

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1464  
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

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## CLARENCE DARROW—THE BIG MINORITY MAN

[The author is connected with the Redpath Lyceum Bureau in the capacity of Director of Publicity.]

"Advancing" Clarence Darrow from Cleveland to the Gulf, and then through the Midwest to Omaha, promoting his public debates on prohibition, the mechanistic theory, and heredity-environment, was the privilege of a lifetime.

For years I had heard this picturesque character "cussed and discussed"—first in connection with the Los Angeles *Times* dynamiting case, in which he represented the McNamara brothers; later, when his mechanistic plea saved Loeb and Leopold from the gallows, and again when, at his own expense, he fought the battle of evolution for John Thomas Scopes in Dayton, Tennessee, with William Jennings Bryan as his foe.

To some extent I had shared the public fear of this free-thinking master of men. I had tried to reconcile his contention that "man is a machine and nothing more," with the apparent fact that courts and juries were moved by his more human than eloquent pleas.

### A PROPER APPROACH

Years ago some self-anointed "master salesman" wise-cracked to the effect that a terror-

striking prospect should be approached as though seated in his B. V. D.'s, the idea being that the calling salesman would not be handicapped by an inferiority complex. On this principle, it was fortunate that my first introduction to Clarence Darrow was in his bathroom at the Hotel Hollenden in Cleveland. By previous appointment I called that afternoon of February 9, 1928, and was greeted by Darrow's long-time friend, David Gibson, and by Darrow's only son, Paul, now a Chicago banker. With few preliminaries, I was led through the historic "presidential suite" and presented to the "chief." Right then his main concern was the daily shave, and the informality of the meeting was characteristic of his constant freedom from anything "high-hat" or "highbrow." The unkempt hair, the unshouldered "galluses," the lowered chin—all familiar in crowded courtrooms—were there.

But I must add that nowadays when Clarence Darrow faces an audience, his hair is combed, his trousers are pressed, and he conforms to accepted usage by sporting both collar and tie. He has never posed as a West Point graduate, nor does he claim authorship of any books on elocution, but with that characteristic slouch, those Darrowesque shrugs of the shoulders, and an earnestness that occasionally is broken by a low chuckle or a furtive smile, he reaches right out over the footlights and gets under the hides of his hearers. The audience, disarmed by his friendly frankness, finds a much misunderstood American who preaches "live and let live," and who rises right up on his

haunches and roars a most indignant roar when an uninvited zealot attempts to regulate his mental and physical appetites.

### NOT WITH THE MOB

Mr. Darrow has been branded "The Big Minority Man," and the title fits him like an old slouch hat. In a debate he expects 80 percent of the audience to be against him, but he adds: "If the majority were with me I would think I was wrong."

Of the nine Darrow debates with which I was connected, five were with Jewish Rabbis, while the others were divided between a prominent Methodist, a Florida lawyer, a Georgia congressman, and a writer of popular books on science.

Why all the rabbis? Perhaps the best explanation is that as a class they comprise about the most learned group of capable platformists in America, and Mr. Darrow has always respected intelligence.

The customary allotment of time was one hour to each debater. Mr. Darrow opened with a 25-minute discussion, his opponent followed with 35 minutes, each speaker's second appearance ran 25 minutes, and Mr. Darrow climaxed the argument with a 10-minute sur-rebuttal, as they say in the modern corridors of learning. He did not insist on opening and closing the debates, but was willing to so change the wording of the question that his opponent could fire the first and last guns. None, however, accepted the courtesy.

"If I'm going to debate," he would say about 10 minutes before starting time, "I suppose I ought to have a few notes." But the blank sheets which were handed him were not used except for reminders on points of rebuttal; this, in spite of the fact that one night he might be debating prohibition and the next night the question, "Is Man a Machine?"

Usually there was a wild rush to the stage, to shake his hand, following the debates; and there were some mad scrambles for his large-scrawled notes, as souvenirs. At Indianapolis this almost cost him the watch and chain he had left on a table with a half dozen sheets of memoranda.

Certainly the financial element did not lure Mr. Darrow into his public debates. However, he was immensely gratified at the friends he found and made in the various cities. Always calm and deliberate, courteous and considerate, he left behind him a trail of admirers.

"Is Clarence Darrow sincere?" "Does he really believe all that he says?" These and similar questions were asked dozens of times on our trip. To those who know Mr. Darrow intimately, such questions are so ridiculous that they classify as unintended humor. As Heywood Broun once remarked, "he makes life worth living by proving that it isn't." But such an inconsistency does not, in this case, constitute insincerity.

### MEETS CLEVELAND RABBI

On our tour, which really began in Cleveland in February, 1928, and ended in the same city

10 months later, the newspapers estimated an average attendance of 3,000. For the first affair in Cleveland, sponsored by the Advertising Club, there was a sell-out of Masonic Temple nearly three weeks before the debate. There the question, "Is Man a Machine?" was argued affirmatively, of course, by Darrow, and negatively by Rabbi Barnett R. Brickner of Euclid Avenue Temple. Chief Justice Carrington T. Marshall, of the Ohio supreme court, presided. At this debate I sat directly behind the speakers, and observed the reaction of a capacity audience—friend and foe alike—to the onslaughts of the great warrior who, by the way, makes his business home in the new Methodist Temple in Chicago.

Rabbi Brickner had been roundly applauded at the conclusion of his final speech. Darrow thanked the audience for this courtesy to his opponent and added, "You see, if I got a whole lot of applause, I would think I was wrong. I take it that a great many of you are religious people. I judge from the way you look, and from the way you applaud utterly irrelevant things." This drew a great laugh, even from the soul adherents who overbalanced the audience. Then Darrow recalled his opponent's quotation of "that drivel of Henley, 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.'" "The captain of his soul," mocked Darrow; "why, he isn't even a deckhand on a raft."

And just to show their friendliness for this freethinker from Chicago, that Cleveland crowd gave Clarence Darrow one of the greatest ova-

tions of his career. The three Cleveland papers carried verbatim reports of the debate, and filled 50 columns with interviews, stenographic reports, feature stories, cartoons and pictures.

### ARGUE WET-DRY IN CINCINNATI

But the Cincinnati debate on prohibition, staged in Music Hall, February 24, was the real show. Darrow's opponent on that occasion was Dr. Clarence True Wilson, secretary of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals, with headquarters in what Darrow often referred to as "the Methodist Vatican," in Washington, D. C.

Darrow and Wilson were to arrive from Chicago and Washington, respectively, at an early morning hour. I had arranged for them to breakfast together at the Hotel Gibson. Dr. and Mrs. Wilson arrived and taxied to the hotel. Darrow's train arrived, passengers unloaded, but my star attraction failed to show up. I was about to inquire the next train from Chicago when, far down the train shed, arm in arm with a uniformed brakeman, came Darrow, seriously discussing a current question with his new friend.

Reporters and cartoonists were waiting at the Hotel, and at the breakfast table insisted that Darrow and Wilson inscribe prohibition sentiments beneath their respective caricatures. Dr. Wilson wrote: "Prohibition at its worst is better than license at its best." Then Darrow took the proffered pencil and scribbled: "Here's hoping that some day we can get a drink without the friendly ministrations of a bootlegger."

Recalling Darrow's repugnance to capital punishment, someone asked if he would favor the death sentence if one of his loved ones were murdered. Characteristically he replied with another question: "Why not ask me, 'if I had a brother, would he like cheese?'"

From this Cincinnati interview, during which Dr. Wilson elicited Mr. Darrow's personal habits in the matter of drink, emanated the report that the old warrior is a teetotaler. Weeks later, in Atlanta, he answered this "accusation" with a deep, throaty chuckle. "I am not a teetotaler and have never claimed to be. Neither have I used liquor to excess." He added pointedly, "If anyone is interested to know, I do not eat to excess, either." And I can vouch for the truth of this last statement, as Clarence Darrow's menu is limited to moderate morning and evening meals, and a very light luncheon.

It was great sport to watch the crowd in Cincinnati, while the 18th amendment was under discussion. Apparently the wets occupied most of the first floor, while the dry element predominated the balconies. When Dr. Wilson declared that "prohibition has been in the hands of dripping wets who wanted it to fail," the dry balconies palmed vociferously. When Darrow opined that "personal liberty is worth more than all the reformers who ever lived to curse the world," the \$2 boys and girls down in the parquet cut loose with a mighty roar of approval. Darrow's word picture of a five-cent glass of foaming beer, "right off the ice," was almost too much for his adherents, many of

whom rushed for the water fountain as their champion relinquished the stage to his dry opponent.

Prof. Leon McCarty of the public speaking department of the University of Cincinnati conducted a rather unusual experiment at this debate. He passed out ballots to be used before and after the arguments. He labeled it a "change of mind vote." If we are to believe those ballots, the crowd went away with minds little changed by the linguistic fracas. Four "wets" became "dry" and 21 "drys" became "wet," according to the markings. Of 56 who were undecided before the debate began, 34 were converted to "repeal of the 18th amendment," and 22 were converted to the negative side. The views of all others voting apparently remained unchanged, whether "wet" or "dry."

### STARTS SOUTHERN TREK

Shortly after the Cincinnati affair, which Mr. Darrow thoroughly enjoyed, "the chief" felt the lure of the South, and headed for St. Petersburg, Florida. Mr. Darrow cannot drive a car, nor does he own one, so Paul Darrow, his son, was commissioned to be his companion on the southerly trek. Ordinarily, the trip would require four or five days. It took the Darrows three weeks. Everywhere along the route were friends who wanted them to "stop over night." Even, Dayton, Tennessee, gave evolution's champion a cordial reception, for during the Scopes trial they had learned the real Clarence Darrow, sans horns, sans hoofs.

Knowing Mr. Darrow's willingness to take

part in two or three debates while in the South, I proceeded to Miami and arranged with the Reverend R. N. Merrill for Darrow and Don C. McMullen, attorney for the Florida Anti-Saloon League, to debate the 18th Amendment in the White Temple, a downtown auditorium of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This was the only practical auditorium available, and naturally I agreed to give the church a percentage of the receipts. Reverend Merrill had stated that either McMullen or Dr. Wilson of Washington would be a worthy opponent for Darrow, and when I received McMullen's O. K., "Brother" Merrill stated that he would announce the debate over radio in connection with his regular Sunday services.

To his secretary he dictated the terms of our agreement, with the exception of the church's percentage. On this point I told him to "write his own ticket," after expenses had been paid. The agreement was signed, the Miami newspapers ran the announcement, tickets were printed, and advertising was ordered. The advance sale was left in the hands of a local music store and I "Pullmaned" for Tampa, McMullen's home city, where the second Florida debate was to be held immediately following Miami. But apparently some of the White Temple's official "bored" felt that Clarence Darrow's faithless feet should not desecrate the sacred portal of their sanctum, and they told the Reverend that the deal was off. He nonchalantly "passed the buck" to "the young man from up north," and sent me a couple of flabbergasting wires at Tampa—wires that strength-

ened my respect for certain Darrowistic views which are too familiar to require repetition. According to last reports, the White Temple "bored" was busy inviting prospective pastors to come down and have a try-out.

About the time I reached Tampa, Mr. Darrow was landing in nearby St. Petersburg. The Tampa folks saw a lot of publicity in the proposed platform combat, and showed their distinguished visitor that true hospitality for which the South is justly famed. Mayor D. B. McKay, also owner of the *Tampa Times*, carried his co-operation to the verge of accepting the debate chairmanship, but there he balked because, we were told, he did not relish spending an entire evening on the same platform with Darrow's local opponent.

### DARROW-READ DIALOGUE

And the real estate interests were alert. They heard that Darrow and Opie Read—verily two of a kind—had been friends and neighbors in Chicago. Read was vacationing at Howey-in-the-Hills and a real estate bus was chartered for the long jaunt up through Orlando to the new citrus development. The hour's dialogue, between Read and Darrow, at the luncheon table, was by all odds the outstanding classic of my ten months on the debate trail. Forgotten—hot days in Tennessee—"and they were hot," Mr. Darrow will tell you emphatically; forgotten—wrangling over the disposal of two abnormal boys who had murdered little Bobbie Franks and whose own lives were in danger;

forgotten—debates on prohibition, evolution and all the other "tions" and "isms."

It was the day off—to talk or not to talk—as he pleased. And he pleased to talk. Especially so, when the bus rolled up at the hotel, and Opie Read, alert at 76, arrived upon the scene. The event resolved itself into a brilliant play of words and flashing wit, as the two liberals expanded their views on politics, prohibition, religion, philosophy, science, and a dozen other themes. Fundamentalists came into the discussion.

"Just think of the tragedy of teaching children not to doubt," deplored Darrow.

"Especially when incredulity is the source of all wisdom," added Read, the veteran novelist. "Incredulity is the greatest stimulus to education. A fundamentalist," he slowly enunciated, "is a man who is willing to believe anything that is not based upon reason."

Talk turned to prohibition, upon which subject Read and Darrow remained in accord. Mrs. Darrow, sitting just across the table, recalled Mencken's definition of a prohibitionist as "a man you would not care to drink with, if he drank." Apparently the mind of the *Tampa Times* reporter was on the Civil War, for when the Mencken definition was quoted the next day it was credited to Lincoln. Anyway, Opie Read appended: "I call a prohibitionist a man whose liquor I would not care or dare to drink."

Darrow advocated a college where scientific truths could be taught freely. "Today there isn't a single professor who can hold his posi-

tion if he dares to say what he thinks. Evolution is taught as a 'theory,' while the Jonah and the whale incident is given as a 'fact'; and so on through the fields of religion and science."

This statement by Darrow was as a match to a bomb, setting off all the fireworks of the combined liberalism and agnosticism of the two men. Volley after volley of verbal ammunition was shot at the "preaching religionists," who pray to God, "whenever He slips up."

"God is always getting a calling down for His neglect by one or the other of His disciples," Read remarked. "It's more than I could stand, having somebody continually reminding me of something I neglected to do."

"It is a known fact that it is the very rich and the very poor that are the most devout religionists. The rich pray that they be permitted to retain their goods, and the poor pray that they may be granted the world's goods."

Darrow ran his long fingers through his hair and with his dark gray eyes twinkling under bushy eyebrows, said:

"I am afraid that you and I will die before this world gets straight."

"Yes, I guess we will have to let the world go to hell," replied Read.

"And we'll go along with it," laughed Darrow. "That is one place you don't have to make reservations. There is always plenty of room. And whoever wants to go to heaven has to take a darn rocky detour."

## MUTUAL ADMIRERS MEET

On the way back to Tampa that evening Mr. Darrow mentioned a magazine article which he must complete within the next 24 hours. But when I reminded him that Will Rogers was to speak that night, he forgot his writing and recalled that, a year previously, Rogers had sent him a birthday wire congratulating him on being "the only freethinker the American people have allowed to live for 70 years." That night we were Will's guests at the auditorium, and when the usher tipped him as to our location, I knew that some valuable "24-sheeting" was about to blossom forth. And I was not disappointed, for toward the end of his customary triumph, the cud-chewing Oklahoman invited Mr. Darrow to stand and be introduced to the audience. The response was rather reluctant. Frankly, the old warrior was embarrassed—so much so, in fact, that he didn't recall the name of his debate opponent when Will raised the question. "Oh, some dry," drawled Darrow. "Well, the Lord pity him," added Will. You can't beat that for "first-page, first-column"—ten days before the big show.

Tampa fell in love with Darrow and his liberality. Especially did the Spanish element appreciate his uncramped style. He visited the Cuban club, ate at the El Pasaje restaurant, was interviewed by La Gaceta, and when I announced his debate from the ring of the Cuban arena in Ybor City, he was given a tremendous ovation.

Three days before the Tampa debate, there appeared in the *Tribune* this editorial squib: "We have just heard that admission will be charged to the Darrow-McMullen debate. And we had thought it would be free, with free refreshments to attract a crowd." There was considerable to read in the same paper, the morning after the debate, a four-column report which included this paragraph: "Froth flew off an imaginary schooner of beer and the echo of the marching song of a million members of the Anti-Saloon League resounded through the municipal auditorium last night as Clarence Darrow and Donald C. McMullen, wet and dry champions, respectively, argued for more than two hours on prohibition. Most every seat was filled long before the show started, and the crowd overflowed onto the stage."

### SAM SMALL'S ATLANTA TRIBUTE

One of the most interesting phases of Mr. Darrow's Atlanta encounter with ("Earnest Willie") Upshaw, again on the subject of prohibition, was the tribute paid him by Sam Small, nationally known booster of the eighteenth amendment. "Darrow and I have campaigned in cahoots for the Democratic party and then have scrapped hotly over theology and prohibition," said Small. "He is always a considerate gentleman and a jolly good scout to stick around with. I really love him. As for brains, he has as superb a bunch of them as I have found on the continent. He thinks powerfully, even when he thinks wrong, as I judge

the subjects of his thoughts sometimes. But I have heard philosophy from Darrow that was not second to that of Montesquieu, John Locke or Carlyle. He has a heart in him as big and as gentle as that of an altar ox. He has sentiments of kindness, charity and humanity that are equal to any that ever emanated from any preacher or priest on the planet.

"My quarrel with Darrow is because he has diverted his splendid intellect and clean instincts to the propagation of a lot of desiccated, alleged agnosticism—whatever that omnibus epithet may denote. He says he doesn't believe Baalam's ass talked to his owner, but Darrow will reverently listen to some human asses who inhabit the Chicago University, talking to him about the earth being a billion years old. It is my guess that the prophet's old jack had a better voice and more sense than those Chicago don't-knows.

"I have heard all the big orators of America and England who have lived in the last half century, but the greatest speech I ever heard was Darrow's, in self-defense, before a jury in Los Angeles," concluded Small.

Hundreds of school teachers were assembled in Atlanta when Mr. Darrow arrived. Reporters, therefore, pounced upon his admission that he started his career as a pedagogue. "Lot of bunk in education," he began. "Take those seven points of education—what do they mean? Words, nothing but words. Lord, how we love words! Education today is like this," he added: "Say a fellow goes into a store to buy a pair

of pants—I believe you call them trousers down here—anyway, it's the same. The fellow finds the pants are too short. All right, the store cuts off the fellow's legs. But if the pants are too long the store has the fellow's legs stretched. That's education. We cut or stretch the child to suit our educational methods, without making the methods suit the child. The purpose of education should be to fit the scholar for living."

The Atlanta debate was a rather boisterous affair. The speakers, understand, were quite gentlemanly, but there were many in the audience who apparently felt that they were attending a free-for-all forum. The wise-crackers became so boisterous at one time that the chairman, Walter McElreath, an Atlanta lawyer, shouted for order that lasted until another heckler broke loose. The speakers themselves were unflattered by the interruptions of their adherents, but their admonitions were of little avail.

In the course of his argument, Mr. Upshaw remarked that he had learned oratory with a plow-pulling mule for an audience, when he was a boy, more than 40 years ago. "And just think," answered Darrow, "right here in Atlanta in 1928, an audience has to listen to the same platitudes that were inflicted on that fool mule."

Apparently, Friday, April 13, was an unlucky debate day for W. D. Upshaw, for three days later his share of the debate money was garnisheed by the state banking department, on

notes which the former Georgia congressman was said to have given a defunct bank. Mr. Darrow also was named technically in the proceedings.

### ENJOYS POPULARITY OF OHIO RABBI

But it remained for Columbus, Ohio, to furnish the ideal debate setting. Memorial Hall stage, balcony and main floor were jammed with those who were curious to see Clarence Darrow, and to hear him argue the mechanistic theory with Rabbi Jacob Tarshish of Temple Israel. George J. Karb, for many years mayor of Columbus, presided. Chief Harry E. French of the police department, held the stop watch. The crowd was enthusiastic, but orderly. Rabbi Tarshish, a heavy favorite among Gentiles as well as Jews, matched wits creditably with his internationally famed opponent. Mr. Darrow rather enjoyed the popularity of his young opponent, and later expressed the wish that they could make a debate tour together.

The Columbus audience was largely with the Rabbi, but it stinted no applause to Darrow on the occasion of some of his witty sallies. And they liked his verbal lashings. There are only a few men who can razz an audience and make them enjoy it. Darrow is the king of this group.

Toward the close of the discussion, another side of Clarence Darrow was revealed. He said, "I've seen the play of life, well into the fifth act. I'm pretty well tired of it and disgusted with it. I want to lie down and go to sleep."

Earlier in the evening he had challenged Rabbi Tarshish's endowment of man with a soul, free will, spirit—or call it what you will. "Where in the dickens is this soul?" asked Darrow. "When it gets separated from the body where does it go? Does it roost in a tree? Was there a soul in the original cell from which I came? Then I must have 10,000 nameless sisters and brothers on my mother's side, and a million on my father's."

It was Mr. Darrow's plan to leave for Chicago immediately after the debate. We went to the Deshler-Wallick Hotel, where the manager had provided luxurious quarters, and while "the chief" packed his light grip I secured his railway ticket and Pullman reservation. These I handed to him as he joined me in the lobby. Friends drove us to the station and we bade goodbye. But the parting was short-lived, for at the gate Mr. Darrow could not locate his passports. He fumbled in every pocket, and delved into packs of letters and documents, but no ticket was found.

"There's your free will," he smiled philosophically. "I thought I was going to Chicago, but we're going back and spend the night with these Columbus people." The word was passed around and within a half hour 20 of us, including Rabbi Tarshish, were at the home of Ralph F. Hirsch reveling in stories which the warrior told of some of his greatest legal battles. Someone put a rather unusual question which he parried by chuckling that "even Dr. Cadman couldn't answer that, and he is supposed to know everything."

## SPENDS EVENING READING MANUSCRIPTS

Having established a debate truce for the summer months, I did not see Mr. Darrow again until I visited his home late in July. On the same elevator that took me to the top floor of the Midway apartment hotel where he lives in Chicago, was a young couple who, I soon learned, appreciated, like myself, the privilege of an occasional hour with the old philosopher. We were greeted by Mr. and Mrs. Darrow, and spent a marvelous two hours hearing from his own lips the manuscripts of three magazine articles he had recently completed. One of these, "The Myth of the Soul," created something of a furore when published in *The Forum*. "The Black Sheep," used by *Liberty*, was based to a large extent upon fact. The third article was full of pointed humor, in defense of his presidential candidate's right to choose his own grammar.

I remained at the Midway overnight and breakfasted with the Darrows the following morning. At that time it was agreed that the next debate would be at Indianapolis, the middle of October, with Rabbi Morris M. Feuerlicht taking the negative side of the question, "Is Man a Machine?"

Paul Darrow at that time was establishing a Chicago banking connection that brought him east from Colorado. A most likeable chap, he was about to leave that morning, so we took the Illinois Central downtown from East 60th Street. Paul and his father sat opposite me. We came first to Paul's station, and there I had

the sentimental surprise of my life. I had known that Clarence Darrow had a heart (or "pump," as he would call it) as big as all outdoors. I had argued with folks who said he was "hard-boiled," but never had I realized this man's real depth of emotion.

An ordinary American father and son, parting for a few days or weeks, would have grasped hands and wished each other well; a French or Italian father and son probably would have kissed each other on the cheek; but Clarence and Paul Darrow intuitively embraced each other in a manner that spoke volumes for the affection existing between these two men among men.

At his office in the Chicago Temple, Mr. Darrow may or may not be found when he is in Chicago. He dictates most of his work at home, knowing that he will have few minutes to himself at his office. On the morning of my visit he was besieged by interviewers, would-be clients, and invitations to speak at religious, political and nondescript gatherings. We parted at noon, to meet three months later at Indianapolis.

### EVANGELIST CRASHES FIRST PAGE

Fun and trouble travel hand in hand at the Hoosier citadel. Rabbi Feuerlicht, a man of exceptional qualities, and with a tremendous following, proved an ideal opponent. But there were other considerations that kept the pot boiling all the time we were there.

Cadle Tabernacle, where the debate was to

be held, is an 8,000-capacity hall with surprisingly good acoustics. It was in the hands of a receiver, and George Montgomery was at the managerial helm. It seems that "Brother" Cadle, an evangelist for whom the auditorium was named, was in the midst of a campaign somewhere out in Missouri when he heard that his old namesake was about to be "deseccrated" by the Darrow-Feuerlicht debate, October 18, and by a boxing match three nights later. Immediately he abandoned the sawdust trail and transported himself to Indianapolis. Advance publicity hadn't been so "hot" up to that time, but the arrival of Cadle put us on the front page in big headlines. A threatened injunction did not materialize, and someone was unkind enough to suggest that the "conscientious objector" was among those present at the verbal joust.

Mr. Darrow had wired that he would arrive early, by sleeper, from Detroit, where he had spoken the previous night on behalf of Al Smith. I arranged a breakfast at the Claypool Hotel and met his train in a drizzling rain. No Darrow appeared, but when I inquired of the Pullman conductor he told me that "the chief" was in a drawing-room and had left word not to be awakened for a half hour. This was unusual, and when he finally appeared, I learned that he was nursing a bad throat and couldn't speak above a whisper. Mrs. Darrow was with him and told me that on the preceding night, in Detroit, he had fought a similar ailment, but had spoken well after getting warmed up.

I trembled for the psychological effect of his

bad throat upon his opponent and upon the audience, but most of all I feared for the interviewers who were quite likely to headline the fact that Clarence Darrow was in town and, for once, speechless. But the boys of the press were extremely charitable, and about the only comment was on the day after the debate, when Dan M. Kidney of *The Times* said quite charitably, as a matter of fact, that Mr. Darrow "fired the opening gun with a sort of muffled pop." The report added that he had lost his voice talking for Al Smith, "but soon found it fairly well." Anyway, he called the crowd down front in that monstrous tabernacle, and scarcely a dozen people left the hall before the finale.

During the debate at Indianapolis Rabbi Feuerlicht referred rather kindly to the necks Mr. Darrow had saved from the noose. At the close a tall, handsome, gray-haired chap shook his hand and remarked quite incidentally that he was one of those whose neck Darrow had saved. I did not hear the conversation, but a moment later Mr. Darrow remarked that he would like for me to meet his friend, "Mr. McNamara," who would drive him to his train. The Los Angeles *Times* case came vividly to mind.

### BIG DAY IN OMAHA

Four weeks later we met in Omaha where the Advertising-Selling League sponsored a debate between Mr. Darrow and Rabbi Frederick Cohn. Again the subject was the mechanistic theory. That noon Dr. A. P. Condon, head

of an Omaha hospital, gave a luncheon at the Athletic Club, which was attended by judges of high and low degree, as well as by the city's leading attorneys.

The newspapers, as usual, were hot on Mr. Darrow's trail, and an especially competent and zealous young woman, Bess Furman, of the *Bee-News*, confided that she wanted to pull a publicity stunt with the debaters as the central figures. The Hearst paper at that time was conducting a "blotto" contest, in which splotches of ink were dabbed indiscriminately on a piece of paper, folded, and then revealed in all sorts of grotesque figures. The Rabbi consented, but Darrow refused. Nor would he autograph the sheet on which Rabbi Cohn made his sketch. "The big minority man," he was dubbed by the coaxing reporter, but he remained obdurate. When someone suggested that the Rabbi's "blotto" be named "the soul," Darrow retorted that it was "just about as blurry as the general idea of the soul."

In Omaha, as elsewhere, Mr. Darrow was quite willing to pose for the news photographers, but trick pictures were declared "out." "Go find yourself a horse," he suggested to a photographer who wanted an action picture.

We were not many miles from Lincoln, Nebraska, home of the late William Jennings Bryan, with whom Mr. Darrow was engaged in the evolution fight in Dayton, Tennessee. "I voted for him twice," admitted Darrow. "I thought he had a good minority issue. I still think he had, but I've decided he didn't understand it."

The anti-evolution law had just been passed in Arkansas, and Mr. Darrow hailed the action as a great thing for Tennessee. "I wouldn't be a bit surprised if those folks in Tennessee had something to do with it," he said. "They got tired of standing alone. But I don't feel sorry for the people of Arkansas; they deserved it." Continuing, he predicted that the anti-evolution law would spread through the South, and up through Kansas, but that the rest of the country would be safe.

### LOOKS FORWARD TO DEATH AND PEACE

Someone got personal and suggested that Mr. Darrow's skepticism had robbed him of the joy of living. This sally brought forth a typical Darrow chuckle. "Don't get the idea that I have not and am not enjoying life," he retorted. "The average man doesn't bother much about his soul. It's today's toothache, today's dinner or today's baseball game that interests us. If I knew I would have a toothache a year from today, it wouldn't keep me awake tonight. We live for today, and aren't capable of really bothering about the future. I have more to look forward to than these preachers," he added. "I look forward to death and peace. They have to look forward to living forever. How I should hate to think of living with myself in an endless Nirvana!"

"Is it really a crime to be an atheist?" he shot back, when asked to define *himself* for the twentieth time on the tour. "Man believes what he believes, and can't help it. Skepticism,

cynicism, atheism, make one kinder, gentler, more considerate of his fellow men. Morals are customs, that's all. It used to be immoral to wear short skirts. They even bothered *me* some. But I've seen 'em now till I've begun to look at girls' faces again."

As in every instance on the tour, the Omaha debate ended in the best of feeling. It was not always an easy matter to secure the right opponent, for there seemed to prevail a feeling that Darrow would "eat 'em alive," without salt or other condiment. But invariably those who met him on the platform were delighted with the experience. Rabbi Cohn, at Omaha, remarked to the audience that Clarence Darrow was so humble that he'd be getting religion if he didn't watch out. Darrow's "iradelast" was to the effect that he had found the Rabbi "a gentleman and a scholar," even though he had frequently become so excited that he quit the microphone cold and lost much of the value of the loud speakers that had been provided by the management of the municipal auditorium.

We had reservations on the 2:45 a. m. train out of Omaha for Des Moines. Mr. Darrow's only baggage was a small black bag which he asked me to handle, inasmuch as he was going with Dr. Condon and some other friends for a visit after the debate. I had met up with Mel Uhl of the Blackhawk Grain Company and, having wiggled through college together, we decided to make the best of the reunion. We took the little black bag out to Mel's house, along with my own luggage, and it was two-

thirty in the morning before we checked in at the Des Moines Pullman. When I asked the porter if Mr. Darrow had arrived, he smiled broadly, remarked that he had beaten me a half hour, and had inquired if I had delivered his grip. "And what did he say when you told him I was not here?" I asked rather anxiously. "Oh, he just said it wouldn't be the first time he ever slept in his underwear," explained the porter. And I was considerably relieved.

Awaiting us at the Fort Des Moines Hotel on the morning of November 14 was Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, a 33rd degree Mason, who was to renew the mechanistic debate, at the Shrine auditorium. We had scarcely sat down to breakfast when Gov. John Hammill of Iowa came in to pay his respects. When a photographer suggested that a group picture be made, Darrow withdrew, saying that it might cause the governor some political embarrassment.

### PUBLICITY STUNT BLOCKED

A delegation of Drake University students came with an invitation for Mr. Darrow to visit their campus. To my surprise he accepted—probably because two of the boys told him they were headed for the law. Out in front of the hotel was a typical collegiate flivver, painted a bright orange, with a loud green stripe around the edge. There was no top, of course, on the prehistoric rambler, and inasmuch as it was beginning to drizzle, Mr. Darrow escaped another publicity stunt most grace-

fully. That it was purely and simply a stunt was apparent when, in crossing the street, I caught sight of a photographer hidden in another machine, and on the blind side of the boys' flivver were sundry signs such as "Fierce Darrow" and "Short Cut to Knowledge." But the college boys found a reputable car, loaded Mr. Darrow carefully into its upholstered interior, and whisked him away to the Drake campus. There he exchanged greetings with the president and notables of the faculty. He took a special liking to the Des Moines collegians and when the party returned to the hotel, he spent two hours discussing with them their plans for the study and practice of law.

At the auditorium, that night, I took one of the ticket windows and got a taste of the human experiences that fall to the lot of a stone-faced ducat dispenser. Illustrating the divergence of interest in Clarence Darrow, were two "broke" customers who applied at the window within five minutes of each other. One was plainly a bum who wanted to satisfy his curiosity by hearing and seeing "the big minority man"; the other was a college professor who had run out of gas on the way downtown and had used too much of his ticket money for power juice. I believed his story, advanced the price, and a week later received his remittance. The bum heard Darrow, too, but no remittance was expected. None was received.

Like the other rabbis who debated Mr. Darrow, Mannheim acquitted himself well, even going so far as to admit that he no longer

held to the old theory of the soul, and that he would make no attempt to define the soul. On the day following the debate he wrote me most enthusiastically about the experience. "I want to thank you," he said, "for having given me the opportunity to meet and to debate with Mr. Darrow, who, entirely apart from his many other gifts, is one of the most 'human' men I have ever met."

We were routed out on a fairly early train that night, for Chicago, and having made a good case for the "human machine," Mr. Darrow did not take full time for his final debate period. However, he delivered himself most effectively on the general subject of morals; shrugging both shoulders characteristically and philosophizing that morals are always determined by custom. "Join the Y. M. C. A., the Rotary Club, the church, the Sunday School," he added, "and no matter what else you do, you will be able to sell prunes successfully."

There had been plenty to do in Des Moines that day, and I remarked to Mr. Darrow, on the way to the train, that I had passed up dinner entirely. Therewith he dug deep into his little grip, rummaged through collars, shirts and socks, and produced a small paper bag. In it were an apple and an orange. "Take 'em both," he offered, although I knew that his own dinner had been limited to a bowl of mush and milk.

In the Pullman smoker were some of those who had attended the debate, and for two hours Mr. Darrow discussed with them everything

from prohibition to immortality. He was out of cigarettes, and I was surprised and complimented when he accepted and smoked to the "bitter end" a Wheeling stogie which I proffered.

The next evening, in Chicago, I enjoyed another highly-prized visit in Mr. Darrow's home. As usual, his tables, window sills, and even the floors were covered with a variety of late books. A few of those I observed with interest were Case's "Evolution of Early Christianity"; "Stranger Than Fiction," a short history of the Jews; a non-technical discussion known as "Creation by Evolution"; Bill Nye; Douglas Woodruff's "Plato's American Republic," and Roy Calvert on "Capital Punishment in the Twentieth Century."

As I was about to leave Mr. Darrow stepped into an adjoining room, came back with a little blue-covered booklet, sat down at his desk and autographed for me a priceless copy of his masterful address to the court in the cases of the juvenile thrill-killers, "Dicky" Loeb and "Babe" Leopold.