion,* p. 85.
12. Abbot, *Inside Story,* p. 1; Persons, *Free Religion,* p. 85.
13. Persons, *Free Religion,* p. 85.
14. M. O. Waggoner deserted Free Religion in his later years. In 1898, at 72, be burned his infidel library and joined the United Brethren Church. See Clark Waggoner's Personal and Family Scrap Book No. 8 in the Local History Room of the Toledo Public Library.
15. Abbot, *Inside Story,* p. 2.
16. See *The Index,* Dec. 23, 1871, p. 404, Col. 2; June 24, 1871, p. 196, Col. 3. The Chicago *Tribune's* satirical comments on the Darwin letter are quoted in *The Index,* April 13, 1872.
17. *The Index,* April 2, 1870.
18. Circular issued to stockholders, March 24, 1873, in files of the Unitarian Church in Toledo.
19. Persons, *Free Religion,* pp. 114-125.
20. Quoted from Christie, *op. cit.,* p. 12.
21. A copy of this reply is in the library of the Unitarian Church in Toledo in a book which belonged to A. E. Macomber. It is bound together with the *Inside Story* and other Abbotiana.
22. See the magazine *Unity* (Chicago), Nov. 12, 1903, p. 166. See also L. A. Abbott, *Descendants of George Abbott, loc. cit.*
23. Christie, *op. cit.,* p. 12.

David Ross Locke

The Post-War Years

By Jack Clifford Ransome

1. *Nasby: Foil of the Republican Party*

It will be recalled that George S. Boutwell, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, said that the winning of the Civil War was the result of three forces: the Army, the Navy, and the Nasby Letters.[1] It will also be recalled that northerners from President Lincoln clear down to the average soldier and sailor in the armed forces had become vividly aware of the propaganda value of the newspaper utterances of this fictitious Copperhead, Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby. This contemptible creature had come to embody the cause against which the North was fighting. Thousands of people who had no understanding of the real issues at stake were able to think that they had such an understanding by reading the Nasby Letters.[2]

What of the author of these papers, David Ross Locke? As editor of a small town newspaper, the Hancock *Jeffersonian,* he had skyrocketed to fame during the Civil War, and had become the friend and confidant of President Lincoln whom he visited at the White House. In the fall of 1865 he was offered the editorship of the Toledo *Daily Blade,* then owned by A. D. Pelton. From then on his climb to fortune was rapid, and, by the time of his death in 1888, he was a nationally known editor, politician, lecturer, playwright and capitalist. And throughout these years of continuing fame and fortune he took Petroleum V. Nasby along, using him to promote the causes expected of a loyal Republican editor.

The great danger to the Republican party in 1865 was that the conferring of citizenship on the southern negroes by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution increased the Democratic representation in the south by wiping out the old arrangement by which only three-fifths of the slaves were represented. This was sure to happen if Lincoln's magnanimous policy of "malice toward none" were adopted because the south would be restored to white supremacy, and the negroes, although represented, would be deprived of the vote. Moreover, with the aid of the northern Democratic vote it was quite possible that the Democrats would soon be restored to power in Congress and in the White House. In order to prevent this the Republican majority in Congress formulated a so-

called radical policy of introducing negro suffrage, overriding white supremacy and preventing President Andrew Johnson from carrying out Lincoln's policy of magnanimity.

To cast discredit on the Lincoln-Johnson policy Locke, while still at Findlay, used the negro-hating Nasby to gloat over the fact that magnanimity meant the restoration of white supremacy and Democratic control. Nasby went to Johnson to plead for the southern states. "They're down," he whined. "Yoor own heel is on their necks. What will yoo do? Will yoo grind em, er will yoo be magnanimous?" By July Nasby was relieved and happy. Locke had him tell of a dream which put time ahead nine months. The South had already been conciliated; South Carolina was represented in Congress by several generals, and Mississippi by a dozen or so colonels; and the Southern delegates had complete control of Congress. Nasby woke from his dream and rejoiced, "So long ez we hev a Southern Dimokrasy to demand, and a Northern Dimokrat to give, all will be well. Bless the Lord!"[3] Now with Copperhead help the South would be able to control Congress and the Presidency. Nasby said, "It is the dooty now uv every Suthern Dimokrat to take the oath of allegiance . . . Then we've got em . . . Then ef we kin carry enuff deestriks North, yoo hev the game in yoor own hand."[4]

But, though Johnson had his way until Congress met in December, 1865, it was a different story after that. The radical policy was soon under way with no obstacle to confront save Johnson's vetoes, most of which were overridden. The policy of the radicals was justifiable, according to Locke, because of the "black codes" of the seceded states. To him these codes signified an attempt on the part of Johnson's reorganized governments to reestablish virtual slavery and thus to reverse the result of the war. For example, Nasby, who had finally wended his way to "Confedrit X Roads," Kentucky, revealed in one satire the fear of Locke in this respect:

> *The Afrikin shel be free; but the good uv society demands that he shel be under proper guardianship. He won't be allowed to change his location; and the laws uv the state will define his duties, and give us the power uv enforcin em. He won't be allowed to hev arms, so he can't resist. Ez he can't leave a plantation, he will hev to submit quietly to sich rools ez the highminded planter makes for him or be shot, or turned out to die of starvashun akordin to cir-*

cumstances . . . we ain't obleeged to take care uv the sick, the aged or the inform, so it will really be better than before.[5]

And so, under the lash of Locke's bitter pen, Johnson and Nasby were driven down the road to contempt and derision. The Republican Party was, of course, the main beneficiary because the real objective was to rescue the southern negroes from Democratic domination so that, with the aid of carpetbaggers (northern Republicans) and scalawags (southern Republicans) the southern states would be transformed into Republican strongholds. Led by Charles Sumner in the Senate and Thaddeus Stevens in the House, Congress, in 1866, extended the life of the Freedmen's Bureau which was designed to protect the negroes from exploitation during their transition from slavery to freedom. Johnson vetoed the bill on the ground that, since the war was over, such federal interference with local affairs was a violation of the Constitutional right of state control over local legislation. It was easy for Locke to assist Northern opinion to misinterpret Johnson's motives and make his veto seem the act of a tyrant. He had Nasby say:

He hez cut hisself loose from Sumner and Stevens; and in less than a week every Republikin uv modrit sensibilities will be aboozin him to that extent that he won't be able to get back again. He's a *animal uv the bull kind; and criticism and opposition is to him the red flag wich the Spanish matadors wave afore the animals . . .*[6]

Later, in 1866, Congress passed a Civil Rights Act which protected the person and property of the freed negroes in the same manner that the white man was protected. Johnson vetoed this bill on the ground that it invaded the legislative and judicial power of the states. The law was passed over his veto and ultimately took shape as the Fourteenth Amendment.[7]

Locke made political hay out of every Johnson veto. Nasby was made to utter:

Moses Johnson is a cake half bake; he is hot on one side and cold on the other. He daren't let go uv Ablisnism, and is afeered to come to us . . . He vetoed the bills and Congress hez vetoed him; the civil rights bill they passed in an uncivil manner . . . our ekal is the nigger now and onless the skool houses is burned and spellin books destroyed, he will soon be our superior . . . .

Locke missed no chance to rub in the enormity of the unreconstructedness of the South. The Toledo *Daily Blade* of May 12, 1866, played up the Memphis riot in which "rebels" of Memphis attempted the destruction of the negro school-houses and churches in May of 1866. In the riot, a large number of negroes—men, women and children—were brutally murdered. It was characteristic of the *Blade* during the ensuing years to soft-pedal the evils of carpet-bag government while attacking severely any racial disturbances.

Locke and Nasby were strongly instrumental in turning the election campaign of 1866 to the ruin of Johnson's chances for obtaining a strong minority in the next Congress. Invited in the fall to take part in the ceremony of laying a corner-stone of a monument to Stephen A. Douglas, the President made it an opportunity for visiting the principal cities of the North and for addressing the people, a means of influencing public opinion,[8] Johnson spoke very intemperately and acted more like a stump speaking hill-billy from Tennessee than a dignified President of the United States.

This was an opening made to order for a satirist. Covering the trip, Locke wrote a series of Nasby Letters which were printed in the Toledo *Daily Blade* and the *Weekly Blade.* These letters were later gathered with other Nasby witticisms into a volume called *Swingin' Round the Cirkle,* the title taken from Johnson's own phrase. Nasby was made to play the role of chaplain to the President on the tour. His biting satire of the unfortunate Johnson's speeches and acts during this tour had a tremendous influence in bringing the chief executive into greater disfavor than ever. The election registered a stunning defeat for the President.

Throughout the next two and one-half years the Nasby letters carried on the anti-Johnson campaign. The satire was more bitter than ever. Locke strove to cast ridicule and shame on every person holding office under Johnson. Nasby was pictured as pestering the President for a postmaster's job. The Democracy was appeased, said Nasby, when Johnson turned wounded veterans out of government jobs and replaced them with his own adherents. Nasby himself managed to squeeze out a wounded Federal soldier for the postmastership at Confedrit X Roads.

With a two-thirds majority in both halls of Congress, the Republicans proceeded to put into effect its plan to Republicanize the South. In

March, 1867, Congress passed the Reconstruction Act, which divided the territory of the seceding states into five military districts. The terms for readmission to the Union were hard. Each state had to include Negro suffrage in its constitution, and the constitution had to be ratified by the voters of the state. Congressional approval of the new constitutions was necessary. Permission for readmission was delayed until three-fourths of all the states had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment disfranchising the old white leaders. Then, when each state was safely "reconstructed", the federal troops would be withdrawn. The result was, of course, Republican rule in all the southern states.[9]

The hounds then closed in for the kill. If they could remove Johnson from office by impeachment and conviction, they could have a Republican President to enforce the Reconstruction Acts and to control the distribution of political appointments. This was true because the rule for presidential succession in those days was for the president of the Senate to succeed the Vice President. Benjamin F. Wade, Republican from Ohio, would thus become president. And so impeachment charges were passed by the House of Representatives alleging violation by the President of the Tenure of Office Act which required Senate approval for the dismissal of Cabinet officers. Johnson, believing the law to be unconstitutional, ignored it when, in 1867, he removed the insubordinate Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton.

Locke's strategy in this manoeuvre was to represent the Democrats as rats deserting their discredited leader. He had Nasby sent to Washington to assist Johnson. When Nasby arrived, Johnson was opening telegrams and letters from prominent leaders of the Democratic Party. Clement L. Vallandigham, the Copperhead, said, "I hev no objecshen to yoor holdin yoor seet to the end uv yoor term, but reely it's a matter uv little consekence to me." Ex-president Franklin "Peerse" said to Johnson:

> *Uv course yoo don't expect the Dimocracy to take any part in the struggle between yoo and Congriss. Elected ez a Republikin, with Republikins in yoor Cabinet, the Dimocricy, while they applaud wat yoo hev done, can't uv course make yoor quarrel theirs.*

At this point, Nasby told of a scout who came in and reported that conservative clerks in all the departments were organizing themselves in Grant clubs and turning in their Johnson buttons.[10] But when finally Johnson escaped conviction for impeachment Locke squirmed out of a

predicament by representing the Democrats who supported Johnson as stool-pigeons. "Names ain't worth a d..n any more," said Nasby, "and men without principles ain't uv the slightest account. And that's what's the matter with the Democracy."[11]

But radical reconstruction of the southern states went on its seemingly appointed way. Aided by "carpetbaggers" and "scalawags", Republican constitutional conventions created new state governments guaranteeing negro equality. New legislatures were elected with strong negro representation. Laws were passed reforming the police and judicial systems; taxation was made more equitable; and new public school systems were devised to bring education to both negroes and whites on equal terms. Private philanthropy assisted these efforts and negro normal schools and even colleges began to appear. Behind it all was the partisan activity of the Union League, a Republican political organization that sought to organize the negroes into Republican clubs.[12]

Locke, an ardent believer in negro equality, assisted in the process. He helped northerners to feel justified in these educational reforms by emphasizing the southerners opposition to negro education. Thus he had Nasby start a college called "The Southern Classikle, Theologikle, and Military Institoot uv Confedrit X Roads" so that southern gentlemen would not have to send their sons to an "Ablishn College." He made southern minds appear to be utterly closed to any enlightenment at all by having Nasby get the people of Confedrit X Roads to pass the following resolutions:

> *Resolved, That while the citizens uv the Corners bleeve in perfect freedom uv thot and speech and desire it above all things, they nevertheless view with alarm the comin uv northerners who are Republikins . . . .*
>
> *Resolved, That we bust the heads only uv disturbing carpetbaggers.*
>
> *Resolved, That all northern Republikins comin here is carpetbaggers and all northern Dimokrats is not.*[13]

2. *Locke the Lecturer*

But during the post Civil War years Locke was more than a mere political promoter of radical reconstruction. One of his greatest hobbies

and pleasures was lecturing, and, as it developed, it also became an extremely profitable one. In fact, he became one of the most widely known lecturers in the nation in the days when lecturing offered a service now so much more effectively provided by the radio. From the end of the Civil War to his death in 1888 Locke lectured in all of the principal cities of the North. At first he lectured upon the request of local communities. Then he joined James Ridpath's Lecture Bureau in Boston and reaped the rich benefits of the lyceum system flourishing at that time. In one season of nine to ten months Locke earned more than $30,000.[14] And, of course, all of this served to advertise his paper and the various editions of his Nasby papers which came out from time to time.

Locke was a peculiar lecturer: we have Mark Twain's word for it. The great humorist has described the first time he saw Locke lecture:

> *The opera house was jammed and packed with people to hear him deliver his lecture on Cussed Be Canaan. He had been on the platform with that same lecture and no other during two or three years, and it had passed his lips several hundred times. Yet even now he could not deliver any sentence of it without his manuscript, except the opening one.*

Twain said Nasby's platform technique was unpolished; he never changed his rigid posture, bent over a reading desk, during the talk.[15] Success was due to the content rather than the presentation of his lectures, for Locke made no attempt at oratory, giving his lectures in a conversational tone, with practically no gestures. Developing the picture of Locke, Twain said:

> *He had the constitution of an ox and the strength and endurance of a prize-fighter. Express trains were rare in those days. Locke missed a connection and in order to meet this Hartford engagement he had traveled two-thirds of a night and a whole day in a cattle car —it was midwinter. He went from cattle car to his reading desk without dining, yet showed no signs of fatigue.*[16]

Twain and Locke, like other lecturers of their day, were accustomed to try their lectures on the country folk of the small towns around Boston first. If the response was favorable, the talk would be polished and presented first in the Boston Music Hall and then in other large cities of the country. Following are *Blade* excerpts of the day, announcing the current stops on a Locke tour:

David Ross Locke delivers the first lecture of the Star Course in Philadelphia on Thursday evening.[17]

Nasby lectures at Dayton February 21 *on the "Woman Question."*[18]

David Ross Locke lectures in Buffalo tomorrow evening.[19]

When he was engaged on extensive lecture tours, Locke had to find time to sandwich in the writing of sufficient Nasby letters to keep him ahead of the *Blade* publication deadlines. One incident, describing his activities when hard-pressed for subject matter, illustrates not only the difficulties of those who write for daily publication, but a phase of his character which seems anything but admirable. Major J. B. Pond, *Blade* publisher, said one day Locke came into his office, saying:

> *"I suppose Gough's mad at me. I was in St. Paul, at the Merchants' Hotel, and hard up for a letter. I saw Gough (a noted temperance lecturer of reputable character) was registered there, and I ordered two whiskey cocktails sent to his room. Then I wrote my letter on what I saw." Nothing was said that could make him understand the outrage he had perpetrated, though probably when his own habits changed, years later, he realized the wrong he had done a man of honorable life and pure purposes.*[20]

Locke was a hearty drinker, and apparently unable to realize that a temperance "addict" could actually believe what he preached and, moreover, make a living by so doing.

"Cussid be Canaan" was one of his most famous lectures and became known to thousands. It was a searching defense of negro equality. He used it repeatedly for several years, until the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment made the subject a closed one. The text begins with those famous words, "We are all descended from grandfathers." It goes on to trace satirically the descent of mankind from Adam and Eve, describing the fissure where the "nigger" became no longer a man but a slave, concluding with an earnest plea for the discarding of racial prejudice and barriers that keep negroes from having a fair chance in the world. His technique was one of continuous exaggeration, to the point where his listeners would be convinced already of the stirring conclusions to follow. An example of the satirical manner of "Cussid be Canaan" is quoted:

Jefferson was at fault in his lack of appreciation, and strange omission of the word "white." The same omission is painfully observable in all the literature of the world. I have searched faithfully the realms of poetry and history, and am compelled to acknowledge that nowhere outside of the constitutions of certain states is the word "white" made a necessary prefix to the word "man." And against this I protest. Literature should conform to law, and to the great Caucasian idea. The term employed to designate responsible beings in the constitution of our states being "white male," I insist that we go through our books, and substitute "white male" for "man" wherever the word occurs.[21]

At the conclusion of the speech he said:

Knowing how deep the prejudice is against the race, knowing how low down in our very natures its roots have struck, I demand, in our renewed and purified republic, the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them. I demand for them full equality with us before the law. Come what may, let it lead to what it will, this demand I make. I make it as a worshipper of true Democracy; as one who believes in the divine right of man—not white man, red man, or black man, but MAN, to self-government.[22]

Thus we see that, after the war, Locke was preaching the same doctrine that stirred him to write the Nasby letters before and all during the Civil War. Freedom for the black man was the subject that concerned him most and about which his writings made him famous.

Another lecture, lighter in tempo, but again rising to an important and serious plea, was on "The Struggles of a Conservative with the Woman Question." The pattern was the same as in "Cussid be Canaan." After admitting that he preferred to see women in a comfortable home atmosphere rather than out in the world trying to make a living like a man, Locke carried his reason, rather than his sentiment, to its logical extreme, and concluded that women must be accorded their just rights. He said:

I would give the ballot to woman for her own sake, for I would enlarge the borders of her mind. I would give it to her for the sake of humanity. I would make her more fit to mold humanity . . . . I would have your daughters fitted to grapple with life alone, for

no matter how you may leave them, you know not what fate may have in store for them.[23]

Politically adept as he was, Locke did not make any specific demands for woman suffrage in his editorial columns. He disagreed with the pro woman suffrage principal of the Ladies' Department of Oberlin College in 1870 when she declared that "present duties fill up our time." Locke said that Oberlin had done much for the cause of reform in the way of preparing women for the proper discharge of public duties and by educating them equally with men. His attitude seemed to be that women should receive suffrage only when they were completely prepared for it.[24] He warned them not to trade their eternal support to a political group for assistance in obtaining suffrage. "It (*suffrage*) will come sometime . . . but let the ballot be placed in untrammeled hands if it is to work any good."[25] Locke commended the woman suffrage experiment in Wyoming.[26] In one humorous note he said, "Some rash fellow says that giving the ballot to women would not amount to much, for none of them would admit they were old enough to vote until they were too old to take interest in politics."[27]

The lyceum circuit also gave Locke a chance to moralize with his humor. During his lecture, "In Search of the Man of Sin", he followed the familiar build up and concluded that every man could find sin in himself and should first purify himself before starting in on the rest of the world. He says:

My hearers, all of you who try hard enough and watch closely enough, may, in the course of a great many years, if you are gifted and have patience, get to be as good as I am. I know you will shrink from a task so apparently hopeless, but I assure you the reward is great enough to justify the trial.[28]

3. *The Versatility of Locke*

Locke was a man of great versatility. In addition to his political satire, editorials, and lectures, he wrote a well-known play, a travel book, poetry, and humorous sketches. He proved that there was money in writing. In Findlay in 1865, Locke borrowed money to come to Toledo, but less than twenty years later he was said to be a millionaire.[29]

The Toledo Blade Company did a prosperous business in the late nineteenth century with the *Toledo Daily, Tri-Weekly,* and *Weekly Blade,*

Locke's *National Monthly,* and the *American Farm Journel.* The *Daily* and *Weekly Blade* had large circulations. The *Weekly Blade,* called "Nasby's Paper" beat New York papers to most parts of the country because of its central location. Its price of one dollar a year to everybody and its wide circulation made it an important advertising medium. It was boasted that it was delivered to every post-office in the United States. *Locke's National Monthly* was a forty-five page fiction magazine containing domestic and foreign articles on all subjects. It was suspended from publication with the *American Farm Journal* in 1878.[30]

The first collection of the Nasby Papers was published in 1864. Additional collections were published in 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1872, 1893, and 1925. All Nasby letters—first appeared either in the Hancock *Jeffersonian* or in the Toledo *Daily* and *Weekly Blade,* and were then reprinted in book form as the result of popular demand.

Outside of the Nasby letters, Locke's best writing is in the humorous sketches of *The Morals of Abou Ben Adhem.* Abou was a quack philosopher who set up shop in a New Jersey village where he claimed to be a Persian 200 years old. These sketches appeared in *Lock's National Monthly* over a period of time. Locke also wrote two novels, *A Paper City* and *The Demogogue,* and a narrative poem, *Hannah Jane.* These three works suffer from an excess of sentiment and exaggeration.

The last important book to appear in Locke's lifetime was *Nasby in Exile,* published from travel articles sent to the *Blade* in 1881-1882 when David and Robinson Locke traveled in Europe. The Lockes were interested in the people of the different countries, their modes of living, their industries, their habits and customs, and tried faithfully to put on paper what they saw. It was during the trip to Ireland that Locke radically changed his viewpoint toward the Irish. He had originally hated them for their overwhelming support of the Democratic Party. He was shocked by the poverty he saw and by the stories of the people's sufferings. When he returned from one excursion in the Irish countryside he offered to send his best Winchester rifle to his guide if he would shoot a landlord with it.[31] *Nasby in Exile* reveals an antipathy for the British and a lack of understanding of foreign idiosyncrasies.

With the passing of time, the popularity of Locke's books rapidly diminished. His flamboyant style of writing suited the needs and character of the period, but the fashion did not last. The Toledo *Daily Blade*

stated in 1919, "When you cry for his books at the library they are never out. In second-hand bookstores they abound and show no trace of having been too affectionately thumbed."[32] More timely and profound literature had replaced them.

Locke gradually withdrew from all newspaper work except a general supervision of the *Weekly Blade*. His later editorials covered a wide range of subjects. In one issue in 1880, he said, "Canada is beginning to be thoroughly aroused in regard to a separation from the mother country . . . Canada has the good wishes of everybody on this side of the line for an independent and republican future."[33] In another editorial he commended the fact that many schools in the United States were adopting the practice of reading current newspapers in class. A large proportion of the *Blade* editorial space in the 1880's was devoted to the subject of education. Locke suggested that more government schools for Indians be established, urged codification of school laws in Ohio, and recommended that technical schools be founded.[34] His more critical editorials continued to attack proposed reductions in the whiskey tax, southern obstruction of negro voting, and the tariff for revenue proposals of the Democrats.

Not all of Locke's editorials were serious in tone. Some spoke quaintly of patent medicines, inventions, and feminine fashions. In 1882, women fashion designers presented for public approval the "divided hygienic skirt." Locke suggested in turn the "united sanitary trousers."[35] Members of Locke's family always maintained that his humor was best within the family circle. Locke was not a member of the church in his later days. Present one evening at a church sociable with his wife, he explained his position to a lady who questioned him as to being a pillar of the church. Casting a comical look at his wife, Locke said, "I am a pillar of the portico, Madam. I'm an outside support."[36] As a matter of fact Locke's true religious views were of a very left wing variety indeed. It was he who encouraged the ill-starred Francis Ellingwood Abbot, apostle of Free Religion, to set up *The Index* in Toledo. This was a radical religious organ for the promotion of the belief that religion should be universal not sectarian, should repudiate all official creeds even to the extent of ascribing no divinity to Jesus. Locke invested $6,000 in this venture, and served on the board of the Index Association in the years 1869-73 when *The Index* was published in Toledo.[37]

Locke's interest also included the field of art. The *Draconian Club,*

organized in Toledo about 1875, marked the beginning of organized local interest in art. It is interesting to note that Locke took great interest in the club, supported its exhibits, and praised it in the columns of the Toledo *Blade*.[38] The *Draconian Club* was a political discussion group as well as an art society. In 1889, the Toledo Club was incorporated by the remaining members of the *Draconian Club.*

Locke devoted much of his time in the 1880's to enterprises other than the newspaper business. In 1884, he incorporated the Jewel Manufacturing Company, its main purpose being the manufacture of sewing machines. Its capital stock in 1888 was $300,000. By this time the former small town newspaper editor was a man of property. In 1886, Locke and other citizens formed a company for the purpose of drilling for natural gas. After drilling several wells with indifferent success, the Company sold its charter to another firm. Most of Locke's later investments were made in downtown real estate.[39]

In 1886, Locke decided to run for alderman of the Third Ward in Toledo. Members of the *Draconian Club,* foreseeing a stiff race and not wanting to see him defeated, advised him against running. Locke had antagonized the liquor interests in the ward by his anti- "Rum Power" editorials. However, by establishing a campaign fund whereby key precinct workers were "hired" at $5.00 each, Locke won the ward election. He was alderman in 1888 at the time of his death.[40]

Locke's name, or rather Nasby's, was often linked with that of Thomas Nast, the great cartoonist, whose caricatures in the New York *World* in the 1870's were so influential in breaking up the infamous Tweed Ring. It was in the campaign of 1868 that this cartoon and column combination became popular. Coming at the Climax of the radical reconstruction campaign, it was a foregone conclusion that General Ulysses S. Grant would carry the Republican Standard to victory over the Democratic ticket headed by Horatio Seymour. Locke's brilliant Nasby satires in support of the Civil War hero during this campaign were more than matched by the work of Nast. Grant modestly declared at the end of the campaign, "Two things elected me, the sword of Sheridan and the pencil of Thomas Nast."[41]

The first meeting of Locke and Nast, in 1867, was a novel event for both. Neither had seen the other and each expected to meet a tall man at the Toledo railroad depot. Locke was portly, of medium height, and

slightly bow-legged; Nast was small and dark. They dodged about for some time, each looking for a tall man. At last they met, and Nast celebrated the meeting in one of his characteristic cartoons.[42] They became good friends; Nast was the illustrator of two of the Nasby books, *Swingin' Round the Cirkle* and *Ekkoes from Kentucky.* Nast and Nasby made an attractive advertising phrase. Locke was very sensitive about Nast-Nasby cartoons appearing before his letters, because he did not want people to think that the cartoons suggested the Nasby papers.

In 1871, Nast published the *Nast Almanac* to which Locke, Mark Twain, Josh Billings, and most of the funny men of the time contributed. Marshall Jewell, minister to Russia, wrote to Nast in 1873, "I value your pencil and his (*Locke's*) pen more than all the other makers of warfare which exist in our party."[43] By 1873, the Nasby letters were appearing only occasionally, and Jewell mentioned to Nast that he missed seeing them.

The end came in 1888 when Locke was rich, powerful and tired. It came in the midst of a political campaign to rescue the Republican party from the savage onslaughts of the Democrats who had been restored to power in 1884 by the vigorous integrity of Grover Cleveland. The Democratic President chose to wage this campaign in 1887-1888 on the issue of a tariff for revenue only. Ever loyal to the "Grand Old Party" Locke, for the last time, took Nasby out of moth balls to cast ridicule on those who wanted to abandon the protective tariff. It was easier for the workingman to understand the Nasby slurs on the American standard of living than the efforts of Cleveland and his opponents to analyze the merits of the question. The Republicans won, but, in the midst of it, Nasby was made to utter a remark that summed up Locke's entire career: "What posterity will say I don't know, neither do I care. It's this generashen I'm going for." As one commentator has aptly said, "The succeeding generations treated him accordingly."[44]

FOOTNOTES

1. Toledo *Daily Blade*, February 15, 1888.
2. Jack Clifford Ransome, "David Ross Locke: Civil War Propagandist" *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*, XX (January, 1948) pp. 5-19.
3. David Ross Locke, *Nasby Divers Views, Opinions and Prophecies of Yours Trooly Petroleum V. Nasby* (Cincinnati, 1866), pp. 327-330.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 333.
5. David Ross Locke, *Swingin' Round the Cirkle* (Boston, 1867), p. 51.
6. David Ross Locke, *The Struggles of Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby* (Boston, 1888), pp. 249, 250.

7. J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Chicago, 1937), p. 735.
8. James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise* of 1850, (New York, 1893), vol. VI, p. 102.
9. John W. Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution,* 1866-1876 (New York, 1902), pp. 119-121.
10. Locke, *Struggles of Nasby,* p. 512.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 533.
12. Claude G. Bowers, *The Tragic Era* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 201-202.
13. Locke, *Struggles of Nasby,* p. 518.
14. Samuel L. Clemens, *Autobiography* (New York, 1925), p. 157.
15. *Ibid.,* pp. 155, 157.
16. *Ibid.,* p. 149.
17. Toledo *Daily Blade,* February 1, 1880.
18. *Ibid.,* February 14, 1880.
19. *Ibid.,* February 17, 1880.
20. Major J. B. Pond, *Eccentricities of Genius* (London, 1901), p. 194.
21. Locke, *Struggles of Nasby,* p. 630.
22. *Ibid.,* p. 658.
23. *Ibid.,* p. 685.
24. Toledo *Daily Blade,* March 15, 1870.
25. *Ibid.,* January 29, 1880.
26. *Ibid.,* December 13, 1871.
27. *Ibid.,* February 18, 1870.
28. Locke, *Struggles of Nasby,* p. 674.
29. Melville D. Landon, *Kings of the Platform and Pulpit* (Chicago, 1892), p. 28.
30. "Toledo *Weekly Blade* (Nasby's Paper)", a descriptive folder published by the *Blade,* 1885.
31. Pond, *op. cit.,* p. 194.
32. Toledo *Daily Blade,* August 16, 1919.
33. *Ibid.,* January 15, 1880.
34. *Ibid.,* June 29, 1882.
35. *Ibid.,* June 15, 1882.
36. Family papers of Mrs. Charles Locke.
37. See Gardner Williams, "Francis Ellingwood Abbot: Free Religionist" *Northwest Ohio Quarterly,* XX (Summer, 1948), pp. 128-143.
38. Toledo *Daily Blade,* June 19, 1915.
39. Clark Waggoner, *History of Toledo and Lucas County* (New York, 1888), vol. 1, p. 802.
40. Cyril Clemens, *Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby* (Webster Groves, Mo., 1936), p. 128.
41. Albert B. Paine, *Th. Nast, His Period and Pictures* (New York, 1904), p. 129.
42. Clipping of an article by Oliver Howland in *Our Fireside Friend,* June, 1875, in possession of Mrs. Charles Locke.
43. Paine, *op. cit.,* p. 281.
44. J[oseph] A. E.[stes], "David Ross Locke" *Dictionary of American Biography,* vol. VI, p. 336.

The President's Page

Safeguards of Liberty
In
The Federal Constitution

At the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution there were included in it those guarantees to liberty which a majority of the Founding Fathers deemed sufficient for the protection of the people.

However several of the State Conventions ratified the Constitution with the understanding that the guarantees later set forth in the Bill of Rights would be adopted as Amendments at the first session of the first Congress.

These guarantees are set forth below in the order in which they appear in the Constitution.

A. The privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus is assured.

Article I, Section 9

B. No Bill of Attainder shall be passed.

Article I, Section 9

C. No Ex Post Facto Law shall be passed.

Article I, Section 9

D. The Trial of all crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury.

Article III, Section 2

E. Such Trial (by Jury) shall be held in the State where such crimes shall have been committed, but when not committed within any State (as on the high seas), the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law direct.

Article III, Section 2

F. Treason against the United States, shall consist *only* in levying War against them, *or* in adhering to their Enemies, giving them aid and comfort.

Article III, Section 3

G. No person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same Overt Act, *or* on Confession in *Open* Court.

Article III, Section 3

This right is supplemented by the provisions of the Sixth Article of the Federal Bill of Rights, which requires that the accused must be confronted with the witnesses against him.

H. No Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood or Forfeiture except during the life of the Person attainted.

Article III, Section 3

I. No religious test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

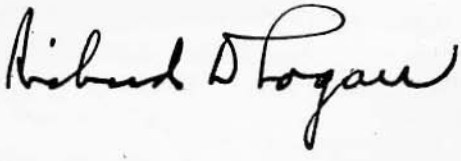
Article VI

The first Article of the Federal Bill of Rights prevents the enactment of any law prohibiting the free exercise of Religion.

During the first 125 years of our Nation's existence, it was unnecessary for most Americans to possess any knowledge, other than a superficial one, of the rights set forth in our Federal Constitution and its Bill of Rights.

However, the increased infiltration into this country during recent years of propaganda advocating Russion Communistic ideologies, encouraged in many instances by citizens in high places, both in and out of Government, makes it imperative for our people to learn the origin, nature, and reason for the adoption of those safeguards which our Founding Fathers so wisely provided.

The provisions of the ten articles of the Bill of Rights have been discussed on this page in earlier numbers of our Quarterly. In subsequent numbers, those guarantees listed above will be discussed.



News

Annual Meeting

The thirtieth annual meeting of the Historical Society of Northwestern Ohio was held June 3, 1948 at the staff room of the Toledo Public Library. President Richard D. Logan was in the chair. The former officers were all re-elected: Richard D. Logan, President; George D. Welles, Vice-President; Carl B. Spitzer, Secretary-Treasurer; and Mrs. Max Shepherst, Librarian. Trustees for the term expiring in 1950 were elected: Lehr Fess, Richard D. Logan, Lyman Spitzer, John H. Taylor, and George D. Welles. Dr. Randolph C. Downes was reappointed executive director of the Society.

The president reported that the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County had appropriated $4,900 for the promotion of local historical research by the Society during the year 1948. It was voted to accept the appropriation and to send a resolution of thanks to the Board. The librarian's report showed the addition of 81 new items to the Society's collections during the past year. The treasurer's report showed the Society to be in excellent financial condition.

The executive director reported on the activities of the Society during the past year. It was pointed out that the membership had doubled and that over 300 copies of *The Conquest* (Lucas' County Historical Series, Volume I) had been sold. Research for Volume II, to be called *Canal Days*—was under way and pointed to the publication of that work in the fall. The work of the Lucas County Historical Biography Contest was described. (See below.)

A resolution of thanks was voted to Mr. Herbert Sewell and the staff of the Toledo Public Library for their cooperation with the Society in providing quarters for our Spring meeting, in setting up displays and paint-

ings for the Machen Centennial, in making available window space for a display of *The Conquest,* and in selling copies of *The Conquest* at the return desk in the Library.

Lucas County Historical Biography Contest

The first annual history writing contest conducted by the Society with the cooperation of the city and county school systems was successfully concluded with the awarding of prizes at the various schools. Thirty-six prizes in all were awarded—three sets of twelve for each of the sophomore, junior and senior grades, varying from $15 to $2. The judges were Miss Mary Hutchinson of the staff of the Board of Education, Mrs. Max Shepherst of the Historical Society, Professor Edward F. Mohler of Mary Manse College, and Mr. Robert J. Barber of Ottawa Hills High School.

The prize winners with their school and the subject of their biography are as follows:

Senior Class

1. Betty Rothhaar	Libbey	S. M. Jones
2. Anna Marie Labuzinski	Central	John Hardy Doyle
3. Mary Alice Dugan	Central	Monsignor F. J. Macelwane
4. Nancy Conklin	St. Ursula Academy	Thomas A. DeVilbiss
5. Barbara M. Kwiatkowski	Central	Edward J. McCormick
6. Corene Moran	Central	Monsignor George Johnson
7. Barbara Tilley	DeVilbiss	Dorman Richardson
8. Mary B. Carstensen	Central	George Stevens
9. Barbara Stedman	St. Ursula Academy	David R. Locke
10. Bette Rae Cochrane	Ursuline Academy	Brand Whitlock
11. Mary Alice Langenderfer	Central	Dr. Elmer Isaac McKesson
12. Rosemary Babione	Central	Monsignor Michael Doyle

Junior Class

1. Janet Kesling	Libbey	Anthony Wayne
2. Natalie Grosjean	Waite	Morrison R. Waite
3. Patsy Harrison	Waite	Edward D. Libbey
4. Alton Klickman	Waite	Walter F. Brown
5. Dorothy Rickard	Whitney	Harriet Whitney
6. Angeline Schneider	Libbey	Art Barrie
7. Donna Burbaugh	Waite	Karl Matheis
8. Avery Fuqua	Libbey	Edward D. Libbey
9. Mary Laub	Libbey	John David Biggers
10. Beverly Flegle	Waite	Walter T. Jackson
11. Charlotte Gaynor	Libbey	Golden Rule Jones
12. Joanne Diaz	Libbey	Art Barrie

Sophomore Class

1. Beverly Jay	Libbey	Brand Whitlock
2. Virginia Pollauf	Central	David Ross Locke

3. Joyce Carlton	Libbey	His Honor the Mayor (Michael V. DiSalle)
4. Elliott Teitlebaum	Libbey	Edward D. Libbey
5. Betty Reetz	Libbey	Julius D. Lamson
6. Geraldyne Studer	Libbey	Robinson Locke
7. Donna Marie Maix	Libbey	John Gunckel
8. Rodger Upton	Libbey	David Ross Locke
9. Nancy Hartwig	Libbey	Horace S. Walbridge
10. Barbara Green	Libbey	Harold E. Williams
11. Ruth Tucker	Waite	Wm. H. Tucker
12. Ann Ivancso	Central	John Q. Carey

Freedom Train

The Freedom Train, sponsored by *The American Heritage Foundation,* will be in Toledo August 31, 1948. There will be on exhibit the original Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the charter of the United Nations and many other historic documents. The American Heritage Foundation is a private organization financed by business, labor and professional organizations.

Monroe County Historical Society

The ninth annual banquet of the Monroe County Historical Society was held on April 22, 1948 at the Methodist Church in Monroe, Michigan. President George W. Paxson presided and Reverend C. L. Cone of Trinity Episcopal Church was toastmaster. The program consisted of papers by David E. Winkworth on Monroe's Nursery Industry, by Warren Kahlbaum on Early Grist and Flour Mills, and by William L. Taft on The Paper Mills of Monroe. Old time tunes were played by Bernard Beaudry on his accordion. The new president, Dr. Lawrence A. Frost was installed.

The Conquest

A few copies of Volume I of the Lucas County Historical Series are left. There is no question that the supply will be exhausted as soon as Volume II (*Canal Days*) appears. A paper useful as an order blank is enclosed for those who have not yet procured copies. The price is $1.60.

Canal Days

This will be Volume II of the Lucas County Historical Series. It will appear in November or December 1948 and will be introduced to the

public along with an exhibition of canal paintings and drawings by Ohio's famous author and illustrator, Frank N. Wilcox of the Cleveland School of Art. Further announcements will be made in the Fall QUARTERLY.