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The Sorceries and Scandals of Satan

Henry M. Tichenor

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Henry M. Tichenor was a writer and magazine editor prominent in the socialist and freethinking movements during the Progressive Era of American history. His writings frequently condemned organized religion, Christianity in particular, as a tool used by the upper classes to maintain control over the working class. In the realm of opposition to religion, he has been ranked beside Clarence Darrow and Madalyn Murray O'Hair as a leading American freethinker of the twentieth century.
In "The Sorceries and Scandals of Satan", Tichenor employs the figure of Satan as a literary symbolic character to represent rebellion against tyranny — a symbolism with a robust tradition in literature and political works. In his book, the character symbol of Satan is employed as a foil against which to compare the horrors of organized religion, especially Christianity More importantly, however, Tichenor reminds us all that there was a time in American history that open skepticism and opposition to religion was a major facet of social political discourse so Americans certainly should not shy away from it today. Vocal opposition to religion is not novel or new.

What is new is the Underworld Amusements republication of this important work. This edition uniquely includes a valuable and critically acclaimed foreword by Robert Merciless which details Tichenor's biography as well as the times and trends which shaped his penetrating writing.

"Some "Debsians" who think of Eugene Debs only as a pioneer labor and Socialist Party leader may not be aware of some of his more radical associates. Marx expressed the role of religion in justifying structured inequality by referring to it as the "opiate of the masses". Tichenor chooses, in the "Sorceries and Scandals of Satan", to develop the fictional struggle of "good" and "evil" from the vantage point of a "Good-seeking" personna called Satan.The books by Tichenor are a challenge worth undertaking, and we are fortunate to have this lesser known of his books re-released. It is fortunate also to have included the highly informative 21 page Foreword by Robert Merciless. Don't dig into the text without first reading the Merciless essay which locates Tichenor's work in the late 19th and early 20th century progressive movement."
-Charles King
Secretary, Eugene V. Debs Foundation
and Emeritus Professor of Sociology, Indiana State University
"Tichenor's "The Sorceries and Scandals of Satan" is a withering and ironic indictment of Christianity wrought with passion and wry humor. Slaughter's handsome re-publication resurrects an almost forgotten monument of diabolical rhetoric. Exposing the lunacy inherent in twisted tales of Christian saints and surreal biblical fables, Tichenor climaxes the book by detailing the horrors of European persecution of heretics and the murderous madness of the New England witch trials. He extols anti-Christian writing from Milton to Ingersoll with deft quotations, and even champions the pagan Greek deities over the foul phantasms enshrined by Christ-lovers. The informative foreword by R. Merciless places this classic of free-thought in a historical context, listing predecessors and descendants, offering a pithy guide to literate thinkers who have embraced Satan as an image inspiring joy in life and liberty of mind."
-Peter H. Gilmore
High Priest, Church of Satan
Author of The Satanic Scriptures
"Meticulous research into Tichenor's life and works is presented in the foreword of this "lost" work, and Merciless puts the book into the context of Tichenor's lifetime, and into today. Those who research the areas of freethought, atheism, non-theism and works controversial to organized religion should read this work."

-Timothy Binga
Freethought Historian
Contributor, New Encyclopedia of Unbelief
Director of the Center for Inquiry

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