

## A DREAM OF INGERSOLVILLE.

BY CHAPLAIN McCABE.

I HAD a dream which was not all a dream. I thought I was on a long journey through a beautiful country when suddenly I came to a great city with walls fifteen feet high. At the gate stood a sentinel whose shining armour reflected back the rays of the morning sun. As I was about to salute him and pass into the city, he stopped me and said:

"Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?"

I answered, "Yes, with all my heart."

"Then," said he, "you can not enter here. No man or woman who acknowledges that name can pass in here. Stand aside! they are coming."

I looked down the road and saw a vast multitude approaching. It was lead by a military officer.

"Who is that?" I asked of the sentinel.

"That," he replied "is the great Col. Robert Ingersoll, the founder of the city of Ingersolvile."

"Who is he?" I ventured to inquire.

"He is a great and mighty warrior, who fought in many bloody battles for the Union during the great war."

I felt ashamed of my ignorance of history and stood silently watching the procession. I had heard of Col. Ingersoll, who resigned in the presence of the enemy, but of course this could not be the same man.

The procession came near enough for me to recognize some of the faces. I noticed Wilbur F. Story, of the Chicago *Times*. A great wagon followed him containing a steam press. Then came Charles A. Dana, also followed by a steam press.

All the noted infidels and scoffers of the country seemed to be there. Most of them passed in unchallenged by the sentinel, but at last a meek looking individual with a white necktie approached and he was stopped. I saw at a glance it was Frothingham.

"Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" said the sentinel.

"Not much!" Everybody laughed and he was allowed to pass in.

There were artists there, with glorious pictures; singers, with ravishing voices; tragedians and comedians, whose names have a world wide fame.

Then came another division of the infidel host. Saloonkeepers by thousands, proprietors of gambling hells, brothels and theatres, all marching in.

I looked, and high aloft above the mass was a banner on which was inscribed, "What has Christianity done for the country?" and another on which was inscribed "Down with the churches! Away with Christianity—it interferes with our happiness!" And then came a murmur of voices, that grew louder and louder, until a shout went up like the roar of Niagara: "Away with him; Crucify him! Crucify!" I felt no desire now to enter into Ingersolvile.

As the last of the procession entered, a few men and women with broad brimmed hats and plain bonnets made their appearance and wanted to go in as missionaries but they were turned rudely away. A zealous young Methodist exhorter with a Bible under his arm asked permission to enter, but the sentinel swore at him awfully. Then I thought I saw Brother Moody applying for admission, but he was refused. I could not help smiling to hear Moody say, as he turned away sadly.

"Well! they let me live and work in Chicago; its very strange they won't let me into Ingersolvile."

The sentinel went inside the gate and shut it with a bang; and I thought, as soon as it was closed, a mighty angel came down with a great iron bar and barred the gate on the outside, and wrote upon it in letters of fire, "Doomed to live together six months." Then he went away and all was silent except the noise of the revelry and shouting that came from within the city walls.

I went away; and as I journeyed through the land I could not believe my eyes. Peace and plenty smiled everywhere. The jails were all empty, the penitentiaries were without occupants. The police of great cities were idle. Judges sat in court rooms with nothing to do. Business was brisk. Many great buildings, formerly crowded with criminals were turned into manufacturing establishments. Just about this time the president of the United States called for a day of Thanksgiving. He attended services in a Presbyterian church. The preacher dwelt upon the changed condition of affairs. As he went on and depicted the great prosperity that had come to the country, and gave reasons for de-out thanksgiving, I saw the old deacon clasp his handkerchief over his mouth to keep from shouting right out. An ancient spinster, old true-blue Presbyterian—couldn't hold in. She expressed the thought of every heart, by shouting with all her might "Glory to God for Ingersolvile!" A young theological student lifted up his hand and devoutly added, "Esto perpetua." Everybody smiled. The country was delirious with joy. Great processions of children swept along the highways singing,

"We'll not give up the Bible,  
God's blessed word of truth.

Vast assemblies of reformed inebriates, with their wives and children, gathered in the open air. No building would hold them. I thought I was in one meeting where Bishop Simpson made an address, and as he closed it a mighty shout went up till the earth rung again. Oh it was wonderful, and then we all stood up and sang with tears of joy,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name:  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all!"

The six months had well nigh gone. I made my way back again to the gate of Ingersolvile. A dreadful silence reigned over the city, broken only by the sharp crack of a revolver now and then. I saw a busy man trying to get in at the gate, and I said to him, "My friend where are you from?"

"I live in Chicago," said he, "and they've taxed us to death there; and I've heard of this city, and I want to go in to buy some real estate in this new and growing place."

He failed utterly to remove the bar, but by some means he got a ladder twelve feet long, and with its aid, he climbed upon the wall. With an eye to business, he shouted to the first person he saw.

"Hallo, there!" what's the price of real estate in Ingersolvile?"

"Nothing!" shouted the voice; "you can have all you want if you'll just take it and pay the taxes."

"What makes your taxes so high?" said the Chicago man. I noted the answer carefully; I shall never forget."

"We've had to build forty new jails and fourteen penitentiaries, a lunatic asylum and orphan asylum in every ward; we've had to disband the public schools, and it takes all the revenue of the city to keep up the police force."

"Where's my old friend Ingersoll?" said the Chicago man.