To Contents

Roscoe Conkling

Edition De Luxe

WORKS OF

Robert G. Ingersoll

Volume III

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VOLUME III

HUMBOLDT

Ladies and Gentlemen: Great minds seem to be a part of the infinite. Those possessing them seem to be brothers of the mountains and the seas.

Humboldt was one of these. He was one of the few great enough to rise above the superstition and prejudice of his time, and to know that experience, observation, and reason are the only basis of knowledge.

He became one of the greatest of men in spite of having been born rich and noble—in spite of position. I say in spite of these things, because wealth and position are generally the enemies of genius, and the destroyers of talent. [Applause.]

It is often said of this or that man, that he is a self-made man—that he was born of the poorest and humblest parents, and that with every obstacle to overcome he became great. This is a mistake. Poverty is generally an advantage. Most of the intellectual giants of the world have been nursed at the sad but loving breast of poverty. Most of those who have climbed highest on the shining ladder of fame commenced at the lowest round. They were reared in the

straw-thatched cottages of Europe; in the log-houses of America; in the factories of the great cities; in the midst of toil; in the smoke and din of labor; and on the verge of want. They were rocked by the feet of mothers whose hands, at the same time, were busy with the needle or the wheel.

It is hard for the rich to resist the thousand allurements of pleasure, and so I say, that Humboldt, in spite of having been born to wealth and high social position, became truly and grandly great.

In the antiquated and romantic castle of Tegel, by the side of the pine forest, on the shore of the charming lake, near the beautiful city of Berlin, the great Humboldt, one hundred years ago to-day, was born, and there he was educated after the method suggested by Rousseau,[1]—Campe,[2] the philologist and critic, and the intellectual Kunth[3] being his tutors. There he received the impressions that determined his career; there the great idea that the universe is governed by the law, took possession of his mind, and there he dedicated his life to the demonstration of this sublime truth.

[1] Jean Jacques Rousseau, a Swiss-French philosopher; born, 1712; died, 1778.

[2] Joachim Heinrich Campe, a German lexicographer and writer of juveniles; born, 1746; died, 1818.

[3] Karl Sigismund Kunth, a German botanist; born, 1788; died, 1850.

He came to the conclusion that the source of man's unhappiness is his ignorance of nature.

He longed to give a physical description of the universe—a grand picture of nature; to account for all phenomena; to discover the laws governing the world; to do away with that splendid delusion called special Providence, and to establish the fact that the universe is governed by law. [Applause.]

To establish this truth was, and is, of infinite importance to mankind. That fact is the death-knell of superstition; it gives liberty to every soul, annihilates fear, and ushers in the Age of Reason.

The object of this illustrious man was to comprehend the phenomena of physical objects in their general connection, and to represent nature as one great whole, moved and animated by internal forces.

For this purpose he turned his attention to descriptive botany, traversing distant lands and mountain ranges to ascertain with certainty the geographical distribution of plants. He investigated the laws regulating the differences of temperature and climate, and the changes of the atmosphere. He studied the formation of the earth's crusts, explored the deepest mines, ascended the highest mountains, and wandered through the craters of extinct volcanoes.

He became thoroughly acquainted with

chemistry, with astronomy, with terrestrial magnetism; and as the investigation of one subject leads to all others, for the reason that there is a mutual dependence and a necessary connection between all facts, so Humboldt became acquainted with the known sciences.

His fame does not depend so much upon his discoveries (although he discovered enough to make hundreds of reputations) as upon his vast and splendid generalizations.

He was to science what Shakespeare was to the drama.

He found, so to speak, the world full of unconnected facts—all portions of a vast system—parts of a machine; he discovered the connection that each bears to all; put them together, and demonstrated beyond all contradiction that the earth is governed by law.

He knew that to discover the connection of phenomena is the primary aim of all natural investigation. He was infinitely practical.

Origin and destiny were questions with which he had nothing to do.

His surroundings made him what he was.

In accordance with a law not fully comprehended, he was a production of his time.

Great men do not live alone; they are surrounded by the great; they are the instruments used to accomplish the tendencies of their generation; they fulfill the prophecies of their age.

Nearly all of the scientific men of the eighteenth century had the same idea entertained by Humboldt, but most of them in a dim and confused way. There was, however, a general belief among the intelligent that the world is governed by law, and that there really exists a connection between all facts, *or that all facts are simply the different aspects of a general fact,* and that the task of science is to discover this connection; to comprehend this general fact or to announce the laws of things. [Applause.]

Germany was full of thought, and her universities swarmed with philosophers and grand thinkers in every department of knowledge.

Humboldt was the friend and companion of the greatest poets, historians, philosophers, artists, statesmen, critics, and logicians of his time.

He was the companion of Schiller,[1] who believed that man would be regenerated through the influence of the Beautiful; of Goethe,[2] the grand patriarch of German literature; of Wieland,[3] who has been called the Voltaire of Germany; of Herbart,[4] who wrote the outlines

[1] Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, a German poet, dramatist, and historian; born, 1759; died, 1805.

[2] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a German poet, dramatist, and prose-writer; born, 1749; died, 1832.

[3] Christopher Martin Wieland, a German poet and author; born, 1733; died, 1813.

[4] Johann Friedrich Herbart, a German philosopher; born, 1776; died, 1841.

of a philosophical history of man; of Kotzebue,[1] who lived in the world of romance; of Schleiermacher,[2] the pantheist; of Schlegel,[3] who gave to his countrymen the enchanted realm of Shakespeare; of the sublime Kant,[4] author of the first work published in Germany on *Pure Reason;* of Fichte,[5] the infinite idealist; of Schopenhauer,[6] the European Buddhist who followed the great Gautama to the painless and dreamless Nirvana, and of hundreds of others, whose names are familiar to and honored by the scientific world.

The German mind had been grandly roused from the long lethargy of the dark ages of ignorance, fear, and faith. Guided by the holy light of reason, every department of knowledge was investigated, enriched, and illustrated.

Humboldt breathed the atmosphere of investigation; old ideas were abandoned; old creeds, hallowed by centuries, were thrown

[1] August Friedrich Ferdinand von Kotzebue, a German dramatist; born, 1761; died, 1819.

[2] Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher, a German philosopher and theologian; born, 1768; died, 1834.

[3] August Wilhelm von Schlegel, a German poet and critic; born, 1767; died, 1845.

[4] Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, founder of the "critical philosophy"; born, 1724; died, 1804.

[5] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, a German metaphysician; born, 1762; died, 1814.

[6] Arthur Schopenhauer, a German philosopher; born, 1788; died, 1860.

aside; thought became courageous; the athlete, Reason, challenged to mortal combat the monsters of superstition. [Applause.]

No wonder that under these influences Humboldt formed the great purpose of presenting to the world a picture of nature in order that men might, for the first time, behold the face of their Mother.

Europe becoming too small for his genius, he visited the tropics in the new world, where in the most circumscribed limits he could find the greatest number of plants, of animals, and the greatest diversity of climate, that he might ascertain the laws governing the production and distribution of plants, animals, and men, and the effects of climate upon them all. He sailed along the gigantic Amazon—the mysterious Orinoco—traversed the Pampas—climbed the Andes until he stood upon the crags of Chimborazo, more than eighteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, and climbed on until blood flowed from his eyes and lips. For nearly five years he pursued his investigations in the new world, accompanied by the intrepid Bonpland.[1] Nothing escaped his attention. He was the best intellectual organ of these new revelations of science. He was calm, reflective, and eloquent; filled with a sense of the beautiful, and the love

[1] Aimé Bonpland, a French naturalist and traveler; born, 1773; died, 1858.

of truth. His collections were immense, and valuable beyond calculation to every science. He endured innumerable hardships, braved countless dangers in unknown and savage lands, and exhausted his fortune for the advancement of true learning.

Upon his return to Europe he was hailed as the second Columbus; as the scientific discoverer of America; as the revealer of a new world; as the great demonstrator of the sublime truth, that universe is governed by law.

I have seen a picture of the old man, sitting upon a mountain-side—above him the eternal snow—below, the smiling valley of the tropics, filled with vine and palm; his chin upon his breast, his eyes deep, thoughtful, and calm—his forehead majestic—grander than the mountains upon which he sat—crowned with the snow of his whitened hair, he looked the intellectual autocrat of this world.

Not satisfied with his discoveries in America, he crossed the steppes of Asia, the wastes of Siberia, the great Ural range, adding to the knowledge of mankind at every step. His energy acknowledged no obstacle, his life knew no leisure; every day was filled with labor and with thought.

He was one of the apostles of science, and he served his divine master with a self-sacrificing zeal that knew no abatement, with an ardor

that constantly increased, with a devotion unwavering and constant as the polar star.

In order that the people at large might have the benefit of his numerous discoveries, and his vast knowledge, he delivered at Berlin a course of lectures, consisting of sixty-one free addresses, upon the following subjects:

Five, upon the nature and limits of physical geography.

Three were devoted to a history of science.

Two, to inducements to a study of natural science.

Sixteen, on the heavens.

Five, on the form, density, latent heat, and magnetic power of the earth, and to the polar light.

Four were on the nature of the crust of the earth, hot springs, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

Two, on mountains and the type of their formation.

Two, on the form of the earth's surface, on the connection of continents, and the elevation of soil over ravines.

Three, on the sea as a globular fluid surrounding the earth.

Ten, on the atmosphere as an elastic fluid surrounding the earth, and on the distribution of heat.

One, on the geographic distribution of organized matter in general.

Three, on the geography of animals.

Two, on the races of men.

These lectures are what is known as the "Cosmos," and present a scientific picture of the world—of infinite diversity in unity—of ceaseless motion in the eternal grasp of law.

These lectures contain the result of his investigation, observation, and experience; they furnish the connection between phenomena; they disclose some of the changes through which the earth has passed in the countless ages; the history of vegetation, animals, and men, the effects of climate upon individuals and nations, the relation we sustain to other worlds, and demonstrate that all phenomena, whether insignificant or grand, exist in accordance with inexorable law.

There are some truths, however, that we never should forget: Superstition has always been the relentless enemy of science; faith has been a hater of demonstration; hypocrisy has been sincere only in its dread of truth, and all religions are inconsistent with mental freedom.

Since the murder of Hypatia[1] in the fifth century, when the polished blade of Greek philosophy was broken by the club of ignorant

[1] Hypatia, a Neoplatonic philosopher of Alexandria; lived during the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century A.D.

Catholicism, until to-day, superstition has detested every effort of reason.

It is almost impossible to conceive of the completeness of the victory that the church achieved over philosophy. For ages science was utterly ignored; thought was a poor slave; an ignorant priest was master of the world; faith put out the eyes of the soul; the reason was a trembling coward; the imagination was set on fire of hell; every human feeling was sought to be suppressed; love was considered infinitely sinful; pleasure was the road to eternal fire, and God was supposed to be happy only when His children were miserable. The world was governed by an Almighty's whim; prayers could change the order of things, halt the grand procession of nature, could produce rain, avert pestilence, famine, and death in all its forms. There was no idea of the certain; all depended upon divine pleasure—or displeasure rather; heaven was full of inconsistent malevolence, and earth of ignorance. Everything was done to appease the divine wrath; every public calamity was caused by the sins of the people; by a failure to pay tithes, or for having, even in secret, felt a disrespect for a priest. To the poor multitude the earth was a kind of enchanted forest, full of demons ready to devour, the theological serpents lurking with infinite power to fascinate and torture the unhappy and impotent soul.

Life to them was a dim and mysterious labyrinth, in which they wandered weary, and lost, guided by priests as bewildered as themselves, without knowing that at every step the Ariadne [1] of reason offered them the long lost clew. [Applause.]

The very heavens were full of death; the lightning was regarded as the glittering vengeance of God, and the earth was thick with snares for the unwary feet of man. The soul was supposed to be crowded with the wild beasts of desire; the heart to be totally corrupt, prompting only to crime; virtues were regarded as deadly sins in disguise; there was a continual warfare being waged between the Deity and the devil, for the possession of every soul; the latter generally being considered victorious. The flood, the tornado, the volcano, were all evidences of the displeasure of heaven, and the sinfulness of man. The blight that withered, the frost that blackened, the earthquake that devoured, were the messengers of the Creator.

The world was governed by Fear.

Against all the evils of nature, there was known only the defense of prayer, of fasting, of credulity, and devotion. *Man in his help-*

[1] Ariadne, in Greek mythology, the daughter of Minos, king of Crete; she gave Theseus the clew, by means of which he found his way out of the labyrinth.

lessness endeavored to soften the heart of God. The faces of the multitude were blanched with fear, and wet with tears; they were the prey of hypocrites, kings, and priests. [Applause and cheers.]

My heart bleeds when I contemplate the sufferings endured by the millions now dead; of those who lived when the world appeared to be insane; when the heavens were filled with an infinite Horror who snatched babes with dimpled hands and rosy cheeks from the white breasts of mothers, and dashed them into an abyss of eternal flames.

Slowly, beautifully, like the coming of the dawn, came the grand truth, that the universe is governed by law; that disease fastens itself upon the good and upon the bad; that the tornado can not be stopped by counting beads; that the rushing lava pauses not for bended knees, the lightning for clasped and uplifted hands, nor the cruel waves of the sea for prayer; that paying tithes causes, rather than prevents famine; that pleasure is not sin; that happiness is the only good; that demons and gods exist only in the imagination; that faith is a lullaby sung to put the soul to sleep; that devotion is a bribe that fear offers to supposed power; that offering rewards in another world for obedience in this, is simply buying a soul on credit; that knowledge consists in ascertaining the laws of

nature, and that wisdom is the science of happiness. Slowly, gradually, beautifully, these truths are dawning upon mankind.

From Copernicus[1] we learn that this earth is only a grain of sand on the infinite shore of the universe; that everywhere we are surrounded by shining worlds vastly greater than our own, all moving and existing in accordance with law. True, the earth began to grow small, but man began to grow great. [Applause.]

The moment the fact was established that other worlds are governed by law, it was only natural to conclude that our little world was also under its dominion. The old theological method of accounting for physical phenomena by the pleasure and displeasure of the Deity was, by the intellectual, abandoned. They found that disease, death, life, thought, heat, cold, the seasons, the winds, the dreams of man, the instinct of animals,—in short that all physical and mental phenomena are governed by law, absolute, eternal, and inexorable.

Let it be understood that by the term "law" are meant the same invariable relations of succession and resemblance predicted of all facts springing from like conditions. Law is a fact—not a cause. It is a fact that like conditions produce like results: this fact is "law." When we say that the universe is governed by law, we

[1] Copernicus, a Prussian astronomer; born, 1473; died, 1543.

mean that this fact, called law, is incapable of change; that it is, has been, and forever will be, the same inexorable, immutable "fact," inseparable from all phenomena. Law, in this sense, was not enacted or made. It could not have been otherwise than as it is. That which necessarily exists has no creator.

Only a few years ago this earth was considered the real center of the universe; all the stars were supposed to revolve around this insignificant atom. The German mind, more than any other, has done away with this piece of egotism. Purbach[1] and Mullerus,[2] in the fifteenth century, contributed most to the advancement of astronomy in their day. To the latter, the world is indebted for the introduction of decimal fractions, which completed our arithmetical notation, and formed the second of the steps by which, in modern times, the science of numbers has been so greatly improved; and yet, both of these men believed in the most childish absurdities, at least in enough of them to die without their orthodoxy having ever been suspected.

Next came the great Copernicus, and he stands at the head of the heroic thinkers of his time, who had the courage and the mental

[1] Georg von Purbach (or Puerbach), a German astronomer; born, 1423; died, 1461.

[2] Mullerus, a German astronomer; lived in the 15th century.

strength to break the chains of prejudice, custom, and authority, and to establish truth on the basis of experience, observation, and reason. He removed the earth, so to speak, from the center of the universe, and ascribed to it a twofold motion, and demonstrated the true position which it occupies in the solar system.

At his bidding the earth began to revolve. At the command of his genius it commenced its grand flight amid the eternal constellations around the sun.

For fifty years his discoveries were disregarded. All at once, by the exertions of Galileo,[1] they were kindled into so grand a conflagration as to consume the philosophy of Aristotle,[2] to alarm the hierarchy of Rome, and to threaten the existence of every opinion not founded upon experience, observation, and reason.

The earth was no longer considered a universe, governed by the caprices of some revengeful Deity, who had made the stars out of what He had left after completing the world, and had stuck them in the sky simply to adorn the night.

I have said this much concerning astronomy because it was the first splendid step forward.

[1] Galileo Galilei, an Italian physicist and astronomer; born, 1564; died, 1642.

[2] Aristotle, a Greek philosopher; born, 384 B.C.; died, 322 B.C.

The first sublime blow that shattered the lance and shivered the shield of superstition; the first real help that man received from heaven; because it was the first great lever placed beneath the altar of a false religion; the first revelation of the infinite to man; the first authoritative declaration, that the universe is governed by law; the first science that gave the lie direct to the cosmogony of barbarism, and because it is the sublimest victory that the reason has achieved.

In speaking of astronomy, I have confined myself to the discoveries made since the revival of learning. Long ago, on the banks of the Ganges, ages before Copernicus lived, Aryabhatta [1] taught that the earth is a sphere, and revolves on its own axis. This, however, does not detract from the glory of the great German. The discovery of the Hindu had been lost in the midnight of Europe—in the age of faith, and Copernicus was as much a discoverer as though Aryabhatta had never lived.

In this short address there is no time to speak of other sciences, and to point out the particular evidence furnished by each, to establish the dominion of law, nor to more than mention the name of Descartes,[2] the first who

[1] Aryabhatta, Hindu astronomer; born about 476 A.D.

[2] René Descartes, a French philosopher; born, 1596; died, 1650.

undertook to give an explanation of the celestial motions, or who formed the vast and philosophic conception of reducing all the phenomena of the universe to the same law of Montaigne,[1] one of the heroes of common sense; of Galvani,[2] whose experiments gave the telegraph to the world; of Voltaire,[3] who contributed more than any other of the sons of men to the destruction of religious intolerance; of Auguste Comte,[4] whose genius erected to itself a monument that still touches the stars; of Gutenberg,[5] Watt,[6] Stephenson,[7] Arkwright,[8] all soldiers of science in the grand army of the dead kings.

The glory of science is, that it is freeing the soul—breaking the mental manacles—getting the brain out of bondage—giving courage to thought—filling the world with mercy, justice, and joy. [Applause.]

[1] Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, a French essayist; born, 1533; died, 1592.

[2] Luigi (or Aloisio) Galvani, an Italian physician and physicist, discoverer of galvanic or voltaic electricity; born, 1737; died, 1798.

[3] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

[4] Isidore Auguste Marie François Xavier Comte, a French philosopher; born, 1798; died, 1857.

[5] Johannes (or Hennes) Gutenberg, a German inventor, inventor of printing; born about 1400; died about 1468.

[6] James Watt, a British inventor and civil engineer; born, 1736; died, 1819.

[7] George Stephenson, an English engineer, the perfecter of the locomotive; born, 1781; died, 1848.

[8] Sir Richard Arkwright, an English barber, inventor, and manufacturer; born, 1732; died, 1792.

Science found agriculture plowing with a stick—reaping with a sickle—commerce at the mercy of the treacherous waves and the inconstant winds—a world without books—without schools—man denying the authority of reason, employing his ingenuity in the manufacture of instruments of torture, in building inquisitions and cathedrals. It found the land filled with malicious monks—with persecuting Protestants, and the burners of men. It found the world full of fear; ignorance upon its knees; credulity the greatest virtue; women treated like beasts of burden; cruelty the only means of reformation. It found the world at the mercy of disease and famine; men trying to read their fates in the stars, and to tell their fortunes by signs and wonders; generals thinking to conquer their enemies by making the sign of the cross, or by telling a rosary. It found all history full of petty and ridiculous falsehood, and the Almighty was supposed to spend most of His time turning sticks into snakes, drowning boys for swimming on Sunday, and killing little children for the purpose of converting their parents. It found the earth filled with slaves and tyrants, the people in all countries down-trodden, half-naked, half-starved, without reason in the world.

Such was the condition of man when the morning of science dawned upon his brain, and

before he had heard the sublime declaration that the universe is governed by law.

For the change that has taken place we are indebted solely to science—the only lever capable of raising mankind. Abject faith is barbarism; reason is civilization. To obey is slavish; to act from a sense of obligation perceived by the reason, is noble. Ignorance worships mystery; Reason explains it: the one grovels, the other soars.

No wonder that fable is the enemy of knowledge. A man with a false diamond shuns the society of lapidaries, and it is upon this principle that superstition abhors science. [Applause.]

In all ages the people have honored those who dishonored them. They have worshiped their destroyers; they have canonized the most gigantic liars, and buried the great thieves in marble and gold.

Under the loftiest monuments sleeps the dust of murder.

Imposture has always worn a crown.

The world is beginning to change because the people are beginning to think. To think is to advance. Everywhere the great minds are investigating the creeds and the superstitions of men—the phenomena of nature, and the laws of things. At the head of this great army of investigators stood Humboldt—the serene leader of an intellectual host—a king

by the suffrage of science, and the divine right of genius.

And to-day we are not honoring some butcher called a soldier; some wily politician called a statesman; some robber called a king; nor some malicious metaphysician called a saint. We are honoring the grand Humboldt, whose victories were all achieved in the arena of thought; who destroyed prejudice, ignorance, and error—a man who shed light—not blood, and who contributed to the knowledge, the wealth, and the happiness of all mankind. [Applause and cheers.]

His life was pure, his aims lofty, his learning varied and profound, and his achievements vast.

We honor him because he has ennobled our race, because he has contributed as much as any man living or dead to the real prosperity of the world. We honor him because he honored us—because he left a legacy of glory to every human being. For these reasons he is honored throughout the world. Millions are doing homage to his genius at this moment, and millions are pronouncing his name with reverence and recounting what he accomplished. [Applause.]

We associate the name of Humboldt with oceans, continents, mountains, and volcanoes; with the great plains; the wide deserts; the

snow-lipped craters of the Andes; with primeval forests and European capitals; with wildernesses and universities; with savages and savans; with the lonely rivers of unpeopled wastes; with peaks and pampas, and steppes, and cliffs and crags; with the progress of the world; with every science known to man; and with every star glittering in the immensity of space.

Humboldt adopted none of the soul-shrinking creeds of his day; wasted none of his time in the stupidities, inanities, and contradictions of theological metaphysics; he did not endeavor to harmonize the astronomy and geology of a barbarous people with the science of the nineteenth century. Never, for one moment, did he abandon the sublime standard of truth; he investigated, he studied, he thought, he separated the gold from the dross in the crucible of his grand brain. He was never found on his knees before the altar of superstition. He stood erect by the grand tranquil column of Reason. He was an admirer, a lover, an adorer of nature, and at the age of ninety, bowed by the weight of nearly a century, covered with the insignia of honor, loved by a nation, respected by a world, with kings for his servants, he laid his weary head upon her bosom—upon the bosom of the universal Mother—and with her loving arms around him, sank into that slumber called Death.

History added another name to the starry scroll of the immortals.

The world is his monument; upon the eternal granite of her hills he inscribed his name, and there upon everlasting stone his genius wrote this, the sublimest of truths:

"THE UNIVERSE IS GOVERNED BY LAW!"

LIFE AND DEEDS OF THOMAS PAINE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Through all the centuries gone, the mind of man has been beleaguered by the mailed hosts of superstition. Slowly and painfully has advanced the army of deliverance. Hated by those they wished to rescue, despised by those they were dying to save, these grand soldiers, these immortal deliverers, have fought without thanks, labored without applause, suffered without pity, and they have died execrated and abhorred.

For the good of mankind they accepted isolation, poverty, and calumny. They gave up all, sacrificed all, lost all but truth and self-respect.

One of the bravest soldiers in this army was Thomas Paine; and for one, I feel indebted to him for the liberty we are enjoying this day. Born among the poor, where children are burdens: in a country where real liberty was unknown: where the privileges of class were guarded with infinite jealousy, and the rights of the individual trampled beneath the feet of priests and nobles; where to advocate justice was treason; where intellectual freedom was in-

fidelity, it is wonderful that the idea of true liberty ever entered his brain.

Poverty was his mother—Necessity his master.

He had more brains than books; more sense than education; more courage than politeness; more strength than polish. He had no veneration for old mistakes—no admiration for ancient lies. He loved the truth for the truth's sake, and for man's sake. He saw oppression on every hand; injustice everywhere; hypocrisy at the altar, venality on the bench; tyranny on the throne; and with a splendid courage he espoused the cause of the weak against the strong—of the enslaved many against the titled few.

At the age of thirty-seven, Thomas Paine left England for America, with the high hope of being instrumental in the establishment of a free government. In his own country he could accomplish nothing. Those two vultures—Church and State—were ready to tear in pieces and devour the heart of anyone who might deny their divine right to enslave the world.

Upon his arrival in this country, he found himself possessed of a letter of introduction, signed by another infidel, the illustrious Franklin. [Applause.] This, and his native genius, constituted his entire capital; and he needed no more. He found the colonies clamoring for jus-

tice; whining about their grievances; upon their knees at the foot of the throne, imploring that mixture of idiocy and insanity, George III by the grace of God, for a restoration of their ancient privileges. They were not endeavoring to become free men, but were trying to soften the heart of their master. They were perfectly willing to make brick if Pharaoh would furnish the straw. The colonists wished for, hoped for, and prayed for reconciliation. They did not dream of independence.

Paine gave to the world his *Common Sense.* It was the first argument for separation, the first assault upon the British *form* of government, the first blow for a republic, and it roused our fathers like a trumpet's blast.

It is simple justice to say that Paine did more to cause the Declaration of Independence than any other man. Neither should it be forgotten that his attacks upon Great Britain were also attacks upon monarchy: and while he convinced the people that the colonies ought to separate from the mother country, he also proved to them that a free government is the best that can be instituted among men.

In my judgment, Thomas Paine was the best political writer that ever lived. "What he wrote was pure nature, and his soul and his pen ever went together." Ceremony, pageantry, and all the paraphernalia of power, had no ef-

fect upon him. He examined into the why and wherefore of things. He was perfectly radical in his mode of thought. Nothing short of the bed-rock satisfied him. His enthusiasm for what he believed to be right knew no bounds. During all the dark scenes of the Revolution, never for one moment did he despair. Year after year his brave words were ringing through the land, and by the bivouac fires the weary soldiers read the inspiring words of *Common Sense,* filled with ideas sharper than their swords, and consecrated themselves anew to the cause of freedom.

Paine was not content with having aroused the spirit of independence, but he gave every energy of his soul to keep that spirit alive. He was with the army. He shared its defeats, its dangers, and its glory. When the situation became desperate, when gloom settled upon all, he gave them the *Crisis.* It was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, leading the way to freedom, honor, and glory. He shouted to them, "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier, and the sunshine patriot, will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

To those who wished to put the war off to some future day, with a lofty and touching

spirit of self-sacrifice he said: "Every generous parent should say, 'If there must be war let be in my day, that my child may have peace.'"

To the cry that Americans were rebels, he replied: "He that rebels against reason is a real rebel; but he that in defense of reason rebels against tyranny, has a better title to 'Defender of the Faith' than George III."

Some said it was not to the interest of the colonies to be free. Paine answered this by saying, "To know whether it be the interest of the continent to be independent, we need ask only this simple, easy question: 'Is it the interest of a man to be a boy all his life?'"

He found many who would listen to nothing, and to them he said, "That to argue with a man who has renounced his reason is like giving medicine to the dead." [Applause.] This sentiment ought to adorn the walls of every orthodox church.

There is a world of political wisdom in this: "England lost her liberty in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles"; and there is real discrimination in saying, "The Greeks and Romans were strongly possessed of the spirit of liberty; but not the principles, for at the time that they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind."

In his letter to the British people, in which he

tried to convince them that war was not to their interest, occurs the following passage brimful of common sense: "War never can be the interest of a trading nation any more than quarreling can be profitable to a man in business. For to make war with those who trade with us is like setting a bull-dog upon a customer at the shop-door."

The writings of Paine fairly glitter with simple, compact, logical statements, that carry conviction to the dullest and most prejudiced. He had the happiest possible way of putting the case; in asking questions in such a way that they answer themselves, and in stating his premises so clearly that the deduction could not be avoided.

Day and night he labored for America; month after month, year after year, he gave himself to the Great Cause, until there was "a government of the people and for the people," and until the banner of the stars floated over a continent redeemed and consecrated to the happiness of mankind. [Cheers and applause.]

At the close of the Revolution, no one stood higher in America than Thomas Paine. The best, the wisest, the most patriotic, were his friends and admirers; and had he been thinking only of his own good he might have rested from his toils and spent the remainder of his life in comfort and ease. He could have been what

the world is pleased to call "respectable." He could have died surrounded by clergymen, warriors, and statesmen. At his death there would have been an imposing funeral, miles of carriages, civic societies, salvos of artillery, a nation in mourning, and, above all, a splendid monument covered with lies.

He chose rather to benefit mankind.

At that time the seeds sown by the great infidels were begining to bear fruit in France. The people were beginning to think.

Thomas Paine went to France. Into the new movement he threw all his energies. His fame had gone before him, and he was welcomed as a friend of the human race, and as a champion of free government.

He had never relinquished his intention of pointing out to his countrymen the defects, absurdities, and abuses of the English government. For this purpose he composed and published his greatest political work, *The Rights of Man.* This work should be read by every man and woman. It is concise, accurate, natural, convincing, and unanswerable. It shows great thought; an intimate knowledge of the various forms of government; deep insight into the very springs of human action; and a courage that compels respect and admiration. The most difficult political problems are solved in a few sentences. The venerable arguments in favor of

wrong are refuted with a question—answered with a word. For forcible illustration, apt comparison, accuracy and clearness of statement, and absolute thoroughness, it has never been excelled.

The fears of the administration were aroused, and Paine was prosecuted for libel and found guilty, and yet there is not a sentiment in the entire work that will not challenge the admiration of every civilized man. It is a magazine of political wisdom, an arsenal of ideas, and an honor, not only to Thomas Paine, but to human nature itself. It could have been written only by the man who had the generosity, the exalted patriotism, the goodness to say, "The world is my country, and to do good my religion." [Applause.]

There is in all the utterances of the world no grander, no sublimer sentiment. There is no creed that can be compared with it for a moment. It should be wrought in gold, adorned with jewels, and impressed upon every human heart: "The world is my country, and to do good my religion."

In 1792, Paine was elected by the department of Calais as their representative in the National Assembly. So great was his popularity in France that he was selected about the same time by the people of no less than four departments. Upon taking his place in the Assembly he was

appointed as one of the committee to draft a constitution for France. Had the French people taken the advice of Thomas Paine there would have been no "reign of terror." The streets of Paris would not have been filled with blood. The Revolution would have been the grandest success of the world. The truth is that Paine was too conservative to suit the leaders of the French Revolution. They, to a great extent, were carried away by hatred, and a desire to destroy. They had suffered so long, they had borne so much, that it was impossible for them to be moderate in the hour of victory.

Besides all this, the French people had been so robbed by the government, so degraded by the church, that they were not fit material with which to construct a republic. Many of the leaders longed to establish a beneficent and just government, but the people asked for revenge.

Paine was filled with a real love for mankind. His philanthropy was boundless. He wished to destroy monarchy—not monarchs. He voted for the destruction of tyranny, but against the death of the king. He wished to establish a government on a new basis; one that would forget the past; one that would give privileges to none and protection to all. [Applause.]

In the Assembly, where nearly all were demanding the execution of the king—where to

differ from the majority was to be suspected, and when to be suspected was almost certain death, Thomas Paine had the courage, the goodness, and the justice to vote against death. To vote against the execution of the king was a vote against his own life. This was the sublimity of devotion to principle. For this he was arrested, imprisoned, and doomed to death.

Search the records of the world and you will find but few sublimer acts than that of Thomas Paine voting against the king's death. He, the hater of despotism, the abhorrer of monarchy, the champion of the rights of man, the republican, accepting death to save the life of a deposed tyrant—of a throneless king. This was the last grand act of his political life—the sublime conclusion of his political career. [Applause.]

All his life he had been the disinterested friend of man. He had labored—not for money, not for fame, but for the general good. He had aspired to no office; had asked no recognition of his services, but had ever been content to labor as a common soldier in the army of Progress. Confining his efforts to no country, looking upon the world as his field of action, filled with a genuine love for the right, he found himself imprisoned by the very people he had striven to save.

Had his enemies succeeded in bringing him to

the block, he would have escaped the calumnies and hatred of the Christian world. In this country, at least, he would have ranked with the proudest names. On the anniversary of the Declaration his name would have been upon the lips of all the orators, and his memory in the hearts of all the people.

Thomas Paine had not finished his career.

He had spent his life thus far in destroying the power of kings, and now he turned his attention to the priests. He knew that every abuse had been embalmed in Scripture—that every outrage was in partnership with some holy text. He knew that the throne skulked behind the altar, and both behind a pretended revelation from God. By this time he had found that it was of little use to free the body and leave the mind in chains. He had explored the foundations of despotism, and had found them infinitely rotten. He had dug under the throne, and it occurred to him that he would take a look behind the altar.

The result of his investigations was given to the world in the *Age of Reason.* From the moment of its publication he became infamous. He was calumniated beyond measure. To slander him was to secure the thanks of the church. All his services were instantly forgotten, disparaged, or denied. He was shunned as though he had been a pestilence. Most of his old

friends forsook him. He was regarded as a moral plague; and at the bare mention of his name the bloody hands of the church were raised in horror. He was denounced as the most despicable of men.

Not content with following him to his grave, they pursued him after death with redoubled fury, and recounted with infinite gusto and satisfaction the supposed horrors of his death-bed, gloried in the fact that he was forlorn and friendless, and gloated like fiends over what they supposed to be the agonizing remorse of his lonely death.

It is wonderful that all his services were thus forgotten. It is amazing that one kind word did not fall from some pulpit; that someone did not accord to him, at least, honesty. Strange, that in the general denunciation someone did not remember his labor for liberty, his devotion to principle, his zeal for the rights of his fellow-men. He had, by brave and splendid effort, associated his name with the cause of Progress. He had made it impossible to write the history of political freedom with his name left out. He was one of the creators of light, one of the heralds of the dawn. He hated tyranny in the name of kings, and in the name of God, with every drop of his noble blood. He believed in liberty and justice, and in the sacred doctrine of human equality. Under these divine banners he

fought the battle of his life. In both worlds he offered his blood for the good of man. In the wilderness of America, in the French Assembly, in the somber cell waiting for death, he was the same unflinching, unwavering friend of his race; the same undaunted champion of universal freedom. And for this he has been hated; for this the church has violated even his grave.

When Paine was born the world was religious, the pulpit was the real throne, and the churches were making every effort to crush out of the brain the idea that it had the right to think.

The splendid saying of Lord Bacon,[1] that "The inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, are the sovereign good of human nature," has been, and ever will be, rejected by religionists. Intellectual liberty, as a matter of necessity, forever destroys the idea that belief is either praise- or blame-worthy, and is wholly inconsistent with every creed in Christendom. Paine recognized this truth. He also saw that as long as the Bible was considered inspired, this infamous doctrine of the virtue of belief would be believed and preached. He examined the Scriptures for himself, and

[1] Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, an English philosopher, jurist, and statesman; born, 1561; died, 1626.

found them filled with cruelty, absurdity, and immorality.

He again made up his mind to sacrifice himself for the good of his fellow-men.

He commenced with the assertion, "That any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child can not be a true system." What a beautiful, what a tender sentiment! No wonder the church began to hate him. He believed in one God and no more. After this life he hoped for happiness. He believed that true religion consisted in doing justice, loving mercy, in endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy, and in offering God the fruit of the heart. [Applause.] He denied the inspiration of the Scriptures. This was his crime. He contended that it is a contradiction in terms to call anything a revelation that comes to us second-hand, either verbally or in writing. He asserted that revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication, and that after that it is only an account of something which another person says was a revelation to him. We have only his word for it, as it was never made to us. This argument never has been and probably never will be answered. He denied the divine origin of Christ, and showed conclusively that the pretended prophecies of the Old Testament had no reference to him whatever; and yet he believed that Christ was a virtuous

and amiable man, that the morality he taught and practiced was of the most benevolent and elevated character, and that it had not been exceeded by any. Upon this point he entertained the same sentiments now held by the Unitarians, and, in fact, by all the most enlightened Christians.

The church itself will before long be driven to occupy the position of Thomas Paine. The best minds of the orthodox world to-day are endeavoring to prove the existence of a personal Deity. All other questions occupy a minor place. You are no longer asked to swallow the Bible whole, whale, Jonah, and all; you are simply required to believe in God, and pay your pew-rent. There is not now an enlightened minister in the world who will seriously contend that Samson's strength was in his hair, or that the necromancers of Egypt could turn water into blood, and pieces of wood into serpents. These follies have passed away, and the only reason that the religious world can now have for disliking Paine is that they have been forced to adopt so many of his opinions.

Paine thought the barbarities of the Old Testament inconsistent with what he deemed the real character of God. He believed that murder, massacre, and indiscriminate slaughter had never been commanded by the Deity. He regarded much of the Bible as childish, unimpor-

tant, and foolish. The scientific world entertains the same opinion: Paine attacked the Bible precisely in the same spirit in which he had attacked the pretensions of kings. He used the same weapons. All the pomp in the world could not make him cower. His reason knew no "Holy of Holies," except the abode of truth. The sciences were then in their infancy. The attention of the really learned had not been directed to an impartial examination of our pretended revelation. It was accepted by most as a matter of course. The church was all-powerful, and no one, unless thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice, thought for a moment of disputing the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. The infamous doctrine that salvation depends upon belief—upon a mere intellectual conviction—was then believed and preached. To doubt was to secure the damnation of your soul. This absurd and devilish doctrine shocked the common sense of Thomas Paine, and he denounced it with the fervor of honest indignation. This doctrine, although infinitely ridiculous, has been nearly universal, and has been as hurtful as senseless. For the overthrow of this infamous tenets, Paine exerted all his strength. He left few arguments to be used by those who should come after him, and he used none that have been refuted. The combined wisdom and genius of all mankind can not possibly conceive

of an argument against liberty of thought. Neither can they show why anyone should be punished, either in this world or another, for acting honestly in accordance with reason; and yet a doctrine with every possible argument against it has been, and still is, believed and defended by the entire orthodox world. Can it be possible that we have been endowed with reason simply that our souls may be caught in its toils and snares, that we may be led by its false and delusive glare out of the narrow path that leads to joy into the broad way of everlasting death? Is it possible that we have been given reason simply that we may through faith ignore its deductions, and avoid its conclusions. Ought the sailor to throw away his compass and depend entirely upon the fog? If reason is not to be depended upon in matters of religion, that is to say, in respect to our duties to the Deity, why should it be relied upon in matters respecting the rights of our fellows? Why should we throw away the laws given to Moses by God Himself and have the audacity to make some of our own? How dare we drown the thunders of Sinai by calling the ayes and noes in a petty legislature? If reason can determine what is merciful, what is just, the duties of man to man, what more do we want either in time or eternity?

Down, forever down, with any religion that requires upon its ignorant altar the sacrifice

of the goddess of Reason, that compels her to abdicate forever the shining throne of the soul, strips from her form the imperial purple, snatches from her hand the scepter of thought and makes her the bond-woman of a senseless faith. [Applause.]

If a man should tell you that he had the most beautiful painting in the world, and after taking you where it was should insist upon having your eyes shut you would likely suspect, either that he had no painting or that it was some pitiable daub. Should he tell you that he was a most excellent performer on the violin, and yet refuse to play unless your ears were stopped, you would think, to say the least of it, that he had an odd way of convincing you of his musical ability. But would his conduct be any more wonderful than that of a religionist who asks that, before examining his creed, you will have the kindness to throw away your reason? The first gentleman says, "Keep your eyes shut, my picture will bear everything but being seen;" "Keep your ears stopped, my music objects to nothing but being heard." The last says, "Away with your reason, my religion dreads nothing but being understood." [Applause.]

So far as I am concerned, I most cheerfully admit that most Christians are honest, and most ministers sincere. We do not attack them; we attack their creed. We accord them the same

rights that we ask for ourselves. We believe that their doctrines are hurtful. We believe that the frightful text,[1] "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," has covered the earth with blood. It has filled the heart with arrogance, cruelty, and murder. It has caused the religious wars; bound hundreds of thousands to the stake; founded inquisitions; filled dungeons; invented instruments of torture; taught the mother to hate her child; imprisoned the mind; filled the world with ignorance; persecuted the lovers of wisdom; built the monasteries and convents; made happiness a crime, investigation a sin, and self-reliance a blasphemy. It has poisoned the springs of learning; misdirected the energies of the world; filled all countries with want; housed the people in hovels; fed them with famine; and but for the efforts of a few brave infidels it would have taken the world back to the midnight of barbarism, and left the heavens without a star.

The maligners of Paine say that he had no right to attack this doctrine, because he was unacquainted with the dead languages; and for this reason, it was a piece of pure impudence in him to investigate the Scriptures.

Is it necessary to understand Hebrew in order

[1] "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 16:16.

to know that cruelty is not a virtue, that murder is inconsistent with infinite goodness, and that eternal punishment can be inflicted upon man only by an eternal fiend? Is it really essential to conjugate the Greek verbs before you can make up your mind as to the probability of dead people getting out of their graves? Must one be versed in Latin before he is entitled to express his opinion as to the genuineness of a pretended revelation from God? Common sense belongs exclusively to no tongue. Logic is not confined to, nor has it been buried with the dead languages. Paine attacked the Bible as it is translated. If the translation is wrong, let its defenders correct it.

The Christianity of Paine's day is not the Christianity of our time. There has been a great improvement since then. One hundred and fifty years ago the foremost preachers of our time would have perished at the stake. A Universalist would have been torn in pieces in England, Scotland, and America. Unitarians would have found themselves in the stocks, pelted by the rabble with dead cats, after which their ears would have been cut off, their tongues bored, and their foreheads branded. Less than one hundred and fifty years ago the following law was in force in Maryland:

"Be it enacted by the Right Honorable, the Lord Proprietor, by and with the advice and

consent of his Lordship's governor, and the upper and lower houses of the Assembly, and the authority of the same:

"That if any person shall hereafter, within this province, wittingly, maliciously, and advisedly, by writing or speaking, blaspheme or curse God, or deny our Savior, Jesus Christ, to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or the Godhead of any of the three persons, or the unity of the Godhead, or shall utter any profane words concerning the Holy Trinity, or any of the persons thereof, and shall thereof be convicted by verdict, shall, for the first offense, be bored through the tongue, and fined twenty pounds to be levied of his body. And for the second offense, the offender shall be stigmatized by burning in the forehead with the letter B, and fined forty pounds. And that for the third offense, the offender shall suffer death without the benefit of clergy."

The strange thing about this law is, that it has never been repealed, and is still in force in the District of Columbia. Laws like this were in force in most of the colonies, and in all countries where the church had power.

In the Old Testament, the death-penalty was attached to hundreds of offenses. It has been the same in all Christian countries. To-day, in

civilized governments, the death-penalty is attached only to murder and treason, and in some it has been entirely abolished. What a commentary upon the divine systems of the world!

In the day of Thomas Paine, the church was ignorant, bloody, and relentless. In Scotland the "kirk" was at the summit of its power. It was a full sister of the Spanish Inquisition. It waged war upon human nature. It was the enemy of happiness, the hater of joy, and the despiser of religious liberty. It taught parents to murder their children rather than to allow them to propagate error. If the mother held opinions of which the infamous "kirk" disapproved, her children were taken from her arms, her babe from her very bosom, and she was not allowed to see them, or to write them a word. It would not allow shipwrecked sailors to be rescued from drowning on Sunday. It sought to annihilate pleasure, to pollute the heart by filling it with religious cruelty and gloom, and to change mankind into a vast horde of pious, heartless fiends. One of the most famous Scotch divines said: "The kirk holds that religious toleration is not far from blasphemy." And this same Scotch kirk denounced, beyond measure, the man who had the moral grandeur to say, "The world is my country, and to do good my religion." And this same kirk ab-

horred the man who said, "Any system of religion that shocks the mind of a child can not be a true system."

At that time nothing so delighted the church as the beauties of endless torment, and listening to the weak wailings of damned infants struggling in the slimy coils and poison-folds of the worm that never dies.

About the beginning of the nineteenth century, a boy by the name of Thomas Aikenhead, was indicted and tried at Edinburgh for having denied the inspiration of the Scriptures, and for having, on several occasions, when cold, wished himself in hell that he might get warm. Notwithstanding the poor boy recanted and begged for mercy, he was found guilty and hanged. His body was thrown in a hole at the foot of the scaffold and covered with stones.

Prosecutions and executions like this were common in every Christian country, and all of them were based upon the belief that an intellectual conviction is a crime.

No wonder the church hated and traduced the author of the *Age of Reason.*

England was filled with Puritan gloom and Episcopal ceremony. All religious conceptions were of the grossest nature. The ideas of crazy fanatics and extravagant poets were taken as sober facts. Milton[1] had clothed Christianity

[1] John Milton, an English poet; born, 1609; died, 1674.

in the soiled and faded finery of the gods—had added to the story of Christ the fables of mythology. He gave to the Protestant Church the most outrageous material ideas of the Deity. He turned all the angels into soldiers—made heaven a battlefield, put Christ in uniform, and described God as a militia general. His works were considered by the Protestants nearly as sacred as the Bible itself, and the imagination of the people was thoroughly polluted by the horrible imagery, the sublime absurdity of the blind Milton.

Heaven and hell were realities—the judgment day was expected—books of account would be opened. Every man would hear the charges against him read. God was supposed to sit on a golden throne, surrounded by the tallest angels, with harps in their hands and crowns on their heads. The goats would be thrust into eternal fire on the left, while the orthodox sheep, on the right, were to gambol on sunny slopes forever and forever.

The nation was profoundly ignorant, and consequently extremely religious, so far as belief was concerned.

In Europe, liberty was lying chained in the Inquisition—her white bosom stained with blood. In the new world the Puritans had been hanging and burning in the name of God, and selling white Quaker children into slavery in the

name of Christ, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

Under such conditions progress was impossible. Someone had to lead the way. The church is, and always has been, incapable of a forward movement. Religion always looks back. The church has already reduced Spain to a guitar, Italy to a hand-organ, and Ireland to exile.

Someone not connected with the church had to attack the monster that was eating out the heart of the world. Someone had to sacrifice himself for the good of all. The people were in the most abject slavery; their manhood had been taken from them by pomp, by pageantry, and by power. Progress is born of doubt and inquiry. The church never doubts—never inquires. To doubt is heresy—to inquire is to admit that you do not know—the church does neither.

More than a century ago Catholicism, wrapped in robes red with the innocent blood of millions, holding in her frantic clutch crowns and scepters, honors and gold, the keys of heaven and hell, trampling beneath her feet the liberties of nations, in the proud moment of almost universal dominion, felt within her heartless breast the deadly dagger of Voltaire.[1]

[1] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

From that blow the church never can recover. Livid with hatred she launched her eternal anathema at the great destroyer, and ignorant Protestants have echoed the curse of Rome.

In our country the church was all-powerful, and although divided into many sects, would instantly unite to repel a common foe.

Paine struck the first grand blow.

The *Age of Reason* did more to undermine the power of the Protestant Church than all other books then known. It furnished an immense amount of food for thought. It was written for the average mind, and is a straightforward, honest investigation of the Bible, and of the Christian system.

Paine did not falter, from the first page to the last. He gives you his candid thought, and candid thoughts are always valuable.

The *Age of Reason* has liberalized us all. It put arguments into the mouths of the people; it put the church on the defensive; it enabled somebody in every village to corner the parson; it made the world wiser and the church better; it took power from the pulpit and divided it among the pews.

Just in proportion that the human race has advanced, the church has lost power. There is no exception to this rule.

No nation ever materially advanced that held strictly to the religion of its founders.

No nation ever gave itself wholly to the control of the church without losing its power, its honor, and its existence.

Every church pretends to have found the exact truth. This is the end of progress. Why pursue that which you have? Why investigate when you know?

Every creed is a rock in running water; humanity sweeps by it. Every creed cries to the universe, "Halt!" A creed is the ignorant past bullying the enlightened present. [Applause.]

The ignorant are not satisfied with what can be demonstrated. Science is too slow for them, and so they invent creeds. They demand completeness. A sublime segment, a grand fragment, are of no value to them. They demand the complete circle—the entire structure.

In music they want a melody with a recurring accent at measured periods. In religion they insist upon immediate answers to the questions of creation and destiny. The alpha and omega of all things must be in the alphabet of their superstition. A religion that can not answer every question, and guess every conundrum is, in their estimation, worse than worthless. They desire a kind of theological dictionary—a religious ready reckoner, together with guide-boards at all crossings and turns. They mistake impudence for authority, solemnity for

wisdom, and pathos for inspiration. The beginning and the end are what they demand. The grand flight of the eagle is nothing to them. They want the nest in which he was hatched, and especially the dry limb upon which he roosts. Anything that can be learned is hardly worth knowing. The present is considered of no value in itself. Happiness must not be expected this side of the clouds, and can only be attained by self-denial and faith; not self-denial for the good of others, but for the salvation of your own sweet self.

Paine denied the authority of Bibles and creeds; this was his crime, and for this the world shut the door in his face, and emptied its slops upon him from the windows.

I challenge the world to show that Thomas Paine ever wrote one line, one word in favor of tyranny—in favor of immorality; one line, one word against what he believed to be for the highest and best interest of mankind; one line, one word against justice, charity, or liberty, and yet he has been pursued as though he had been a fiend from hell. [Applause.] His memory has been execrated as though he had murdered some Uriah [1] for his wife; driven some Hagar [2] into

[1] Uriah, in Biblical history, a Hittite, whom David caused to be placed in the most dangerous point in a battle that he might be killed and his wife be free for David to marry.

[2] Hagar, in Biblical history, the hand-maid of Sarah, Abraham's

the desert to starve with his child upon her bosom, defiled his own daughters;[1] ripped open with the sword the sweet bodies of loving and innocent women; advised one brother to assassinate another; kept[2] a harem with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines; or had persecuted Christians even unto strange cities.

The church has pursued Paine to deter others. No effort has been in any age of the world spared to crush out opposition. The church used painting, music, and architecture, simply to degrade mankind. But there are men that nothing can awe. There have been at all times brave spirits that dared even the gods. Some proud head has always been above the waves. In every age some Diogenes[3] has sacrificed to all the gods. True genius never cowers, and there is always some Samson[4] feeling for the pillars of authority.

Cathedrals and domes, and chimes and chants; temples frescoed and groined and carved, and

wife, who, after she had borne a son to Abraham, was cast out into the desert.

[1] Genesis 20:30-38.

[2] "But King Solomon loved many strange women. . . . And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines."—I. Kings 11:1-3.

[3] Diogenes, a Greek cynic philosopher; born about 412 B.C.; died, 323 B.C.

[4] Samson, in Biblical history, an Israelite judge of the tribe of Dan.

gilded with gold; altars and tapers, and paintings of virgin and babe; censer and chalice; chasuble, patten, and alb; organs, and anthems, and incense rising to the winged and blest; maniple, amice, and stole; crosses and crosiers, tiaras and crowns; miters and missals and masses; rosaries, relics, and robes; martyrs and saints, and windows stained as with the blood of Christ—never, never for one moment awed the brave, proud spirit of the infidel. He knew that all the pomp and glitter had been purchased with liberty—that priceless jewel of the soul. In looking at the cathedral he remembered the dungeon. The music of the organ was not loud enough to drown the clank of fetters. He could not forget that the taper had lighted the fagot. He knew that the cross adorned the hilt of the sword, and so, where others worshiped, he wept and scorned.

The doubter, the investigator, the infidel, have been the saviors of liberty. The truth is beginning to be realized, and the truly intellectual are honoring the brave thinkers of the past.

But the church is as unforgiving as ever, and still wonders why any infidel should be wicked enough to endeavor to destroy her power.

I will tell the church why.

You have imprisoned the human mind; you have been the enemy of liberty; you have burned us at the stake; wasted us upon slow

fires; torn our flesh with iron; you have covered us with chains—treated us as outcasts; you have filled the world with fear; you have taken our wives and children from our arms; you have confiscated our property; you have denied us the right to testify in courts of justice; you have branded us with infamy; you have torn out our tongues; you have refused us burial. In the name of your religion, you have robbed us of every right; and after having inflicted upon us every evil that can be inflicted in this world, you have fallen upon your knees, and with clasped hands implored your God to torment us forever.

Can you wonder that we hate your doctrines, that we despise your creeds, that we feel proud to know that we are beyond your power, that we are free in spite of you, that we can express our honest thought, and that the whole world is grandly rising into the blessed light?

Can you wonder that we point with pride to the fact that infidelity has ever been found battling for the rights of man, for the liberty of conscience, and for the happiness of all?

Can you wonder that we are proud to know that we have always been disciples of reason, and soldiers of freedom; that we have denounced tyranny and superstition, and have kept our hands unstained with human blood?

We deny that religion is the end or object of

this life. When it is so considered it becomes destructive of happiness—the real end of life. It becomes a hydra-headed monster, reaching in terrible coils from the heavens, and thrusting its thousand fangs into the bleeding, quivering hearts of men. It devours their substance, builds palaces for God (who dwells not in temples made with hands), and allows His children to die in huts and hovels. It fills the earth with mourning, heaven with hatred, the present with fear, and all the future with despair.

Virtue is a subordination of the passions to the intellect. It is to act in accordance with your highest convictions. It does not consist in believing, but in doing. This is the sublime truth that the infidels in all ages have uttered. They have handed the torch from one to the other through all the years that have fled. Upon the altar of reason they have kept the sacred fire, and through the long midnight of faith they fed the divine flame.

Infidelity is liberty; all religion is slavery. In every creed man is the slave of God, woman is the slave of man, and the sweet children are the slaves of all.

We do not want creeds; we want knowledge; we want happiness.

And yet we are told by the church that we have accomplished nothing; that we are simply

destroyers; that we tear down without building again.

Is it nothing to free the mind? Is it nothing to civilize mankind? Is it nothing to fill the world with light, with discovery, with science? Is it nothing to dignify man and exalt the intellect? Is it nothing to grope your way into the dreary prisons, the damp and dropping dungeons, the dark and silent cells of superstition, where the souls of men are chained to floors of stone; to greet them like a ray of light, like the song of a bird, the murmur of a stream; to see the dull eyes open and grow slowly bright; to feel yourself grasped by the shrunken and unused hands, and hear yourself thanked by a strange and hollow voice?

Is it nothing to conduct these souls gradually into the blessed light of day, to let them see again the happy fields, the sweet, green earth, and hear the everlasting music of the waves? Is it nothing to make men wipe the dust from their swollen knees, the tears from their blanched and furrowed cheeks? Is it a small thing to reave the heavens of an insatiate monster and write upon the eternal dome, glittering with stars, the grand word—"freedom"?

Is it a small thing to quench the flames of hell with the holy tears of pity—to unbind the martyr from the stake—break all the chains—put out the fires of civil war—stay the sword of

the fanatic, and tear the bloody hands of the church from the white throat of science?

Is it a small thing to make men truly free, to destroy the dogmas of ignorance, prejudice, and power, the poisoned fables of superstition, and to drive from the beautiful face of the earth the fiend of Fear?

It does seem as though the most zealous Christian must at times entertain some doubt as to the divine origin of his religion. For eighteen hundred years the doctrine has been preached. For more than a thousand years the church had, to a great extent, the control of the civilized world, and what has been the result? Are the Christian nations patterns of charity and forbearance? On the contrary, their principal business is to destroy each other. More than five millions of Christians are trained, educated, and drilled to murder their fellow-Christians. Every nation is groaning under a vast debt incurred in carrying on war against other Christians, or defending itself from Christian assault. The world is covered with forts to protect Christians from Christians, and every sea is covered with iron monsters ready to blow Christian brains into eternal froth. Millions upon millions are annually expended in the effort to construct still more deadly and terrible engines of death. Industry is crippled, honest toil is robbed, and even beggary is taxed to de-

fray the expenses of Christian warfare. There must be some other way to reform this world. We have tried creed, and dogma, and fable, and they have failed; and they have failed in all the nations dead.

The people perish for the lack of knowledge.

Nothing but education—scientific education—can benefit mankind. We must find out the laws of nature and conform to them.

We need free bodies and free minds,—free labor and free thought,—chainless hands and fetterless brains. Free labor will give us wealth. Free thought will give us truth.

We need men with moral courage to speak and write their real thoughts, and to stand by their convictions, even to the very death. We need have no fear of being too radical. The future will verify all grand and brave predictions. Paine was splendidly in advance of his time; but he was orthodox compared with the infidels of to-day.

Science, the great Iconoclast, has been busy since 1809, and by the highway of progress are the broken images of the Past.

On every hand the people advance. The Vicar of God has been pushed from the throne of the Cæsars, and upon the roofs of the Eternal City falls once more the shadow of the Eagle.

All has been accomplished by the heroic few. The men of science have explored heaven and

earth, and with infinite patience have furnished the facts. The brave thinkers have used them. The gloomy caverns of superstition have been transformed into temples of thought, and the demons of the past are the angels of to-day.

Science took a handful of sand, constructed a telescope, and with it explored the starry depths of heaven. Science wrested from the gods their thunderbolts; and now, the electric spark, freighted with thought and love, flashes under all the waves of the sea. Science took a tear from the cheek of unpaid labor, converted it into steam, created a giant that turns with tireless arm the countless wheels of toil.

Thomas Paine was one of the intellectual heroes—one of the men to whom we are indebted. His name is associated forever with the Great Republic. As long as free government exists he will be remembered, admired, and honored.

He lived a long, laborious, and useful life. The world is better for his having lived. For the sake of truth he accepted hatred and reproach for his portion. He ate the bitter bread of sorrow. His friends were untrue to him because he was true to himself, and true to them. He lost the respect of what is called society, but kept his own. His life is what the world calls failure and what history calls success.

If to love your fellow-men more than self is goodness, Thomas Paine was good.

If to be in advance of your time—to be a pioneer in the direction of right—is greatness, Thomas Paine was great.

If to avow your principles and discharge your duty in the presence of death is heroic, Thomas Paine was a hero.

At the age of seventy-three, death touched his tired heart. He died in the land his genius defended—under the flag he gave to the skies. Slander can not touch him now—hatred can not reach him more. He sleeps in the sanctuary of the tomb, beneath the quiet of the stars.

A few more years—a few more brave men—a few more rays of light, and mankind will venerate the memory of him who said:

"ANY SYSTEM OF RELIGION THAT SHOCKS THE MIND OF A CHILD CAN NOT BE A TRUE SYSTEM."

"THE WORLD IS MY COUNTRY, AND TO DO GOOD MY RELIGION."

THOMAS PAINE'S VINDICATION

[In a lecture in San Francisco in the summer of 1877, Mr. Ingersoll offered to give one thousand dollars in gold to any clergyman who would prove that Paine "died in terror because of religious opinions he had expressed, or that Voltaire did not pass away as serenely as the coming of the dawn." The *New York Observer,* a Presbyterian paper published in New York, Irenaeus Prime, editor, called upon him to put up the money, characterizing his offer as "infidel buncombe," upon which the following correspondence ensued:]

INGERSOLL'S FIRST LETTER

To the Editor of the New York Observer:

I have been informed that you accepted, in your paper, an offer made by me to any clergyman in San Francisco. That offer was that I would pay one thousand dollars in gold to any minister in that city who would prove that Thomas Paine died in terror because of religious opinions he had expressed, or that Voltaire did not pass away as serenely as the coming of the dawn.

For many years religious journals and ministers have been circulating certain pretended accounts of the frightful agonies endured by Paine and Voltaire when dying; that these great

men at the moment of death were terrified because they had given their honest opinions upon the subject of religion to their fellow-men. The imagination of the religious world has been taxed to the utmost in inventing absurd and infamous accounts of the last moments of these intellectual giants. Every Sunday-school paper, thousands of idiotic tracts, and countless stupidities called sermons, have been filled with these calumnies.

Paine and Voltaire were both believers in God—both hoped for immortality—both believed in special Providence. But both denied the inspiration of the Scriptures—both denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. While theologians most cheerfully admit that most murderers die without fear, they deny the possibility of any man who has expressed his disbelief in the inspiration of the Bible dying except in an agony of terror. These stories are used in revivals and in Sunday schools, and have long been considered of great value.

I am anxious that these slanders should cease. I am desirous of seeing justice done, even at this late day, to the dead.

For the purpose of ascertaining the evidence upon which these death-bed accounts really rest, I make to you the following proposition:

First. As to Thomas Paine: I will deposit with the First National Bank of Peoria, Ill.,

one thousand dollars in gold, upon the following conditions: This money shall be subject to your order when you shall, in the manner hereinafter provided, substantiate that Thomas Paine admitted the Bible to be an inspired book, or that he recanted his infidel opinions—or that he died regretting that he had disbelieved the Bible—or that he died calling upon Jesus in any religious sense whatever.

In order that a tribunal may be created to try this question, you may select one man, I will select another, and the two thus chosen shall select a third, and any two of the three may decide the matter.

As there will be certain costs and expenditures on both sides, such costs and expenditures shall be paid by the defeated party.

In addition to the one thousand dollars in gold, I will deposit a bond with good and sufficient security in the sum of two thousand dollars, conditioned for the payment of all costs in case I am defeated. I shall require of you a like bond.

From the date of accepting this offer you may have ninety days in which to collect and present your testimony, giving me notice of time and place of taking depositions. I shall have a like time to take evidence upon my side, giving you like notice, and you shall then have thirty days to take further testimony in reply to what I may

offer. The case shall then be argued before the persons chosen; and their decisions shall be final as to us.

If the arbitrator chosen by me shall die, I shall have the right to choose another. You shall have the same right. If the third one, chosen by our two, shall die, the two shall choose another; and all vacancies, from whatever cause, shall be filled upon the same principle.

The arbitrators shall sit when and where a majority shall determine, and shall have full power to pass upon all questions arising as to competency of evidence, and upon all subjects.

Second. As to Voltaire: I make the same proposition, if you will substantiate that Voltaire died expressing remorse or showing in any way that he was in mental agony because he attacked Catholicism—or because he had denied the inspiration of the Bible—or because he had denied the divinity of Christ.

I make these propositions because I want your people to stop slandering the dead.

If the propositions do not suit you in any particular, please state your objections, and I will modify them in any way consistent with the object in view.

If Paine and Voltaire died filled with childish and silly fear, I want to know it, and I want the world to know it. On the other hand, if

the believers in superstition have made and circulated these cruel slanders concerning the mighty dead, I want the world to know that.

As soon as you notify me of the acceptance of those propositions I will send you the certificate of the bank that the money has been deposited upon the foregoing conditions, together with copies of bonds for costs.

Yours truly,
R. G. INGERSOLL.

THE *OBSERVER'S* FIRST ATTACK

(From the *New York Observer* of Sept. 27, 1877.)

We have received a copy of a printed letter, addressed "To the Editor of the *New York Observer*," signed R. G. Ingersoll (Col. Robert G. Ingersoll we presume), referring to a paragraph published some weeks since in the *Observer*, in which we offered to produce the evidence "that Tom Paine died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death." This letter, after complaining in an exaggerated style that Paine and Voltaire have been grossly slandered, and that "for many years religious journals and ministers have been circulating certain pretended accounts of the frightful agonies endured by Paine and Voltaire when dying," etc., proposes to establish a Court of Arbitration to consider certain propositions in regard to the deaths of Paine and Voltaire. The letter further proposes that we shall have ninety days in which to collect and present the testimony in the affirmative of these propositions; the respondent to have ninety days to present the evidence on the other side; the affirmative then to have thirty days more for producing further

testimony, the case then to be argued before this Court, whose decision shall be final as to us.

As not one of the affirmations, in the form stated in this letter, was contained in the offer that we made, we have no occasion to substantiate them. But we are prepared to produce the evidence of the truth of our own statement, and even go farther; to show not only "that Tom Paine died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death," but that for many years previous and up to that event he lived a drunken and beastly life.

And we are the more impelled to do this because we have received within the last few months, numerous letters asking information and facts in regard to the character and habits of Paine. These letters have come chiefly from the West, where Infidels appear to be making a desperate effort to rescue his name from the infamy into which it had sunk long before he died. The word beastly, so often applied to Paine, though far from being elegant, most fitly expresses his real character. So debauched, degraded, and filthy had he become before his death, that he was a fit companion only for the "beasts that perish," and he was in consequence excluded from all decent society, even from that of respectable Infidels.

We have in our possession abundant testimony to the facts in the case, and chiefly from our own correspondents. The direct testimony we preface with an extract from a sketch of the life of Paine, in a volume entitled *Our Countrymen,* by B. J. Lossing,[1] Esq., the well-known historian. A portion of this sketch we published in the *Observer* of June 21, 1855, in which Mr. Lossing says:

"In 1802 he (Paine) returned to America and resided a part of the time upon a farm at New Rochelle, presented

[1] Benson John Lossing, an American historian and journalist; born, 1813; died, 1891.

to him by the State of New York for his Revolutionary services. Paine became very intemperate, and fell low in the social scale, not only on acount of his beastly habits, but because of his blasphemous tirade against Christianity."

In the year 1851 Grant Thorburn, of this city, who was personally and well acquainted with the man of whom he wrote, furnished for the *New York Observer* two articles—"Reminiscences of Thomas Paine"—from which we make some extracts. Grant Thorburn, who was the reputed hero of Galt's *Lawrie Todd,* was personally and well known to hundreds of persons still living in this city. His statements, so far as we know, were nowhere called in question at the time they were published.

"MESSRS. EDITORS: A few days ago I entered my seventy-ninth year. For the last sixty of these years, I have been only one day confined by sickness. I am not sensible of decay in either body or mind, spectacles excepted. I have not a pain or a stiff joint in my body. I walk as far and as fast, and my personal feelings are as comfortable, as when in my twentieth year; thank God, who gave me a sound constitution, and common sense to take care of it.

"I think it is the duty of the aged to tell the generation that is to follow what they have seen with their eyes and heard with their ears of the wonders the Lord has wrought in their days. In his providential arrangements he brought me into close contact with Paine and Carver, two of his most open and inveterate enemies. Carver and I blew the bellows in the same shop; Paine lodged with Carver; hence our intimacy. My days are numbered, and but few remain. I owe it to my God and to the world to tell what I have seen, felt, and heard in their company.

"The past sixty years have been styled emphatically *the age of Infidelity.* I was in my nineteenth year at the commencement of that period, and have been in contact,

and, in some case, in confidential intimacy, with some of the most prominent actors in the important events embraced in that period. One of the most prominent in his day was Mr. Thomas Paine. His public history is before the world; but his secret history, as they say in St. Cloud, is probably now known only to myself. Of the truth of this remark you will judge in the sequel.

"Thomas Paine was born in 1737, in Norfolk County, Old England. He was brought up to the business of stay-making with his father, who was a member of the Society of Friends. He was afterwards an exciseman in the town of Lewes, where he married the daughter of the collector of the custom house. After three years she obtained a divorce from him for neglect and cruel treatment. [Ladies, this mortal was the author of the *Rights of Man.*] Shortly after this he became a *defaulter,* and fled to America at the commencement of the Revolution. In 1787 Paine went to France. In 1792 he was chosen a member of the bloody Convention, and sat on the trial of Louis XVI. In the Reign of Terror and of Robespierre, he was thrown into prison, and narrowly escaped the guillotine by a miracle of Providence. While in France he published letters to Washington—a scurrilous libel, which was bought, read, and extolled by Deists, Jacobins, and Infidels, but burned and destroyed by true Americans. God willing, I will give the account of his escape from the guillotine, in a future number, as I heard it from his own lips.

"Paine arrived at New York in the spring of 1802. On the next day I was introduced to him at the City Hotel. On the day after, he started for Washington. There he was received with open arms by Jefferson,[1] Aaron Burr,[2] and

[1] Thomas Jefferson, an American statesman; born, 1743; president of the United States, 1801-1809; died, 1826.

[2] Aaron Burr, an American politician, lawyer, and soldier; born, 1756; killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel, 1804; planned to

a whole phalanx of Deists and Jacobins from every section of the country. A public dinner was got up to welcome the author of the *Age of Reason,* and the same man who tried to deface the fair fame of Washington. As easily might Paine darken the sun at mid-day by throwing at it a handful of mud! But the dinner! Here was expected a feast of reason and flow of soul. Alas! tell it not in Gath! Paine entered—his feet covered with a preparation of mud and compost; his pants having a rent both wide and unseemly; his vest, which had once been black, was now the color of gold dust, from a thick coating of Scotch snuff. His coat had a ventilator at the elbow of each sleeve. His fine linen looked as if not mollified by Colgate's soap since the last fourth of July. He reeled to and fro like a drunken man at his wits' end. Thus he entered the room. The Freethinkers were confounded, and thought it was a hoax; they, no doubt, mentally exclaimed, 'He is no company for gentlemen.' He received instructions in a few days, and left the purlieus of the court forever.

"Arriving in New York, he was set down at the City Hotel; but his habits being an outrage on all the common decencies of life, at the end of the week he was politely informed there was no room for *him* in that inn. His trunk was carried from hotel to tavern, from tavern to boarding house, and still the answer was, 'We have no room.' Inquiry for accommodation was made at a dwelling whose inmates were wretchedness personified; but it was written on the door as with the point of a diamond, 'No admittance for Thomas Paine.' In this dilemma, William Carver received him into his own house. It was here our intimacy commenced, and it continued, with a few interruptions, seven years thereafter."

conquer Texas and Mexico and establish a republic with New Orleans as the capital; was arrested, indicted for treason, but acquited, 1807; died, 1836.

The following extract is made from a subsequent number of the *Reminiscences of Thomas Paine,* by the same hand:

"It was in Carver's house that, by the movements of Providence, I sat down between two of the most inveterate Infidels that ever beheld the light of the sun. They were both mechanics—Carver a blacksmith, Paine a stay-maker. They were both unlearned men, but were of strong mind; for the Devil, having made human nature his study for six thousand years, will never employ a fool when he needs a journeyman. Carver, his wife, and Paine having been inhabitants of the same town in England, at their fireside, he being present, I learned his history from his cradle; and I saw him in all his native deformity, and traced him with my own eyes to his grave.

"Carver kept a porter-house on a small scale on the corner of Thames and Temple streets; at the same time he doctored horses and mended their shoes. It was noised about that Mr. Paine kept his headquarters in this domicile, a small two-story building whose outside had not seen a whitewash- nor paint-brush since the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Hundreds of his old political and Freethinking friends resorted hither to meet him. I witnessed some of their interviews; but oh, what consternation! Instead of the pale-faced man of thirty-six, when he wrote *Common Sense,* they beheld an old remnant of mortality, drunk, bloated, and half asleep. Very few of the better sort ever returned.

"Mr. Paine was sensible of his forbidding appearance, and generally was very morose when strangers were introduced. An old lady from Scotland wished an introduction. We entered his room. Said I, 'Mr. Paine, this is Mrs. Bruce, from Scotland.' 'Scotland,' he repeated, 'a country of bigots and fanatics.' 'Yes,' said I, 'but it's the only country in Europe where every man, woman, and child

can read the Bible and write their own name.' Our stay was short. When we got on the pavement, 'What do you think of Mr. Paine?' I inquired. 'I think he is *fou* (drunk), but och, man,' she added, 'what an *awfu' judgment looking face* he's got.'

"His chief companions were journeymen mechanics of the baser sort. One evening I stepped into his room. He was setting forth the Bible to a dozen of these characters, and painting it in its blackest colors. When he had ceased, I said, 'Mr. Paine, you have been in Ireland and Scotland.' He had. 'Scotland, comparatively speaking, is full of Bible; everyone reads it, and it is their chief school-book.' This he conceded. 'They have few Bibles in Ireland, and those who can read are prohibited by the priests from looking in the Bible.' This also was conceded. 'Now,' said I, 'Mr. Paine, if the Bible was a bad book, those who use it most would be the *worst members of society,* but the contrary is the fact, for while our jails, penitentiaries, State prisons, and almshouses are filled from Ireland, this day there is not a Scotch man or woman in any of them,' and such was a fact at that time. Observe that this was forty-five years ago. 'Besides,' I continued, 'I see in this room a few of my own shopmates. In months past, when they read the Bible, they went to church with their families. There they rested from the labors of the last week and kept their children under eye, rose early on Monday morning, and entered on the labors of the week with a sound head and a quiet conscience. And what are they now? Having heard the lectures of blind Palmer and read your *Age of Reason,* they became Freethinkers; and if they continue in the same course they are now following, they will soon be free-drinkers also.' 'And what are they following?' said Paine. Said I, 'They now go to the tavern on Sunday, sit drinking, smoking, and talking politics, their children in the streets or fields, learning everything that is

wicked; having spent fifty or sixty cents, each one comes home late, and better than half drunk; he has a headache next morning, and perhaps is unable to work till two P. M., thus losing a half-day's wages. Disease and death soon follow, when his widow and orphans are sent to the almshouse.'

"I continued: 'Mr. Paine, Hume, yourself, and other Freethinkers profess to write for the good of society.' He assented. 'Well,' said I, 'which is the most useful member of society: he who spends his time and money in the tavern, leaving his children to grow up a curse to the world, or the man who leads his children to church on Sunday, keeps them in sight through the day, and thus preserves them from the path of the destroyer, besides the saving of his money and the preservation of his own health?' The clock in the room struck ten as I spoke the last sentence; two candles were burning on the table; he took one, and walked off to bed without saying a word. His disciples and I looked on one another for a moment after; after a few friendly remarks on the same subject, each man went to his own house. They never all returned, and some of them walked no more with him.

"On a subsequent evening he told me the particulars of his remarkable escape from death, but the narrative is too long for this article. I will state the particulars in my next, only remarking, by the way, that when he stopped speaking, I said, 'What did you think at the time of this wonderful preservation?' He said the *Fates* had ordained that he was not to die at that time. Said I, 'Mr. Paine, I will tell you what I think; you know you have written and spoken much against the religion of the Bible; you have extolled the perfectibility of human reason when left to its own guidance, unshackled by priestcraft and superstition. The God in whom you live and move, and have your being, has spared your life, that you might give

to the world a living comment on your own doctrines. You now show to the world what human nature is, when left to itself to wander in its own counsels. Here you sit, in an obscure, uncomfortable dwelling, powdered with snuff and stupefied with brandy. You were once the companion of Washington,[1] Jay,[2] and Hamilton,[3] but are now deserted by every good man, and even respectable Deists cross the street to avoid you.' He said he cared not a straw for the opinions of the world. Said I, 'I envy not your feelings, for I wish so to conduct, that I may gain the esteem of my fellow-men.'

"He died on the 8th of June, 1809. Few knew that he was alive that month, till they saw his death announced in the papers of the 9th; had he died on the day when he was chalked for the guillotine in Paris his name would have stood high in the temple of fame. But he was spared ten years longer, till his profane and hateful life put a veto on his infidel writings."

The subject of Paine's character having come up more than a year ago, we received the following letter from the Rev. J. D. Wickham, D. D., of Manchester, Vt., a gentleman of the highest character, with whom we have been acquainted from our boyhood. He is an uncle to ex-Mayor Wickham, of the city of New York. The following is an extract from his letter, as published in the *Observer* at that time:

"The writer of this communication was more than fifty years ago a resident of New Rochelle, N. Y., where the body of Paine was buried. His grave was in one corner of a

[1] George Washington, an American soldier and statesman; born, 1732; president of the United States, 1789-1797; died, 1797.

[2] John Jay, an American statesman and jurist; born, 1745; died, 1829.

[3] Alexander Hamilton, an American statesman; born, 1757; died, 1804.

farm, which, having been confiscated as the property of a Tory during the Revolutionary war, had been presented to Paine by the State of New York for his patriotic service in aid of the Revolution. On this farm he spent his latter days with a solitary female attendant. I have heard the physician who visited him describe the condition in which he was accustomed to find his patient, and to which his vicious habits, and especially his habitual drunkenness, had reduced him. This he represented as revolting to his sensibilities, making even his necessary calls to prescribe for his relief exceedingly unwelcome and repulsive. This physician was an esteemed elder in the church of which I was at that time pastor, highly regarded not only for skill in his profession, but as a man of sound judgment and unimpeachable veracity. He has been dead many years. But the name of Matson Smith, M. D., is still held in honored remembrance by all who knew him."

On the appearance of the letter of Dr. Wickham, we received a communication from the Rev. Charles Hawley, D. D., then and now the distinguished pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Auburn, N. Y., confirming Dr. Wickham's statements in regard to the character and habits of Paine.

"The statement of Rev. Dr. Wickham, who preceded me in the Presyterian church of that place (New Rochelle) some twenty years, accords entirely with the well-known facts concerning Paine's habits as given me by the older residents, and which, until quite recently, have remained uncontradicted. The venerable Matson Smith, whom Dr. Wickham gives as his principal authority, was an elder in the church at New Rochelle from its organization until his death, a period of more than thirty years, esteemed and trusted by all for his Christian integrity and professional skill. I have heard from him substantially the

same account of Paine's degradation, from personal knowledge as his physician, the particulars of which are too loathsome to be described in print. He came to lose all self-respect and regard for decency in his personal habits, which were at times simply beastly. His drunkenness became habitual and notorious before he left New Rochelle, and he was not infrequently found lying by the roadside so helplessly intoxicated that he had to be carried home, as I have been told by persons who had befriended him in that miserable condition.

"There were some who, in spite of the shame and degradation into which he fell, still cherished a lingering respect for what he had been, and in consideration of the service he had rendered the Revolutionary cause by his political writings; but no one in that vicinity, as late as thirty years ago, would have had the temerity to deny these things, much less to call them 'wicked inventions of the clergy.' Dr. Smith was accustomed to refer to Paine's powers of conversation as somewhat remarkable, and even fascinating, when he was himself; and never gave me the impression that he spoke from religious prejudice, but rather with regret that one so capable of better things should have sunken so low."

This much for the life of Paine. Now for his death. The testimony contained in the following article was copied from the *New York Tribune* of March 27, 1876. It has been published again and again, and, so far as we know, has never been impeached. The extract from the journal of Stephen Grellet was also printed in the *Observer* of Jan. 29, 1863, with a note stating that it was from the *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet, a Quaker,* whose *Life and Gospel Labors* were published in Philadelphia, 1860. Mr. Grellet at that time alluded to resided in Greenwich, then a suburb of New York, where Paine resided and where he died:

(From the *New York Tribune* of March 27, 1876.)

"THOMAS PAINE.

"His last hours.—Extracts from an old Journal.

"*To the Editor of the Tribune:*

"*Sir:* I am much pleased with your editorial 'Thomas Paine's Bust.' In the journal of Stephen Grellet, a noted and most worthy minister of the Society of Friends, I find the following record made in the fall of 1803:

"'I may not omit recording here the death of Thomas Paine. A few days previous to my leaving home on my last religious visit, on hearing that he was ill and in a very destitute condition, I went to see him, and found him in a wretched state, for he had been so neglected and forsaken by his pretended friends that the common attentions to a sick man had been withheld from him. The skin of his body was in some places worn off, which greatly increased his sufferings. A nurse was provided for him and some needful comforts were supplied. He was mostly in a state of stupor, but something that had passed between us had made such an impression upon him that some time after my departure he sent for me, and, on being told that I was gone from home, he sent for another Friend. This induced a valuable young Friend (Mary Roscoe), who has resided in my family and continued at Greenwich during a part of my absence, frequently to go and take him some little refreshment suitable for an invalid, furnished by a neighbor. Once when she was there, three of his deistical associates came to the door and, in a loud, unfeeling manner, said: "Tom Paine, it is said you are turning Christian, but we hope you will die as you have lived;" and then went away. On which, turning to Mary Roscoe, he said, "You see what miserable comforters they are." Once he asked her if she had ever read any of his writings, and on being told she had read but very little of them, he inquired what

she thought of them, adding, "From such a one as you I expect a correct answer." She told him that when very young his *Age of Reason* was put into her hands, but that the more she read in it the more dark and distressed she felt, and she threw the book into the fire. "I wish all had done as you," he replied; "for if the devil had any agency in any work, he has had it in my writing that book." When going to carry him some refreshments, she repeatedly heard him uttering the language, "Oh, Lord!" "Lord God," or "Lord Jesus have mercy upon me!"'

"Thus the poor Infidel, wretched in body and mind, received at the last his only ministrations of comfort from hands prompted by hearts filled with the love of the Lord Jesus, whom he had denied and reviled.

"Very truly, &c.,

"W. H. LADD."

"BROOKLYN, 3d month, 25th day, 1876."

We have verified the above extract, and have corrected one or two unimportant verbal errors from the second edition of the *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labors of Stephen Grellet,* published in London in 1861 (see vol. i, p. 125). That so little is known in regard to the last days of Paine is explained by the fact that he had been deserted by all decent people, excepting those who, like Stephen Grellet and the nurse he employed, ministered to the wretched man out of Christian compassion. Stephen Grellet, in his journal, states that Paine wrote much during his last illness, but nothing of what he wrote at that time remains. His Infidel executors may have had their own reasons for not giving to the world "the last words of Thomas Paine."

We are quite sure all candid readers will acknowledge that we have proved our propositions, that Paine lived a drunken, beastly life, and that he "died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death." That the proof will be accepted

by Infidels, we can only hope. Some would not be persuaded even though Tom Paine should rise from the dead and confirm it all. Those of the same character with Paine can be expected to renounce their admiration for such a specimen of Infidelity and blasphemy and of beastly living only through the enlightening influences of God's grace, which has opened the eyes of thousands and tens of thousands of Infidels and made them humble believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners. We wish even to the bitterest enemies of the cross nothing worse than this. And in the hope that this statement of facts may be blessed of God in the farther illustration of the fruits of Infidelity as exhibited in the life of one of its chief apostles, we do not regret having been called to devote so much space to the subject.

INGERSOLL'S REPLY TO THE *OBSERVER*

"To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason is like administering medicine to the dead."—THOMAS PAINE.

PEORIA, October 8, 1877.

To the Editor of the New York Observer:

Sir: Last June in San Francisco, I offered a thousand dollars in gold—not as a wager, but as a gift—to anyone who would substantiate the absurd story that Thomas Paine died in agony and fear, frightened by the clanking chains of devils. I also offered the same amount to any minister who would prove that Voltaire did not pass away as serenely as the coming of

the dawn. Afterward I was informed that you had accepted the offer, and had called upon me to deposit the money. Acting upon this information, I sent you the following letter:

[This is the letter printed above.]

In your paper of September 27, 1877, you acknowledge the receipt of the foregoing letter, and after giving an outline of its contents, say: "As not one of the affirmations, in the form stated in this letter, was contained in the offer we made, we have no occasion to substantiate them. But we are prepared to produce the evidence of the truth of our own statement, and even to go further: to show not only that Tom Paine 'died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death,' but that for many years previous, and up to that event, he lived a drunken and beastly life."

In order to refresh your memory as to what you published, I call your attention to the following, which appeared in the *New York Observer,* the 19th of July, 1877.

"Col. Bob. Ingersoll, in a speech full of ribaldry and blasphemy, made in San Francisco recently, said:

"'I will give $1,000 in gold coin to any clergyman who can substantiate that the death of Voltaire was not as peaceful as the dawn; and of Tom Paine, whom they assert died in fear and agony, frightened by the clanking chains of devils—in fact frightened to death by God. I

will give $1,000 likewise to anyone who can substantiate this "absurd story"—a story without a word of truth in it.'

"We have published the testimony, and the witnesses are on hand to prove that Tom Paine died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death. *Let the Colonel deposit the money with any honest man, and the absurd story, as he terms it, shall be shown to be an over true tale. But he won't do it. His talk is Infidel 'buncombe' and nothing more.*"

On the 31st of August I sent you my letter, and on the 27th of September you say in your paper: "As not one of the affirmations in the form stated in this letter was contained in the offer we made, we have no occasion to substantiate them."

What were the affirmations contained in the offer you made? I had offered a thousand dollars in gold to anyone who would substantiate *"the absurd story" that Thomas Paine died in fear and agony, frightened by the clanking chains of devils—in fact frightened to death by God.*

In response to this offer you said: "Let the Colonel deposit the money with an honest man and the 'absurd story,' as he terms it, shall be shown to be an 'over true tale.' But he won't do it. His talk is Infidel 'buncombe' and nothing more."

Did you not offer to prove that Paine died in fear and agony, frightened by the clanking chains of devils? Did you not ask me to de-

posit the money that you might prove the "absurd story" to be an "over true tale" and obtain the money? Did you not in your paper of the 27th of September in effect deny that you had offered to prove this "absurd story"? As soon as I offered to deposit the gold and give bonds besides to cover costs, did you not publish a falsehood?

You have eaten your own words, and, for my part, I would rather have dined with Ezekiel than with you.

You have not met the issue. You have knowingly avoided it. The question was not as to the personal habits of Paine. The real question was and is, whether Paine was filled with fear and horror at the time of his death on account of his religious opinions. That is the question. You avoid this. In effect, you abandon that charge and make others.

To you belongs the honor of having made the most cruel and infamous charges against Thomas Paine that have ever been made. Of what you have said you can not prove the truth of one word.

You say that Thomas Paine died a drunken, cowardly, beastly death.

I pronounce this charge to be a cowardly and beastly falsehood.

Have you any evidence that he was in a drunken condition when he died?

What did he say or do of a *cowardly* character just before, or at about the time of his death?

In what way was his death cowardly? You must answer these questions, and give your proof, or all honest men will hold you in abhorrence. You have made these charges. The man against whom you make them is dead. He can not answer you. I can. He can not compel you to produce your testimony, or to admit by your silence that you have cruelly slandered the defenseless dead. I can and I will. You say that his death was cowardly. In what respect? Was it cowardly in him to hold the Thirty-Nine Articles in contempt? Was it cowardly *not* to call on your Lord? Was it cowardly not to be afraid? You say that his death was beastly. Again I ask, in what respect? Was it beastly to submit to the inevitable with tranquillity? Was it beastly to look with composure upon the approach of death? Was it beastly to die without a complaint, without a murmur—to pass from life without fear?

Mr. Paine had prophesied that fanatics would crawl and cringe around him during his last moments. He believed they would put a lie in the mouth of Death.

When the shadow of the coming dissolution was upon him, two clergymen, Messrs. Milledol-

lar and Cunningham, called to annoy the dying man. Mr. Cunningham had the politeness to say, "You have now a full view of death—you can not live long, and whosoever does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will assuredly be damned." Mr. Paine replied, "Let me have none of your popish stuff. Get away with you. Good-morning."

On another occasion a Methodist minister obtruded himself when Willet Hicks was present. This minister declared to Mr. Paine "that unless he repented of his unbelief he would be damned." Paine, although at the door of death, rose in his bed and indignantly requested the clergyman to leave his room. On another occasion, two brothers by the name of Pigott, sought to convert him. He was displeased and requested their departure. Afterwards Thomas Nixon and Captain Daniel Pelton visited him for the express purpose of ascertaining whether he had, in any manner, changed his religious opinions. They were assured by the dying man that he still held the principles he had expressed in his writings.

Afterwards, these gentlemen hearing that William Cobbett was about to write a life of Paine sent him the following note:

"New York, April 24, 1818.

"Sir: We have been informed that you have a design to write a history of the life and writings of Thomas Paine.

If you have been furnished with materials in respect to his religious opinions, or rather of his recantation of his former opinions before his death, all you have heard of his recanting is false. Being aware that such reports would be raised after his death by fanatics which infested his house at the time it was expected he would die, we, the subscribers, intimate acquaintances of Thomas Paine since the year 1776, went to his house. He was sitting up in a chair, and apparently in full vigor and use of all his mental faculties. We interrogated him upon his religious opinions, and if he had changed his mind, or repented of anything he had said or written on that subject. He answered, 'not at all,' and appeared rather offended at our supposition that any change should take place in his mind. We took down in writing the questions put to him and his answers thereto before a number of persons then in his room, among whom were his doctor, Mrs. Bonneville, etc. This paper is mislaid and can not be found at present, but the above is the substance which can be attested by many living witnesses.

"THOMAS NIXON.
"DANIEL PELTON."

Mr. Jarvis, the artist, saw Mr. Paine one or two days before his death. To Mr. Jarvis he expressed his belief in his written opinions upon the subject of religion. B. F. Haskin, an attorney of the city of New York, also visited him and inquired as to his religious opinions. Paine was then upon the threshold of death, but he did not tremble. He was not a coward. He expressed his firm and unshaken belief in the religious ideas he had given to the world.

Dr. Manley was with him when he spoke his last words. Dr. Manley asked the dying man if he did not wish to believe that Jesus was the Son of God, and the dying philosopher answered: "I have no wish to believe on that subject." Amasa Woodsworth sat up with Thomas Paine the night before his death. In 1869 Gilbert Vale hearing that Mr. Woodsworth was living in or near Boston, visited him for the purpose of getting his statement. The statement was published in the *Beacon* of June 5, 1839, while thousands who had been acquainted with Mr. Paine were living.

The following is the article referred to:

"We have just returned from Boston. One object of our visit to that city, was to see a Mr. Amasa Woodsworth, an engineer, now retired in a handsome cottage and garden at East Cambridge, Boston. This gentleman owned the house occupied by Paine at his death—while he lived next door. As an act of kindness Mr. Woodsworth visited Mr. Paine every day for six weeks before his death. He frequently sat up with him, and did so on the last two nights of his life. He was always there with Dr. Manley, the physician, and assisted in removing Mr. Paine while his bed was prepared. He was present when Dr. Manley asked Mr. Paine 'if he wished to believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God,' and he describes Mr. Paine's answer as animated. He says that lying on his back he used some action and with much emphasis, replied, 'I have no wish to believe on that subject.' He lived some time after this, but was not known to speak, for he died tranquilly. He accounts for the insinuating style of Dr. Manley's letter, by

stating that that gentleman just after its publication joined a church. He informs us that he has openly reproved the doctor for the falsity contained in the spirit of that letter, boldly declaring before Dr. Manley, who is yet living, that nothing which he saw justified the insinuations. Mr. Woodsworth assures us that he neither heard nor saw anything to justify the belief of any mental change in the opinions of Mr. Paine previous to his death; but that being very ill and in pain, chiefly arising from the skin being removed in some parts by long lying, he was generally too uneasy to enjoy conversation on abstract subjects. This, then, is the best evidence that can be procured on this subject and we publish it while the contravening parties are yet alive, and with the authority of Mr. Woodsworth.

"GILBERT VALE."

A few weeks ago I received the following letter which confirms the statement of Mr. Vale:

"NEAR STOCKTON, CAL., GREENWOOD COTTAGE, July 9, 1877.

"COL. INGERSOLL: In 1842 I talked with a gentleman in Boston. I have forgotten his name; but he was then an engineer of the Charleston navy yard. I am thus particular so that you can find his name on the books. He told me that he had nursed Thomas Paine in his last illness, and closed his eyes when dead. I asked him if he recanted and called upon God to save him. He replied, 'No. He died as he had taught. He had a sore upon his side and when we turned him it was very painful and he would cry out "O, God!" or something like that.' 'But,' said the narrator, 'that was nothing, for he believed in a God.' I told him that I had often asserted from the pulpit that Mr. Paine had recanted in his last moments. The gentle-

man said that it was not true, and he appeared to be an intelligent, truthful man.

"With respect I remain, &c.,

"PHILIP GRAVES, M. D."

The next witness was Willet Hicks, a Quaker preacher. He says that during the last illness of Mr. Paine he visited him almost daily, and that Paine died firmly convinced of the truth of the religious opinions he had given to his fellow-men. It was this same Willet Hicks that Paine applied to for permission to be buried in the cemetery of the Quakers. Permission was refused. This settles the question of recantation. If he had recanted, of course there would have been no objection to his body being buried by the side of the best hypocrites on the earth. If Paine recanted why should he be denied "a little earth for charity"? Had he recanted, it would have been regarded as a vast and splendid triumph for the gospel. It would with much noise and pomp and ostentation have been heralded about the world.

I received the following letter to-day. The writer is well known in this city, and is a man of high character:

"PEORIA, Oct. 8th, 1877.

"ROBERT G. INGERSOLL, *Esteemed Friend:* My parents were Friends [Quakers]. My father died when I was very young. The elderly and middle-aged Friends visited at my mother's house. We lived in the city of New York.

Among the number I distinctly remember Elias Hicks, Willet Hicks, and a Mr. —— Day, who was a bookseller in Pearl Street. There were many others, whose names I do not now remember. The subject of the recantation by Thomas Paine of his views about the Bible in his last illness, or at any other time, was discussed by them in my presence at different times. I learned from them that some of them had attended upon Thomas Paine in his last sickness, and administered to his wants up to the time of his death. And upon the question of whether he did recant there was but one expression. They all said that he did not recant in any manner. I often heard them say they wished he had recanted. In fact, according to them, the nearer he approached death the more positive he appeared to be in his convictions.

"These conversations were from 1820 to 1822. I was at that time from ten to twelve years old, but these conversations impressed themselves upon me because many thoughtless people then blamed the Society of Friends for their kindness to that 'arch Infidel,' Thomas Paine.

"Truly yours,

"A. C. HANKINSON."

A few days ago I received the following letter:

"ALBANY, NEW YORK, Sept. 27, 1876.

"*Dear Sir:* It is over twenty years ago that professionally I made the acquaintance of John Hogeboom, a Justice of the Peace of the county of Rensselaer, New York. He was then over seventy years of age and had the reputation of being a man of candor and integrity. He was a great admirer of Paine. He told me that he was personally acquainted with him, and used to see him frequently during

the last years of his life in the city of New York, where Hogeboom then resided. I asked him if there was any truth in the charge that Paine was in the habit of getting drunk. He said that it was utterly false; that he never heard of such a thing during the life-time of Mr. Paine, and did not believe anyone else did. I asked him about the recantation of his religious opinions on his death-bed, and the revolting death-bed scenes that the world had heard so much about. He said there was no truth in them, that he had received his information from persons who attended Paine in his last illness, 'and that he passed peacefully away, as we may say, in the sunshine of a great soul.'

"Yours truly,

"W. J. HILTON."

The witnesses by whom I substantiate the fact that Thomas Paine did not recant, and that he died holding the religious opinions he had published, are:

First.—Thomas Nixon, Captain Daniel Pelton, B. F. Haskin. These gentlemen visited him during his last illness for the purpose of ascertaining if he had in any respect changed his views upon religion. He told them he had not.

Second.—James Cheetham. This man was the most malicious enemy Mr. Paine had, and yet he admits that "Thomas Paine died placidly, and almost without a struggle" (see *Life of Thomas Paine,* by James Cheetham).

Third.—The ministers, Milledollar and Cunningham. These gentlemen told Mr. Paine that if he died without believing in the Lord

Jesus Christ he would be damned, and Paine replied, "Let me have none of your popish stuff. Good-morning" (see Sherwin's *Life of Paine,* p. 220).

Fourth.—Mrs. Hedden. She told these same preachers when they attempted to obtrude themselves upon Mr. Paine again, that the attempt to convert Mr. Paine was useless—"that if God did not change his mind no human power could."

Fifth.—Andrew A. Dean. This man lived upon Paine's farm at New Rochelle, and corresponded with him upon religious subjects (see Paine's *Theological Works,* p. 308).

Sixth.—Mr. Jarvis, the artist with whom Paine lived. He gives an account of an old lady coming to Paine and telling him that God Almighty had sent her to tell him that unless he believed the blessed Savior, he would be damned. Paine replied that God would not send such a foolish old woman with such an impertinent message (see Clio Hickman's *Life of Paine*).

Seventh.—William Carver, with whom Paine boarded. Mr. Carver said again and again that Paine did not recant. He knew him well, and had every opportunity of knowing (see *Life of Paine,* by Vale).

Eighth.—Dr. Manley, who attended him in his last sickness, and to whom Paine spoke his

last words. Dr. Manley asked him if he did not wish to believe in Jesus Christ, and he replied, "I have no wish to believe on that subject."

Ninth.—Willet Hicks and Elias Hicks, who were with him frequently during his last sickness, and both of whom tried to persuade him to recant. According to their testimony Mr. Paine died as he had lived—a believer in God and a friend of man. Willet Hicks was offered money to say something false against Thomas Paine. He was even offered money to remain silent and allow others to slander the dead. Mr. Hicks, speaking of Thomas Paine, said, "He was a good man—an honest man" (Vale's *Life of Paine*).

Tenth.—Amasa Woodsworth, who was with him every day for some six weeks immediately preceding his death, and sat up with him the last two nights of his life. This man declares that Paine did not recant and that he died tranquilly. The evidence of Mr. Woodsworth is conclusive.

Eleventh.—Thomas Paine himself. The will of Thomas Paine, written by himself, commences as follows:

"The last will and testament of me, the subscriber, Thomas Paine, reposing confidence in my creator God, and in no other being, for I know of no other, nor believe in any other;"

and closes in these words: "I have lived an honest and useful life to mankind; my time has been spent in doing good, and I die in perfect composure and resignation to the will of my creator God."

Twelfth.—If Thomas Paine recanted, why do you pursue him? If he recanted, he died substantially in your belief, for what reason then do you denounce his death as cowardly? If upon his death-bed he renounced the opinions he had published, the business of defaming him should be done by infidels, not by Christians.

I ask you if it is honest to throw away the testimony of his friends—the evidence of fair and honorable men—and take the putrid words of avowed and malignant enemies?

When Thomas Paine was dying he was infested by fanatics—by the snaky spies of bigotry. In the shadows of death were the unclean birds of prey waiting to tear with beak and claw the corpse of him who wrote the *Rights of Man.* And there lurking and crouching in the darkness were the jackals and hyenas of superstition ready to violate his grave.

These birds of prey—these unclean beasts—are the witnesses produced and relied upon by you.

One by one the instruments of torture have been wrenched from the cruel clutch of the

church, until within the armory of orthodoxy there remains but one weapon—slander.

Against the witnesses that I have produced you can bring just two—Mary Roscoe and Mary Hinsdale. The first is referred to in the memoir of Stephen Grellet. She had once been a servant in his house. Grellet tells what happened between this girl and Paine. According to this account Paine asked her if she had ever read any of his writings, and on being told that she had read very *little* of them, he inquired what she thought of them, adding that from such an one he expected a correct answer.

Let us examine this falsehood. Why would Paine expect a correct answer from one who had read very little of them? Does not such a statement devour itself? This young lady further said that the *Age of Reason* was put into her hands, and that the more she read in it the more dark and distressed she felt, and that she threw the book into the fire. Whereupon Mr. Paine remarked, "I wish all had done as you did, for if the devil ever had any agency in any work he had it in my writing that book."

The next is Mary Hinsdale. She was a servant in the family of Willet Hicks. She, like Mary Roscoe, was sent to carry some delicacy to Mr. Paine. To this young lady Paine, according to her account, said precisely the same

that he did to Mary Roscoe, and she said the same thing to Mr. Paine.

My own opinion is that Mary Roscoe and Mary Hinsdale are one and the same person, or the same story has been by mistake put into the mouth of both.

It is not possible that the same conversation should have taken place between Paine and Mary Roscoe, and between him and Mary Hinsdale.

Mary Hinsdale lived with Willet Hicks and he pronounced her story a pious fraud and fabrication. He said that Thomas Paine never said any such thing to Mary Hinsdale (see Vale's *Life of Paine*).

Another thing about this witness. A woman by the name of Mary Lockwood, a Hicksite Quaker, died. Mary Hinsdale met her brother about this time and told him that his sister had recanted, and wanted her to say so at her funeral. This turned out to be false.

It has been claimed that Mary Hinsdale made her statement to Charles Collins. Long after the alleged occurrence Gilbert Vale, one of the biographers of Paine, had a conversation with Collins concerning Mary Hinsdale. Vale asked him what he thought of her. He replied that some of the Friends believed that she used opiates, and that they did not give credit to her statements. He also said that he believed what

the Friends said, but thought that when a young woman she *might* have told the truth.

In 1818 William Cobbett came to New York. He began collecting materials for a life of Thomas Paine. In this he became acquainted with Mary Hinsdale and Charles Collins. Mr. Cobbett gave a full account of what happened in a letter addressed to the Norwich *Mercury* in 1819. From this account it seems that Charles Collins told Cobbett that Paine had recanted. Cobbett called for the testimony, and told Mr. Collins that he must give time, place, and the circumstances. He finally brought a statement that he stated had been made by Mary Hinsdale. Armed with this document Cobbett, in October of that year, called upon the said Mary Hinsdale, at No. 10 Anthony Street, New York, and showed her the statement. Upon being questioned by Mr. Cobbett she said, "That it was so long ago that she could not speak positively to any part of the matter—that she would not say that any part of the paper was true—that she had never seen the paper—and that she had never given Charles Collins authority to say anything about the matter in her name." And so in the month of October, in the year of grace 1818, in the mist and fog of forgetfulness disappeared forever one Mary Hinsdale—the last and only witness against the intellectual honesty of Thomas Paine.

Did Thomas Paine live the life of a drunken beast, and did he die a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death?

Upon you rests the burden of substantiating these infamous charges.

You have, I suppose, produced the best evidence in your possession, and that evidence I will now proceed to examine. Your first witness is Grant Thorburn. He makes three charges against Thomas Paine. First: That his wife obtained a divorce from him in England for cruelty and neglect. Second: That he was a defaulter and fled from England to America. Third: That he was a drunkard. These three charges stand upon the same evidence—the word of Grant Thorburn. If they are not all true Mr. Thorburn stands impeached.

The charge that Mrs. Paine obtained a divorce on account of the cruelty and neglect of her husband is utterly false. There is no such record in the world, and never was. Paine and his wife separated by mutual consent; each respecting the other. They remained friends. This charge is without any foundation in fact. I challenge the Christian world to produce the record of this decree of divorce. According to Mr. Thorburn it was granted in England. In that country public records are kept of all such decrees. Have the kindness to produce this decree showing that it was given

on account of cruelty, or admit that Mr. Thorburn was mistaken.

Thomas Paine was a just man. Although separated from his wife, he always spoke of her with tenderness and respect, and frequently sent her money without letting her know the source from whence it came. Was this the conduct of a drunken beast?

The second charge, that Paine was a defaulter in England and fled to America, is equally false. He did not flee from England. He came to America, not as a fugitive, but as a free man. He came with a letter of introduction signed by another infidel, Benjamin Franklin. He came as a soldier of freedom—an apostle of liberty.

In this second charge there is not one word of truth.

He held a small office in England. If he was a defaulter the records of that country will show that fact.

Mr. Thorburn, unless the record can be produced to substantiate him, stands convicted of at least two mistakes.

Now as to the third: He says that in 1802 Paine was an "old remnant of mortality, drunk, bloated, and half asleep."

Can anyone believe this to be a true account of the personal appearance of Mr. Paine in 1802? He had just returned from France.

He had been welcomed home by Thomas Jefferson, who had said that he was entitled to the hospitality of every American.

In 1802 Mr. Paine was honored with a public dinner in the city of New York. He was called upon and treated with kindness and respect by such men as De Witt Clinton.[1]

In 1806 Mr. Paine wrote a letter to Andrew A. Dean upon the subject of religion. Read that letter and then say that the writer of it was an "old remnant of mortality, drunk, bloated, and half-asleep." Search the files of the *New York Observer* from the first issue to the last, and you will find nothing superior to this letter. In 1803 Mr. Paine wrote a letter of considerable length, and of great force, to his friend Samuel Adams.[2] Such letters are not written by drunken beasts, nor by old remnants of mortality, nor by drunkards. It was about the same time that he wrote his *Remarks on Robert Hall's Sermons.* These *Remarks* were not written by a drunken beast, but by a clear-headed and thoughtful man.

In 1804 he published an essay on the invasion of England, and a treatise on gunboats, full of valuable maritime information; in 1805 a treatise

[1] De Witt Clinton, an American lawyer and statesman; born, 1769; died, 1828.

[2] Samuel Adams, an American patriot and statesman; born, 1722; died, 1803.

on yellow fever, suggesting modes of prevention. In short he was an industrious and thoughtful man. He sympathized with the poor and oppressed of all lands. He looked upon monarchy as a species of physical slavery. He had the goodness to attack that form of government. He regarded the religion of his day as a kind of mental slavery. He had the courage to give his reasons for his opinion. His reasons filled the churches with hatred. Instead of answering his arguments they attacked him. Men who were not fit to blacken his shoes, blackened his character.

There is too much religious cant in the statement of Mr. Thorburn. He exhibited too much anxiety to tell what Grant Thorburn said to Thomas Paine. He names Thomas Jefferson as one of the disreputable men who welcomed Paine with open arms. The testimony of a man who regarded Thomas Jefferson as a disreputable person, as to the character of anybody, is utterly without value. In my judgment, the testimony of Mr. Thorburn should be thrown aside as wholly unworthy of belief.

Your next witness is the Rev. J. D. Wickham, D. D., who tells what an elder in his church said. This elder said that Paine passed his last days on his farm at New Rochelle with a solitary female attendant. This is not true.

He did not pass his last days at New Rochelle. Consequently this pious elder did not see him during his last days at that place. Upon this elder we prove an alibi. Mr. Paine passed his last days in the city of New York, in a house upon Columbia Street. The story of the Rev. J. D. Wickham, D. D., is simply false.

The next competent false witness is the Rev. Charles Hawley, D. D., who proceeds to state that the story of the Rev. J. D. Wickham, D. D., is corroborated by older citizens of New Rochelle. The names of these ancient residents are withheld. According to these unknown witnesses, the account given by the deceased elder was entirely correct. But as the particulars of Mr. Paine's conduct "were too loathesome to be described in print," we are left entirely in the dark as to what he really did.

While at New Rochelle Mr. Paine lived with Mr. Purdy, with Mr. Dean, with Captain Pelton, and with Mr. Staple. It is worthy of note that all of these gentlemen give the lie direct to the statements of "older residents" and ancient citizens spoken of by the Rev. Charles Hawley, D. D., and leave him with his "loathsome particulars" existing in his own mind.

The next gentleman you bring upon the stand is W. H. Ladd, who quotes from the memoirs of Stephen Grellett. This gentleman also has the misfortune to be dead. According to his

account, Mr. Paine made his recantation to a servant girl of his, by the name of Mary Roscoe; to this girl, according to the account, Mr. Paine uttered the wish that all who read his book had burned it. I believe there is a mistake in the name of this girl. Her name was probably Mary Hinsdale, as it was once claimed that Paine made the same remarks to her, but this point I shall notice hereafter. These are your witnesses, and the only ones you bring forward, to support your charge that Thomas Paine lived a drunken and beastly life, and died a drunken, cowardly, and beastly death. All these calumnies are found in a life of Paine by a Mr. Cheetham, the convicted libeler already referred to. Mr. Cheetham was an enemy of the man whose life he pretended to write.

In order to show you the estimation in which Mr. Cheetham was held by Mr. Paine, I will give you a copy of a letter that throws light upon this point:

"October 28, 1807.

"MR. CHEETHAM: Unless you make a public apology for the abuse and falsehood in your paper of Tuesday, October 27th, respecting me, I will prosecute you for lying.

"THOMAS PAINE."

In another letter, speaking of the same man, Mr. Paine says: "If an unprincipled bully can not be reformed he can be punished."

"Cheetham has been so long in the habit of giving false information, that truth is to him like a foreign language."

Mr. Cheetham wrote the life of Paine to gratify his malice and to support religion. He was prosecuted for libel—was convicted and fined.

Yet the life of Paine written by this man is referred to by the Christian world as the highest authority.

As to the personal habits of Mr. Paine, we have the testimony of William Carver, with whom he lived; of Mr. Jarvis, the artist, with whom he lived; of Mr. Staple, with whom he lived; of Mr. Purdy, who was a tenant of Paine's; of Mr. Burger, with whom he was intimate; of Thoms Nixon and Captain Daniel Pelton, both of whom knew him well; of Amasa Woodsworth, who was with him when he died; of John Fellows, who boarded at the same house; of James Wilburn, with whom he boarded; of B. F. Haskin, a lawyer who was well acquainted with him and called upon him during his last illness; of Walter Morton, a friend; of Clio Rickman who had known him for many years; of Willet and Elias Hicks, Quakers, who knew him intimately and well; of Judge Herttell, H. Margary, Elihu Palmer, and many others. All these testified to the fact that Mr. Paine was a temperate man. In

those days nearly everybody used spirituous liquors. Paine was not an exception; but he did not drink to excess. Mr. Lovett, who kept the City Hotel where Paine stopped, in a note to Caleb Bingham, declared that Paine drank less than any boarder he had.

Against all this evidence you produce the story of Grant Thorburn—the story of the Rev. J. D. Wickham that an elder in his church told him that Paine was a drunkard, corroborated by the Rev. Charles Hawley, and an extract from Lossing's history to the same effect. The evidence is overwhelming against you. Will you have the fairness to admit it? Your witnesses are merely the repeaters of the falsehoods of James Cheetham, the convicted libeler.

After all, drinking is not as bad as lying. An honest drunkard is better than a calumniator of the dead. "A remnant of old mortality, drunk, bloated, and half-asleep" is better than a perfectly sober defender of human slavery.

To become drunk is a virtue compared with stealing a babe from the breast of its mother.

Drunkenness is one of the beatitudes, compared with editing a religious paper devoted to the defense of slavery upon the ground that it is a divine institution.

Do you really think that Paine was a drunken beast when he wrote *Common Sense*—a pamphlet that aroused three millions of people, as

people never were aroused by a pamphlet before? Was he a drunken beast when he wrote the *Crisis?* Was it to a drunken beast that the following letter was addressed.

"ROCKY HILL, September 10, 1783.

"I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy I know not. Be it for either or both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place and partake with me I shall be exceedingly happy to see you at it. Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country: and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who with much pleasure subscribes himself

"Your Sincere Friend,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

Did any of your ancestors ever receive a letter like that?

Do you think that Paine was a drunken beast when the following letter was received by him?

"You express a wish in your letter to return to America in a national ship; Mr. Dawson, who brings over the treaty, and who will present you with this letter, is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive and accommodate you back. If you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. You will in general find us returned to sentiments worthy of former times; *in these it will be your glory to have steadily labored and with as much effect*

as any man living. That you may live long to continue your useful labors, and reap the reward in the *thankfulness of nations,* is my sincere prayer. Accept the assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.

"THOMAS JEFFERSON."

Did any of your ancestors ever receive a letter like that?

"It has been very generally propagated through the continent that I wrote the pamphlet *Common Sense.* I could not have written anything in so manly and striking a style."—JOHN ADAMS.

"A few more such *flaming* arguments as were exhibited at Falmouth and Norfolk, added to the sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet *Common Sense,* will not leave numbers at a loss to decide on the propriety of separation."—GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"It is not necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen—I speak of the great mass of the people—are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our natural character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being on a more extensive scale the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able defender of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not, nor can they be indifferent. . . .

"JAMES MONROE."

Did any of your ancestors ever receive a letter like that?

"No writer has exceeded Paine in ease and familiarity of style, in perspicuity of expression, happiness of elucidation, and in simple and unassuming language."—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Was ever a letter like that written about an editor of the *New York Observer?*

Was it in consideration of the services of a drunken beast that the legislature of Pennsylvania presented Thomas Paine with five hundred pounds sterling?

Did the State of New York feel indebted to a drunken beast, and confer upon Thomas Paine an estate of several hundred acres!

"I believe in the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy."

"My own mind is my own church."

"It is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself."

"Any system of religion that shocks the mind of a child can not be a true system."

"The Word of God is the creation which we behold."

"The age of ignorance commenced with the Christian system."

"It is with a pious fraud as with a bad ac-

tion—it begets a calamitous necessity of going on."

"To read the Bible without horror, we must undo everything that is tender, sympathizing, and benevolent in the heart of man."

"The man does not exist who can say I have persecuted him, or that I have in any case returned evil for evil."

"Of all tyrannies that afflict mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst."

"The belief in a cruel god makes a cruel man."

"My own opinion is, that those whose lives have been spent in doing good and endeavoring to make their fellow-mortals happy, will be happy hereafter."

"The intellectual part of religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and in which no third party has any right to interfere. The practical part consists in our doing good to each other."

"No man ought to make a living by religion. One person can not act religion for another—every person must perform it for himself."

"One good schoolmaster is of more use than a hundred priests."

"Let us propagate morality unfettered by superstition."

"God is the power, or first cause, nature is the law, and matter is the subject acted upon."

"I believe in one God and no more, and I hope for happiness beyond this life."

"The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect nor ought the road to it to be obstructed by any."

"My religion, and the whole of it, is the fear and love of the Deity and universal philanthropy."

"I have yet, I believe, some years in store, for I have a good state of health and a happy mind. I take care of both, by nourishing the first with *temperance* and the latter with abundance."

"He lives immured within the Bastile of a word."

How perfectly that sentence describes you! The Bastile in which you are immured is the word "Calvinism."

"Man has no property in man."

What a splendid motto that would have made for the *New York Observer* in the olden time!

"The world is my country; to do good, my religion."

I ask you again whether these splendid utterances came from the lips of a drunken beast?

The charge has been made, over and over again, that Thomas Paine died in want and destitution—that he was an abandoned pauper—

an outcast without friends and without money. This charge is just as false as the rest.

Upon his return to this country in 1802, he was worth $30,000, according to his own statement made at that time in the following letter addressed to Clio Rickman:

"My Dear Friend: Mr. Monroe, who is appointed minister extraordinary to France, takes charge of this, to be delivered to Mr. Este, banker in Paris, to be forwarded to you.

"I arrived at Baltimore the 30th of October, and you can have no idea of the agitation which my arrival occasioned. From New Hampshire to Georgia (an extent of fifteen hundred miles) every newspaper was filled with applause or abuse.

"My property in this country has been taken care of by my friends, and is now worth six thousand pounds sterling; which, put in the funds, will bring me four hundred pounds sterling a year.

"Remember me in affection and friendship to your wife and family, and in the circle of your friends.

"Thomas Paine."

A man in those days worth thirty thousand dollars was not a pauper. That amount would bring an income of at least two thousand dollars per annum. Two thousand dollars then would be fully equal to five thousand dollars now.

On the 12th of July, 1809, the year in which he died, Mr. Paine made his will. From this instrument we learn that he was the owner of a

valuable farm within twenty miles of New York. He also was the owner of thirty shares in the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, worth upwards of fifteen hundred dollars. Besides this, some personal property and ready money. By his will he gave to Walter Morton, and Thomas Addis Emmet, brother of Robert Emmet, two hundred dollars each, and one hundred to the widow of Elihu Palmer.

Is it possible that this will was made by a pauper—by a destitute outcast—by a man who suffered for the ordinary necessaries of life?

But suppose, for the sake of the argument, that he was poor and he died a beggar, does that tend to show that the Bible is an inspired book and that Calvin did not burn Servetus? Do you really regard poverty as a crime? If Paine had died a millionaire, would you have accepted his religious opinions? If Paine had drank nothing but cold water, would you have repudiated the five cardinal points of Calvinism? Does an argument depend for its force upon the pecuniary condition of the person making it? As a matter of fact, most reformers—most men and women of genius—have been acquainted with poverty. Beneath a covering of rags have been found some of the tenderest and bravest hearts.

Owing to the attitude of the churches for the last fifteen hundred years, truth-telling has not been a very lucrative business. As a rule,

hypocrisy has worn the robes, and honesty the rags. That day is passing away. You can not now answer the arguments of a man by pointing at holes in his coat. Thomas Paine attacked the church when it was powerful—when it had what were called honors to bestow—when it was the keeper of the public conscience—when it was strong and cruel. The church waited till he was dead, then attacked his reputation and his clothes.

Once upon a time a donkey kicked a lion. The lion was dead.

From the persistence with which the orthodox have charged for the last sixty-eight years that Thomas Paine recanted, and that when dying he was filled with remorse and fear; from the malignity of the attacks upon his personal character, I had concluded that there must be some evidence of some kind to support these charges. Even with my ideas of the average honor of believers in superstition—the disciples of fear—I did not quite believe that all these infamies rested solely upon poorly attested lies. I had charity enough to suppose that something had been said or done by Thomas Paine capable of being tortured into a foundation for these calumnies. And I was foolish enough to think that even you would be willing to fairly examine the pretended evidence said to sustain these charges, and give your honest conclusion

to the world. I supposed that you, being acquainted with the history of your country, felt under a certain obligation to Thomas Paine for the splendid services rendered by him in the darkest days of the Revolution. It was only reasonable to suppose that you were aware that in the midnight of Valley Forge the *Crisis,* by Thomas Paine, was the first star that glittered in the wide horizon of despair. I took it for granted that you knew of the bold stand taken and the brave words spoken by Thomas Paine, in the French convention, against the death of the king. I thought it probable that you, being an editor, had read the *Rights of Man;* that you knew that Thomas Paine was a champion of human liberty; that he was one of the founders and fathers of this republic; that he was one of the foremost men of his age; that he had never written a word in favor of injustice; that he was a despiser of slavery; that he abhorred tyranny in all its forms; that he was in the widest and highest sense a friend of his race; that his head was as clear as his heart was good, and that he had the courage to speak his honest thoughts. Under these circumstances I had hoped that you would for the moment forget your religious prejudices and submit to the enlightened judgment of the world the evidence you had, or could obtain, affecting in any way the character of so great and so generous a man.

This you have refused to do. In my judgment, you have mistaken the temper of even your own readers. A large majority of the religious people of this country have, to a considerable extent, outgrown the prejudices of their fathers. They are willing to know the truth, and the whole truth, about the life and death of Thomas Paine. They will not thank you for having presented them the moss-covered, the maimed, and distorted traditions of ignorance, prejudice, and credulity. By this course you will convince them not of the wickedness of Paine, but of your own unfairness.

What crime had Thomas Paine committed that he should have feared to die? The only answer you can give is, that he denied the inspiration of the Scriptures. If this is a crime, the civilized world is filled with criminals. The pioneers of human thought—the intellectual readers of the world—the foremost men in every science—the kings of literature and art—those who stand in the front rank of investigation—the men who are civilizing, elevating, instructing, and refining mankind, are to-day unbelievers in the dogma of inspiration. Upon this question the intellect of Christendom agrees with the conclusions reached by the genius of Thomas Paine. Centuries ago a noise was made for the purpose of frightening mankind. Orthodoxy is the echo of that noise.

The man who now regards the Old Testament as in any sense a sacred or inspired book is, in my judgment, an intellectual and moral deformity. There is in it so much that is cruel, ignorant, and ferocious that it is to me a matter of amazement that it was ever thought to be the work of a most moral deity.

As it was a question of inspiration Thomas Paine gave his honest opinion. Can it be that to give an honest opinion causes a man to die in terror and despair? Why should it be taken for granted that Thomas Paine, who devoted his life to the sacred cause of freedom, should have been hissed at in the hour of death by the snakes of conscience, while editors of Presbyterian papers who defended slavery as a divine institution, and cheerfully justified the stealing of babes from the breasts of mothers, are supposed to have passed smilingly from earth to embraces of angels? Why should you think that the heroic author of the *Rights of Man* should shudderingly dread to leave this "bank and shoal of time," while Calvin, dripping with the blood of Servetus, was anxious to be judged of God? Is it possible that the persecutors—the instigators of the massacre of St. Bartholomew—the inventors and users of thumbscrews, and iron boots, and iron racks—the burners and tearers of human flesh—the stealers, whippers, and enslavers of men—the buyers and beaters of

babes and mothers—the founders of inquisitions—the makers of chains, the builders of dungeons, the slanderers of the living and the calumniators of the dead, all died in the odor of sanctity, with white, forgiven hands folded upon the breasts of peace, while the destroyers of prejudice, the apostles of humanity—the soldiers of liberty—the breakers of fetters—the creators of light—died surrounded with the fierce fiends of fear?

In your attempt to destroy the character of Thomas Paine you have failed, and have succeeded only in leaving a stain upon your own. You have written words as cruel, bitter, and heartless as the creed of Calvin. Hereafter you will stand in the pillory of history as a defamer—a calumniator of the dead. You will be known as the man who said that Thomas Paine, the "Author Hero," lived a drunken, cowardly, and beastly life, and died a drunken and beastly death. These infamous words will be branded upon the forehead of your reputation. They will be remembered against you when all else you may have uttered shall have passed from the memory of men.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

THE *OBSERVER'S* SECOND ATTACK

(From the *New York Observer* of Nov. 1, 1877.)

TOM PAINE AGAIN.

In the *Observer* of September 27th, in response to numerous calls from different parts of the country for information, and in fulfillment of a promise, we presented a mass of testimony, chiefly from persons with whom we had been personally acquainted, establishing the truth of our assertions in regard to the dissolute life and miserable end of Paine. It was not a pleasing subject for discussion, and an apology, or at least an explanation, is due to our readers for resuming it, and for occupying so much space, or any space, in exhibiting the truth and the proofs in regard to the character of a man who had become so debased by his intemperance, and so vile in his habits, as to be excluded, for many years before and up to the time of his death, from all decent society.

Our reasons for taking up the subject at all, and for presenting at this time so much additional testimony in regard to the facts of the case, are these: At different periods for the last fifty years, efforts have been made by Infidels to revive and honor the memory of one whose friends would honor him most by suffering his name to sink into oblivion, if that were possible. About two years since, Rev. O. B. Frothingham, of this city, came to their aid, and undertook a sort of championship of Paine, making in a public discourse this statement: "No private character has been more foully calumniated in the name of God than that of Thomas Paine." Mr. Frothingham, it will be remembered, is the one who recently, in a public discourse, announced the downfall of Christianity, although he very kindly made the allowance that, "it may be a thousand years before its decay will be visible to all eyes." (It is

our private opinion that it will be at least a thousand and one.) Rev. John W. Chadwick, a minister of the same order of unbelief, who signs himself, "Minister of the Second Unitarian Society in Brooklyn," has devoted two discourses to the same end, eulogizing Paine. In one of these, which we have before us in a handsomely printed pamphlet, entitled *Method and Value of his (Paine's) Religious Teachings,* he says: "Christian usage has determined that an Infidel means one who does not believe in Christianity as a supernatural religion; in the Bible as a supernatural book; in Jesus as a supernatural person. And in this sense Paine was an Infidel, and so, thank God, am I." It is proper to add that Unitarians generally decline all responsibility for the utterances of both of these men, and that they compose a denomination, or, rather, two denominations, of their own.

There is also a certain class of Infidels who are not quite prepared to meet the odium that attaches to the name; they call themselves Christians, but their sympathies are all with the enemies of Christianity, and they are not always able to conceal it. They have not the courage of their opinions, like Mr. Frothingham and Mr. Chadwick, and they work only sideways toward the same end. We have been no little amused since our last article on this subject appeared to read some of the articles that have been written on the other side, though professedly on no side, and to observe how sincerely these men deprecate the discussion of the character of Paine, as an unprofitable topic. It never appeared to them unprofitable when the discussion was on the other side.

Then, too, we have for months past been receiving letters from different parts of the country, asking authentic information on the subject and stating that the followers of Paine are making extraordinary efforts to circulate his writings against the Christian religion, and in order to

give currency to these writings they are endeavoring to rescue his name from the disgrace into which it sank during the latter years of his life. Paine spent several of his last years in furnishing a commentary upon his Infidel principles. This commentary was contained in his besotted, degraded life and miserable end, but his friends do not wish the commentary to go out in connection with his writings. They prefer to have them read without the comments by their author. Hence this anxiety to free the great apostle of Infidelity from the obloquy which his life brought upon his name; to represent him as a pure, noble, virtuous man, and to make it appear that he died a peaceful, happy death, just like a philosopher.

But what makes the publication of the facts in the case still more imperative at this time is the wholesale accusation brought against the Christian public by the friends and admirers of Paine. Christian ministers as a class, and Christian journals are expressly accused of falsifying history, of defaming "the mighty dead!" (meaning Paine), etc., etc. In the face of all these accusations it cannot be out of place to state the facts and to fortify the statement by satisfactory evidence, as we are abundantly able to do.

The two points on which we proposed to produce the testimony are, the character of Paine's life (referring, of course, to his last residence in this country, for no one has intimated that he had sunk into such besotted drunkenness until about the time of his return to the United States in 1802), and the real character of his death as consistent with such a life, and as marked further by the cowardliness, which has been often exhibited by Infidels in the same circumstances.

It is nothing at all to the purpose to show, as his friends are fond of doing, that Paine rendered important service to the cause of American independence. This is not the point under discussion and is not denied. No one ever

called in question the valuable services that Benedict Arnold [1] rendered to the country in the early part of the Revolutionary War; but this, with true Americans, does not suffice to cast a shade of loveliness or even to spread a mantle of charity over his subsequent career. Whatever share Paine had in the personal friendship of the fathers of the Revolution he forfeited by his subsequent life of beastly drunkenness and degradation, and on this account as well as on account of his blasphemy he was shunned by all decent people.

We wish to make one or two corrections of misstatements by Paine's advocates, on which a vast amount of argument has been simply wasted. We have never stated in any form, nor have we ever supposed, that Paine actually renounced his Infidelity. The acounts agree in stating that he died a blaspheming Infidel, and his horrible death we regard as one of the fruits, the fitting complement of his Infidelity. We have never seen anything that encouraged the hope that he was not abandoned of God in his last hours. But we have no doubt, on the other hand, that, having become a wreck in body and mind through his intemperance, abandoned of God, deserted by his Infidel companions, and dependent upon Christian charity for the attentions he received, miserable beyond description in his condition, and seeing nothing to hope for in the future, he was afraid to die, and was ready to call upon God and upon Christ for mercy, and ready perhaps in the next minute to blaspheme. This is what we referred to in speaking of Paine's death as cowardly. It is shown in the testimony we have produced, and still more fully in that which we now present. The most wicked men are ready to call upon God in seasons of great peril, and sometimes ask

[1] Benedict Arnold, an American Revolutionary general and traitor; born, 1741; died, 1801.

for Christian ministrations when in extreme illness; but they are often ready on any alleviation of distress to turn to their wickedness again, in the expressive language of Scripture,[1] "as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

We have never stated or intimated, nor, so far as we are aware, has any one of our correspondents stated, that Paine died in poverty. It has been frequently and truthfully stated that Paine was dependent on Christian charity for the attentions he received in his last days, and so he was. His Infidel companions forsook him and Christian hearts and hands ministered to his wants, notwithstanding the blasphemies of his death-bed.

Nor has one of our correspondents stated, as alleged, that Paine died at New Rochelle. The Rev. Dr. Wickham, who was a resident of that place nearly fifty years ago, and who was perfectly familiar with the facts of his life, wrote that Paine spent "his latter days" on the farm presented to him by the State of New York, which was strictly true, but made no reference to it as the place of his death. Such misrepresentations serve to show how much the advocates of Paine admire "truth."

With these explanations we produce further evidence in regard to the manner of Paine's life and the character of his death, both of which we have already characterized in appropriate terms, as the following testimony will show:

In regard to Paine's "personal habits," even before his return to this country, and particularly his aversion to soap and water, Elkana Watson, a gentleman of the highest social position, who resided in France during a part of the Revolutionary war, and who was the personal friend of Washington, Franklin, and other patriots of the period, makes some incidental statements in his *Men and Times of the Revolution.* Though eulogizing Paine's efforts in be-

[1] II. Peter 2:22.

half of American Independence, he describes him as "coarse and uncouth in his manners, loathsome in his appearance, and a disgusting egotist." On Paine's arrival at Nantes, the Mayor and other distinguished citizens called upon him to pay their respects to the American patriot. Mr. Watson says: "He was soon rid of his respectable visitors, who left the room with marks of astonishment and disgust." Mr. Watson, after much entreaty, and only by promising him a bundle of newspapers to read while undergoing the operation, succeeded in prevailing on Paine to "stew, for an hour, in a hot bath." Mr. Watson accompanied Paine to the bath, and "instructed the keeper in French (which Paine did not understand) gradually to increase the heat of the water until '*le Monsieur serait bien bouille*' (until the gentleman shall be well boiled); and adds that "he became so much absorbed in his reading that he was nearly parboiled before leaving the bath, much to his improvement and my satisfaction."

William Carver has been cited as a witness in behalf of Paine, and particularly as to his "personal habits." In a letter to Paine, dated December 2, 1776, he bears the following testimony:

"A respectable gentleman from New Rochelle called to see me a few days back, and said that everybody was tired of you there, and no one would undertake to board and lodge you. I thought this was the case, as I found you at a tavern in a most miserable situation. You appeared as if you had not been shaved for a fortnight, and as to a shirt, it could not be said that you had one on. It was only the remains of one, and this, likewise, appeared not to have been off your back for a fortnight, and was nearly the color of tanned leather; and you had the most disagreeable smell possible; just like that of our poor beggars in England. Do you remember the pains I took

to clean you? that I got a tub of warm water and soap and washed you from head to foot, and this I had to do three times before I could get you clean." (And then follow more disgusting details.)

"You say, also, that you found your own liquors during the time you boarded with me; but you should have said, 'I found only a small part of the liquor I drank during my stay with you; this part I purchased of John Fellows, which was a demijohn of brandy containing four gallons, and this did not serve me three weeks.' This can be proved, and I mean not to say anything that I can not prove; for I hold truth as a precious jewel. It is a well-known fact, that you drank one quart of brandy per day, at my expense, during the different times that you have boarded with me, the demijohn above mentioned excepted, and the last fourteen weeks you were sick. Is not this a supply of liquor for dinner and supper?"

This chosen witness in behalf of Paine, closes his letter, which is full of loathsome descriptions of Paine's manner of life, as follows:

"Now, sir, I think I have drawn a complete portrait of your character; yet to enter upon every minutia would be to give a history of your life, and to develop the fallacious mask of hypocrisy and deception under which you have acted in your political as well as moral capacity of life."

(Signed) "WILLIAM CARVER."

Carver had the same opinion of Paine to his dying day. When an old man, and an Infidel of the Paine type and habits, he was visited by the Rev. E. F. Hatfield, D. D., of this city, who writes to us of his interview with Carver, under date of Sept. 27, 1877.

"I conversed with him nearly an hour. I took special pains to learn from him all that I could about Paine, whose

landlord he had been for eighteen months. He spoke of him as a base and shameless drunkard, utterly destitute of moral principle. His denunciations of the man were perfectly fearful, and fully confirmed, in my apprehension, all that had been written of Paine's immorality and repulsiveness."

Cheetham's *Life of Paine,* which was published the year that he died, and which has passed through several editions (we have three of them now before us), describes a man lost to all moral sensibility and to all sense of decency, a habitual drunkard, and it is simply incredible that a book should have appeared so soon after the death of its subject and should have been so frequently republished without being at once refuted, if the testimony were not substantially true. Many years later, when it was found necessary to bolster up the reputation of Paine, Cheetham's memoirs were called a pack of lies. If only one-tenth part of what he publishes circumstantially in his volume, as facts in regard to Paine, were true, all that has been written against him in later years does not begin to set forth the degraded character of the man's life. And with all that has been written on the subject we see no good reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of Cheetham's portrait of the man whom he knew so well.

Dr. J. W. Francis, well-known as an eminent physician, of this city, in his *Reminiscences of New York,* says of Paine:

"He who, in his early days, had been associated with, and had received counsel from Franklin, was, in his old age, deserted by the humblest menial; he, whose pen had proved a very sword among nations, had shaken empires, and made kings tremble, now yielded up the mastery to the most treacherous of tyrants, King Alcohol."

The physician who attended Paine during his last illness was Dr. James R. Manley, a gentleman of the highest char-

acter. A letter of his, written in October of the year that Paine died, fully corroborates the account of his state as recorded by Stephen Grellet in his *Memoirs,* which we have already printed. He writes:

"New York, October 2, 1809: I was called upon by accident to visit Mr. Paine, on the 25th of February last, and found him indisposed with fever, and very apprehensive of an attack of apoplexy, as he stated that he had that disease before, and at this time felt a great degree of vertigo, and was unable to help himself as he had hitherto done, on account of an intense pain above the eyes. On inquiry of the attendants I was told that three or four days previously he had concluded to dispense with his usual quantity of accustomed stimulus and that he had on that day resumed it. To the want of his usual drink they attributed his illness, and it is highly probable that the usual quantity operating upon a state of system more excited from the above privations, was the cause of the symptoms of which he then complained. . . . And here let me be permitted to observe (lest blame might attach to those whose business it was to pay any particular attention to his cleanliness of person) that it was absolutely impossible to effect that purpose. Cleanliness appeared to make no part of his comfort; he seemed to have a singular aversion to soap and water; he would never ask to be washed, and when he was he would always make objections; and it was not unusual to wash and to dress him clean very much against his inclinations. In this deplorable state, with confirmed dropsy, attended with frequent cough, vomiting, and hiccough, he continued growing from bad to worse till the morning of the 8th of June, when he died. Though I may remark that during the last three weeks of his life his situation was such that his decease was confidently expected every day, his ulcers having assumed a gangrenous appearance, being excessively fetid, and discolored blisters having taken place on the soles of his feet

without any ostensible cause, which baffled the usual attempts to arrest their progress; and when we consider his former habits, his advanced age, the feebleness of his constitution, his constant habit of using ardent spirits *ad libitum* till the commencement of his last illness, so far from wondering that he died so soon, we are constrained to ask, How did he live so long? Concerning his conduct during his disease I have not much to remark, though the little I have may be somewhat interesting. Mr. Paine professed to be above the fear of death, and a great part of his conversation was principally directed to give the impression that he was perfectly willing to leave this world, and yet some parts of his conduct were with difficulty reconcilable with his belief. In the first stages of his illness he was satisfied to be left alone during the day, but he required some person to be with him at night, urging as reason that he was afraid that he should die when unattended, and at this period his deportment and his principle seemed to be consistent; so much so that a stranger would judge from some of the remarks he would make that he was an Infidel. I recollect being with him at night, watching; he was very apprehensive of a speedy dissolution, and suffered great distress of body, and perhaps of mind (for he was waiting the event of an application to the Society of Friends for permission that his corpse might be deposited in their grave ground, and had reason to believe that the request might be refused), when he remarked in these words, 'I think I can say what *they* made Jesus Christ to say—"My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?"' He went on to observe on the want of that respect which he conceived he merited, when I observed to him that I thought his corpse should be a matter of least concern to him; that those whom he would leave behind him would see that he was properly interred, and, further, that it would be of little consequence to *me* where I was deposited, provided I was buried; upon

which he answered that he had nothing else to talk about, and that he would as lief talk of his death as of anything, but that he was not so indifferent about his corpse as I appeared to be.

"During the latter part of his life, though his conversation was equivocal, his conduct was singular; he could not be left alone night or day; he not only required to have some person with him, but he must see that he or she was there, and would not allow his curtain to be closed at any time; and if, as it would sometimes unavoidably happen, he was left alone, he would scream and halloo until some person came to him. When relief from pain would admit, he seemed thoughtful and contemplative, his eyes being generally closed, and his hands folded upon his breast, although he never slept without the assistance of an anodyne. There was something remarkable in his conduct about the period (which comprises about two weeks immediately preceding his death), particularly when we reflect that Thomas Paine was the author of the *Age of Reason.*

"He would call out during his paroxysms of distress, without intermission, 'O Lord help me! God help me! Jesus Christ help me! Lord help me!' etc., repeating the same expressions without the least variation, in a tone of voice that would alarm the house. It was this conduct which induced me to think that he had abandoned his former opinions, and I was more inclined to that belief when I understood from his nurse (who is a very serious and, I believe, pious woman), that he would occasionally inquire, when he saw her engaged with a book, what she was reading, and, being answered, and at the same asked whether she should read aloud, he assented, and would appear to give particular attention.

"I took occasion during the nights of the 5th and 6th of June to test the strength of his opinions respecting revelation.

"I purposely made him a very late visit; it was a time which seemed to suit exactly with my erand; it was midnight, he was in great distress, constantly exclaiming in the words above mentioned; when, after a considerable preface, I addressed him in the following manner, the nurse being present: 'Mr. Paine, your opinions, by a large portion of the community, have been treated with deference; you have never been in the habit of mixing in your conversation words of coarse meaning; you have never indulged in the practice of profane swearing; you must be sensible that we are acquainted with your religious opinions as they are given to the world. What must we think of your present conduct? Why do you call upon Jesus Christ to help you? Do you believe that he can help you? Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ? Come, now, answer me honestly. I want an answer from the lips of a dying man, for I verily believe that you will not live twenty-four hours'; I waited some time at the end of every question; he did not answer, but ceased to exclaim in the above manner. Again I addressed him: 'Mr. Paine, you have not answered my questions; will you answer them? Allow me to ask again, do you believe? or let me qualify the question, do you wish to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?' After a pause of some minutes, he answered, 'I have no wish to believe on that subject.' I then left him, and knew not whether he afterward spoke to any person on any subject, though he lived, as I before observed, till the morning of the 8th. Such conduct, under usual circumstances, I conceive absolutely unaccountable, though, with diffidence, I would remark, not so much so in the present instance; for though the first necessary and general result of conviction be a sincere wish to atone for evil committed, yet it may be a question worthy of able consideration whether excessive pride of opinion, consummate vanity, and inordinate self-love might not prevent or retard that otherwise natural

consequence. For my own part, I believe that had not Thomas Paine been such a distinguished Infidel he would have left less equivocal evidence of a change of opinion. Concerning the persons who visited Mr. Paine in his distress as his personal friends, I heard very little, though I may observe that their number was small, and of that number there were not wanting those who endeavored to support him in his deistical opinions, and to encourage him to 'die like a man,' to 'hold fast his integrity,' lest Christians, or, as they were pleased to term them, hypocrites, might take advantage of his weakness, and furnish themselves with a weapon by which they might hope to destroy their glorious system of morals. Numbers visited him from motives of benevolence and Christian charity, endeavoring to effect a change of mind in respect to his religious sentiments. The labor of such was apparently lost, and they pretty generally received such treatment from him as none but good men would risk a second time, though some of those persons called frequently."

The following testimony will be new to most of our readers. It is from a letter written by Bishop Fenwick (Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston), containing a full account of a visit which he paid Paine in his last illness. It was printed in the *United States Catholic Magazine* for 1846; in the *Catholic Herald* of Philadelphia, October 15, 1846: in a supplement to the *Hartford Courant,* October 23, 1847; and in *Littell's Living Age* for January 22, 1848, from which we copy. Bishop Fenwick writes:

"A short time before Paine died I was sent for by him. He was prompted to this by a poor Catholic woman who went to see him in his sickness, and who told him, among other things, that in his wretched condition if anybody could do him any good it would be a Roman Catholic priest. This woman was an American convert (formerly a Shaking Quakeress), whom I had received into the Church

but a few weeks before. She was the bearer of this message to me from Paine. I stated this circumstance to Father Kohlmann, at breakfast, and requested him to accompany me. After some solicitation on my part he agreed to do so, at which I was greatly rejoiced, because I was at the time quite young and inexperienced in the ministry, and was glad to have his assistance, as I knew, from the great reputation of Paine, that I should have to do with one of the most impious as well as infamous of men. We shortly after set out for the house at Greenwich, where Paine lodged, and on the way agreed on a mode of proceeding with him.

"We arrived at the house; a decent-looking elderly woman (probably his housekeeper) came to the door and inquired whether we were the Catholic priests, for, said she, 'Mr. Paine has been so much annoyed of late by other denominations calling upon him that he has left express orders with me to admit no one to-day but the clergymen of the Catholic Church.' Upon assuring her that we were Catholic clergymen she opened the door and showed us into the parlor. She then left the room and shortly after returned to inform us that Paine was asleep, and, at the same time, expressed a wish that we would not disturb him, 'for,' said she, 'he is always in a bad humor when roused out of his sleep. It is better we wait a little till he be awake.' We accordingly sat down and resolved to wait a more favorable moment. 'Gentlemen,' said the lady, after having taken her seat also, 'I really wish you may succeed with Mr. Paine, for he is laboring under great distress of mind ever since he was informed by his physicians that he cannot possibly live and must die shortly. He sent for you today because he was told that if anyone could do him good you might. Possibly he may think you know of some remedy which his physicians are ignorant of. He is truly to be pitied. His cries when he is left alone are heart-rending. "O Lord, help me!" he will exclaim during his

paroxysms of distress—"God help me—Jesus Christ, help me!" repeating the same expressions without the least variation, in a tone of voice that would alarm the house. Sometimes he will say, "O God, what have I done to suffer so much?" then, shortly after, "But there is no God," and again a little after, "Yet, if there should be, what would become of me hereafter." Thus he will continue for some time, when on a sudden he will scream, as if in terror and agony, and call out for me by name. On one of these occasions, which are very frequent, I went to him and inquired what he wanted. "Stay with me," he replied, "for God's sake, for I can not bear to be left alone." I then observed that I could not always be with him, as I had much to attend in the house. "Then," said he, "send even a child to stay with me, for it is a hell to be alone." I never saw,' she concluded, 'a more unhappy, a more forsaken man. It seems he can not reconcile himself to die.'

"Such was the conversation of the woman who had received us, and who probably had been employed to nurse and take care of him during his illness. She was a Protestant, yet seemed very desirous that we should afford him some relief in his state of abandonment, bordering on complete despair. Having remained thus some time in the parlor, we at length heard a noise in the adjoining passageway, which induced us to believe that Mr. Paine, who was sick in that room, had awoke. We accordingly proposed to proceed thither, which was assented to by the woman, and she opened the door for us. On entering we found him just getting out of his slumber. A more wretched being in appearance I never beheld. He was lying in a bed sufficiently decent of itself, but at present besmeared with filth; his look was that of a man greatly tortured in mind; his eyes haggard, his countenance forbidding, and his whole appearance that of one whose better days had been one continued scene of debauch. His only

nourishment at this time, as we were informed, was nothing more than milk punch, in which he indulged to the full extent of his weak state. He had partaken, undoubtedly, but very recently of it, as the sides and corners of his mouth exhibited very unequivocal traces of it, as well as of blood, which had also followed in the track and left its mark on the pillow. His face, to a certain extent, had also been besmeared with it."

Immediately upon their making known the object of their visit, Paine interrupted the speaker by saying: "That's enough, sir; that's enough," and again interrupted him, "I see what you would be about. I wish to hear no more from you, sir. My mind is made up on that subject. I look upon the whole of the Christian scheme to be a tissue of absurdities and lies, and Jesus Christ to be nothing more than a cunning knave and impostor." He drove them out of the room, exclaiming: "Away with you and your God, too, leave the room instantly; all that you uttered are lies —filthy lies; and if I had a little more time I would prove, as I did about your impostor, Jesus Christ."

This, we think, will suffice. We have a mass of letters containing statements confirmatory of what we have published in regard to the life and death of Paine, but nothing more can be required.

INGERSOLL'S SECOND REPLY

PEORIA, NOV. 2, 1877.

To the Editor of the New York Observer:

You ought to have honesty enough to admit that you did, in your paper of July 19, offer to prove that the absurd story that Thomas Paine died in terror and agony on account of

the religious opinions he had expressed, was true. You ought to have fairness enough to admit that you called upon me to deposit one thousand dollars with an honest man, that you might, by proving that Thomas Paine did die in terror, obtain the money.

You ought to have honor enough to admit that you challenged me and that you commenced the controversy concerning Thomas Paine.

You ought to have goodness enough to admit that you were mistaken in the charges you made.

You ought to have manhood enough to do what you falsely asserted that Thomas Paine did:—you ought to recant. You ought to admit publicly that you slandered the dead; that you falsified history; that you defamed the defenseless; that you deliberately denied what you had published in your own paper. There is an old saying to the effect that open confession is good for the soul. To you is presented a splendid opportunity of testing the truth of this saying.

Nothing has astonished me more than your lack of common honesty exhibited in this controversy. In your last, you quote from Dr. J. W. Francis. Why did you leave out that portion in which Dr. Francis says "*that Cheetham with settled malignity wrote the life of Paine*"? Why did you leave out that part in

which Dr. Francis says that "Cheetham in the same way *slandered Alexander Hamilton and De Witt Clinton*"? Is it your business to suppress the truth? Why did you not publish the entire letter of Bishop Fenwick? Was it because it proved beyond all cavil that Thomas Paine did not recant? Was it because in the light of that letter Mary Roscoe, Mary Hinsdale, and Grant Thorburn appeared unworthy of belief? Dr. J. W. Francis says in the same article from which you quoted, "*Paine clung to his Infidelity until the last moment of his life.*" Why did you not publish that? It was in the first line immediately above what you did quote. You must have seen it. Why did you suppress it? A lawyer, doing a thing of this character, is denominated a shyster. I do not know the appropriate word to designate a theologian guilty of such an act.

You brought forward three witnesses, pretending to have personal knowledge about the life and death of Thomas Paine: Grant Thorburn, Mary Roscoe, and Mary Hinsdale. In my reply I took the ground that Mary Roscoe and Mary Hinsdale must have been the same person. I thought it impossible that Paine should have had a conversation with Mary Roscoe and then one *precisely* like it with Mary Hinsdale. Acting upon this conviction, I proceeded to show that the conversation never

could have happened, that it was absurdly false to say that Paine asked the opinion of a girl as to his works who had never read but little of them. I then showed by the testimony of William Cobbett, that he visited Mary Hinsdale in 1819, taking with him a statement concerning the recantation of Paine, given him by Mr. Collins, and that upon being shown this statement she said that "it was so long ago that she would not speak positively to any part of the matter—that she would not say any part of the paper was true." At that time she knew nothing, and remembered nothing. I also showed that she was a kind of standing witness to prove that others recanted. Willet Hicks denounced her as unworthy of belief.

To-day the following from the *New York World* was received, showing that I was right in my conjecture:

"*To the Editor of the World:*

"*Sir:* I see by your paper that Bob Ingersoll discredits Mary Hinsdale's story of the scenes which occurred at the death-bed of Thomas Paine. No one who knew that good lady would for one moment doubt her veracity or question her testimony. Both she and her husband were Quaker preachers, and well known and respected inhabitants of New York City. *Ingersoll is right in his conjecture that Mary Roscoe and Mary Hinsdale was the same person.* Her maiden name was Roscoe, and she married Henry Hinsdale. My mother was a Roscoe, a niece of Mary Roscoe, and lived with her for some time. I have

heard her relate the story of Tom Paine's dying remorse, as told her by her aunt, who was a witness to it. She says (in a letter I have just received from her), 'he (Tom Paine) suffered fearfully from remorse and renounced his Infidel principles, calling on God to forgive him, and wishing his pamphlets and books to be burned, saying he could not die in peace until it was done.'

"(Rev.) A. W. Cornell.

"*Harpersville, New York.*"

You will notice that the testimony of Mary Hinsdale has been drawing interest stince 1809, and has materially increased. If Paine "suffered fearfully from remorse, renounced his Infidel opinions, and called on God to forgive him," it is hardly generous for the Christian world to fasten the fangs of malice in the flesh of his reputation.

So Mary Roscoe was Mary Hinsdale, and as Mary Hinsdale has been shown by her own admission to Mr. Cobbett to have known nothing of the matter; and as Mary Hinsdale was not, according to Willet Hicks, worthy of belief—as she told a falsehood of the same kind about Mary Lockwood, and was, according to Mr. Collins, addicted to the use of opium—this disposes of her and her testimony.

There remains upon the stand Grant Thorburn. Concerning this witness, I received, yesterday, from the eminent biographer and essayist, James Parton, the following epistle:

"NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

"*Col. R. G. Ingersoll:*

"Touching Grant Thorburn, I personally know him to have been a dishonest man. At the age of ninety-two he copied with trembling hand, a piece from a newspaper and brought it to the office of the *Home Journal as his own.* It was I who received it and detected the deliberate forgery. If you are ever going to continue this subject, I will give you the exact facts.

"Fervently yours,

"JAMES PARTON."

After this, you are welcome to what remains of Grant Thorburn.

There is one thing that I have noticed during this controversy regarding Thomas Paine. In no instance that I now call to mind has any Christian writer spoken respectfully of Mr. Paine. All have taken particular pains to call him "Tom" Paine. Is it not a little strange that religion should make men so coarse and ill-natured?

I have often wondered what these same gentlemen would say if I should speak of the men eminent in the annals of Christianity in the same way. What would they say if I should write about "Tim" Dwight, old "Ad" Clark, "Tom" Scott, "Jim" McKnight, "Bill" Hamilton, "Dick" Whately, "Bill" Paley, and "Jack" Calvin? They would *say* of me then just what I *think* of them now.

Even if we have religion, do not let us try

to get along without good manners. Rudeness is exceedingly unbecoming, even in a saint. Persons who forgive their enemies ought, to say the least, treat with politeness those who have never injured them.

It is exceedingly gratifying to me that I have compelled you to say that "Paine died a blaspheming Infidel." Hereafter it is to be hoped nothing will be heard about his having recanted. As an answer to some slander his friends can confidently quote the following from the *New York Observer* of November 1, 1877: "*We have never stated in any form, nor have we ever supposed that Paine actually renounced his Infidelity. The accounts agree in stating that he died a blaspheming Infidel.*"

This for all coming time will refute the slanders of the churches yet to be.

Right here allow me to ask: If you never supposed that Paine renounced his infidelity, why did you try to prove by Mary Hinsdale that which you believed to be untrue?

From the bottom of my heart I thank myself for having compelled you to admit that Thomas Paine did not recant.

For the purpose of verifying your own admission concerning the death of Mr. Paine, permit me to call your attention to the following affidavit:

"WABASH, INDIANA, October 27, 1877.

"*Col. R. G. Ingersoll:*

"*Dear Sir:* The following statement of facts is at your disposal. In the year 1833 Willet Hicks made a visit to Indiana and stayed over night at my father's house, four miles east of Richmond. In the morning at breakfast my mother asked Willet Hicks the following questions:

"'Was thee with Thomas Paine during his last sickness?'

"Mr. Hicks said: 'I was with him every day during the latter part of his last sickness.'

"'Did he express any regret in regard to writing the *Age of Reason,* as the published accounts say he did—those accounts that have the credit of emanating from his Catholic housekeeper?'

"Mr. Hicks replied: 'He did not in any way, by word or action.'

"Did he call on God or Jesus Christ, asking either of them to forgive his sins, or did he curse them or either of them?'

"Mr. Hicks answered: 'He did not. He died as easy as anyone I ever saw die, and I have seen many die in my time.' "WILLIAM B. BARNES."

"Subscribed and sworn to before me October 27, 1877.

"WARREN BIGLER, Notary Public."

You say in your last that "Thomas Paine was abandoned of God." So far as this controversy is concerned, it seems to me that in that sentence you have most graphically described your own condition.

Wishing you success in all honest undertakings, I remain, Yours truly,

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

THOMAS PAINE

[This address was delivered at a Paine birthday celebration in New York in 1892.]

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN: It is not simply a duty, but it is a privilege to help rescue the reputation of a great and noble man from the slanders of ignorance and hypocrisy. We have listened to a very noble eulogium upon Thomas Paine by Mr. Conway, and the reason it is so noble is that it is true. We have been told what he did; something of what he accomplished in this world, and a little of what he suffered. We must remember that for many, many ages, mankind was governed by two ideas: one, that all power to govern came from the clouds—came from some king of kings, and that all who ruled occupied their thrones because it was the will of him who sat in sovereignty above all. This was the belief; and this power from on high, coming to the king, going on down from him to the lowest one in authority, finally reached and robbed the poor, wretched peasants.

Thus it was for many, many generations, and the result of it was that the many toiled in vain,

with little to eat and little to wear, living in huts and dens, that the few might live in idleness—might be clad in robes of purple. That was the scheme of the divine government, believed in by our ancestors—honestly believed in, at least, by those who submitted; and they were to be rewarded for all the pains suffered in this world by having harps when they should go to another. And they consoled themselves with the thought: While the kings and the queens and the lords and the ladies have their good times here, we will have our good times after we die; and possibly we will have the happiness of seeing all these ladies and gentlemen in hell. The latter reflection undoubtedly was a great consolation.

That, I say, was the first idea; but the man of whom you have heard so much and which has been so well said, took the other ground, and said: "This power to govern does not come from God. God must be retired from politics. This power to govern comes from the consent of the governed. The source of this authority must be the people themselves." Well, nothing could be more laughable at that time than the idea of having a government administered by shoemakers, and carpenters, and farmers, and simple buyers and traders. It was thought impossible that such people should have brain enough to really administer a government.

This governing power—this governing sense—was confined to the few—the few that had been chosen by the king of kings; but finally, through the efforts of Thomas Paine, more than through the efforts of any other man who ever trod the western world, that experiment was tried here on our soil; and the question was, whether ordinary human beings, with ordinary intelligence, even though they were mechanics and farmers and merchants—and lawyers—whether they had the sense and the honesty to form a government, and patriotism enough to administer it. It was tried here; and I need not say it has been an amazing success. In all these other governments the church and state existed together. They were united. But a few people in the days of Thomas Paine said, "Let us separate church and state;" and our forefathers agreed to it. Very few, however, were in favor of it.

I will tell you to-night why they agreed to it. A few, like Thomas Paine, like Benjamin Franklin, like Thomas Jefferson—a few knew there should be no such marriage. But the question came up before the many—the average multitude—and then the question took a different form. It was not with them, Shall there be a church and state?—but, Shall it be *our* church? The Puritans would have had their church united to the state, if they had had the power; the Episcopalians the same; and so of

every sect in the thirteen colonies. But there is a little human nature even in a church; and the church that could not be the bride was willing the state should remain a bachelor, rather than marry a rival. In that way, and in that way only, we got rid of the church in this country.

Now then, that was the first great step. Political power does not come from God, or if there be an infinite being, He allows human beings to govern themselves. He refused longer to be accountable for the blunders of any administration; and that was an excellent thing for Him. So, since that time, in this country, and in some other lands, the people have endeavored to manage their own affairs, without the interference of any gentleman pretending to be the agent of some power above the clouds. That was the first step.

Then there is another thing. For many, many generations, it has been believed—is believed by a great many good people to-night—that religion comes from the clouds. We have now got to the point that we know that political power comes from the people, and that every government should rest on the consent of the governed. We know that. We have found out that the people themselves make and create and administer better government than they ever got from the clouds. I say, then, the belief was

that religion came from that same country; and that if some being, somewhere in the midst of the constellations, had not written ten commandments, we would never have known right from wrong.

Now, it has always seemed to me—and I think I can make it clear to you—that no such information was necessary. In this world, for a great many years, people have had to work to get an honest living; and wherever man has worked to get an honest living, he has always objected to some fellow who did not work taking the result of his labors. If a man that planted a few acres of potatoes, and hoed them all summer, and dug them in the fall, and picked them up—using his own back—it never would have occurred to him that a gentleman who had sat on the fence and watched him—I say, it would never have occurred to him that that fence-sitter, even if no ten commandments had ever been given, had a better right to the potatoes than the man who raised them. So, it seems to me that in every country where the people, or a majority of the people, objected to being murdered, there would probably have been a law against murder, whether they had ever heard from Mount Sinai or not. And so we might go through most of the decalogue.

I say, then, we had to take another step, and that was that religion does not come from the

clouds. Religion comes from the heart of man. Human affection is the foundation of all that is holy in religion. Human intelligence, applied to human conduct, is what we call morality; and you add to simple morality kindness, charity, love—and there can be no more perfect religion imagined by the brain of man. Now, then, as we succeeded so well in politics, by getting out of our mind the idea that power and authority came from beyond the stars, so I hope that we shall make the greatest possible advance in religion, when we get it out of our minds that religion comes from another world.

There is no religion except humanity. There can not be. Those clouds called creeds are destined all to fade away, but the sky will remain—humanity; and in the sky will shine the constellations of human virtues. In other words, we want to outgrow the supernatural in these affairs.

Thomas Paine helped take the first step. He dug down under the throne, searching for the bed-rock, and he found nothing but lies, mistakes, assumption—everything that is infamous. And when he got through with that work, it occurred to him, one day, to dig under the altar and see what was there; and it was worse there than under the throne. Thomas Paine was not what would be called to-day much of an infidel. I think he would have me cut dead. If he were

alive to-night, he would be off with the Unitarians—and with the conservative wing of the Unitarians. That is to say, he believed absolutely in the existence of an infinite God; and in some way he excused that God for making this world—for giving power to the Catholic Church. How he did it, I do not know; but he did it. In some way, he excused that Deity for all the volcanoes and plagues and famines of the world. *How, I do not know; but he did. And he may* have been right. I am not saying that he was wrong. All I am saying is that I do not believe he was right.

As I have said a hundred times, you have no idea how little I know on this subject; and you never will know how little I know until you appreciate the state of your own knowledge. Paine, I say, not only believed in it, but he believed in a special Providence, exactly as Mr. Conway has told you.

Well, so did Voltaire; he wrote essay after essay, not simply to prove the existence of God, but that he in some way ruled this world. Well, I do not deny it; but there are two facts inconsistent in my mind—that is to say, one fact is inconsistent with the *alleged* fact. I cannot harmonize God and Siberia. Still, I do not say that I know; because you know that I do not, and I know that I do not. But Paine wanted to do one thing. He wanted in religion

to get rid of the middlemen. He wanted the citizens of the United States to transact what little business they might have with the Deity, without paying any commissions to gentlemen who were in the guessing business for a living. And whoever steps between a priest and his salary will find that he has committed all the crimes in the statutes; and if he does not find it out, others will find it out—when he is dead.

That is all he tried to do. He taught pure morality. He taught that we should worship God simply by expressing and feeling our gratitude, and that gratitude should rise from the heart for favors received, like perfume from a flower; that there need be no form, no ceremony, no costly cathedrals for this business—no hired clergy; that man could worship God for himself. Then he made enemies. Then they began to look, as Mr. Conway has said, for special Providence.

And I remember when there *was* something the matter with my throat. I got a letter from a Presbyterian minister who took the pains to tell me that he had read in a paper that I had cancer of the throat; he then called my attention to the fact that it was probably a judgment of God for the blasphemies I had uttered. And I wrote back to him, good-naturedly—I always feel that way towards clergymen; I have the feeling that they are doing the best they know.

So I wrote back to him that I should not wonder if he were right; and if it turned out that it was the judgment of God, I should never blame him—never; that if I were in God's place, probably, I should kill any man that I could not answer.

In justice to that man, I suppose I ought to add that he wrote me another letter taking the first one all back. But such was the belief; and if the church could have answered the *Age of Reason,* it would have satisfied itself simply by attacking the book—that would have been enough. It was because it could not answer the book that it attacked the man. And that is what the church has always done. I do not say it has been dishonest. I do not know how it will account for its acts. But it has always done that way. And there is something to me remarkable in the constitution of a religious falsehood. What health it has! How hard it is to kill! After you think it is dead, the roses of health will bloom in its cheeks again. It will lie in a comatose condition, like a frozen serpent, and all at once, in the sunshine of opportunity, it crawls. It will lie hidden for years, waiting for the mouth of resurrection—waiting for orthodox lips, that it may be born once again. And it is always born again, yes, sir. I have never known a religious lie to die.

Only the other day, in a paper in this city,

appeared the old story that when Thomas Paine died he was in agony and terror; that he called upon Christ to have pity on his soul; that he confessed to some girl that the devil must have had a hand in writing the *Age of Reason;* that he wished the books had all been burned. Now, that was told only the other day; written—published—by a minister of the gospel—one who has been duly ordained; and I have no doubt he believes every word of it—undoubtedly he believes it, because he wants it that way.

But the facts are exactly the other way. And is it not wonderful that all these gentlemen rely so much on what they call the evidence of death? Hundreds of murderers die in this country on the gallows without a quiver—with the utmost courage; and I have never known one of those deaths to be quoted in favor of murder—never; and yet it would be just as sensible. A man goes to the stake and dies for his opinion. That is not the slightest evidence that his opinion is correct. It simply demonstrates the sincerity of the man and the courage of his heart, not the correctness of his opinion. And if every Christian in the world was frightened at death when he dies, it would not tend to prove the truth of any miracle in the Bible or the falsity of any miracle in the Bible. The thing is not evidence in that case.

So the same story was told of Voltaire in the same paper here the other day—that he had died in the utmost terror. Now, it has been denied—not only that, but it has been demonstrated a thousand times—that it is utterly false. But it will come up again next spring along with the grass. The intelligent ministers, however, will not use it—that is, not when they are preaching in their own pulpit; if they go out in the country they may. And it is a very curious thing the way that is done. When a thing gets too idiotic to be preached in the pulpit it is handed down to the Sunday-school superintendent and taught to the children. When it is too absurd for the children we give it to the missionaries, or send it down South to the colored brethren.

In other words, we do with our theories—with our religions—as we do with our clothes; when they get out at the elbows and knees, and when we can not get them cleaned and revamped, or mended, to look decent, why, then, we have charity enough to give them to some other fellow. So we find the religious teachings of the day charitably distributed—going from the highest, as they call themselves, down, down, down, until they strike those who for the first time hear "glad tidings of great joy."

Now, all that Thomas Paine endeavored to do—and it seems like a small matter—was to

make this world fit to live in. That is what he was trying to do. He was trying to keep the organized few from living upon the agony and toil of the unorganized many. He did his very best to exalt in the bosom of every man his idea of the dignity of man—his idea of the value of liberty and opportunity—his idea of culture, of education; raising, day by day, the standard of human endeavor. That is what he tried to do. He tried to change kings and lords and dukes into the servants of the sovereign people. That is what he endeavored to do. And in the world of religion he tried to do, if possible, still more.

In the one case he wished to preserve the individual rights of the man by the preservation of a republican government—of real, pure democracy, as nearly pure in form as the number of people would permit. But in the world of religion he knew that each man was a sovereign; that in that world there should be no government except the government of reason, of persuasion, of logic. He knew that in the world of thought each brain should wear the crown and tiara of sovereignty and the robe of purple. He knew that in that world only the man was a good citizen who gave every right that he claimed for himself to every other human being. He also knew that in that great republic of mind only those were traitors who resorted

to brute force. And so Thomas Paine said, "Let every man think for himself; let him have his own idea of the divine being; let him worship as his heart prompts."

Upon that subject he said as great a thing as man has ever said: "When you say that man shall only worship God in one way, by that law you say that God shall receive worship only in one way." No greater utterance ever fell from lips upon that subject. You have no right, if there be a God, to say what worship he shall receive; and Thomas Paine said, "If there be a God, His heart goes out to all His children in this world, and consequently it is His will that they should all be free; that they should all be happy."

And all I contend for in this world is that every man is entitled to the work of his hands; every man is entitled to the harvest of his brain; and it is the duty of every man to give his honest thought to every being who has the right to ask it. That is all. That is all the religion we need in this world, or any other. There may be another—and everybody who is now living wishes to keep on living. Hope is not based on evidence. There is a vast deal of hope where there is no evidence. There has been a good deal of hope when the evidence was the other way on a great many questions in this world. And I suppose it can truthfully be said that hope is the

only universal liar who never loses his reputation for veracity. Hope always tells a good story—always paints on the canvas of the future a beautiful picture. And I would do nothing by word or act—I would do nothing anyway—to take from the sky the smallest hope that ever shed a ray of light in the human heart; not one.

If this universe only could be as I wish it were—and maybe it is—I would like to know—nothing could fill me with greater joy than to know that for every sorrow suffered here there is to be a joy somewhere. Nothing would give me greater delight than to know that every tear that sorrow has ever shed will at last become prismatic, and that we will see the beautiful bow upon the dark cloud of death. Nothing would give me greater joy than to know that there is some world where innocence will always be a perfect shield—some world where justice will triumph—some world where truth can enter the ring naked and conquer all comers—some world in which the good man can not be slandered and maligned—some world in which every heart can be known as it absolutely is. And if there be such a world, in its shining streets, or by its winding streams of joy, you will never meet a grander soul, a braver soul, than once inhabited the clay of Thomas Paine.

And so I say, let us do what we can to

destroy the phantoms of ignorance and superstition. Let us do what we can to take from the heart these weeds and thorns; and let us be happy here, and be happy here by making others so. Let us enjoy to-day without regretting having lost yesterday, and without fearing that we may lose to-morrow. Let us enjoy this green strip of flowering earth, called the present, stretching between the two great eternal deserts —the past and the future. Let us enjoy that strip of verdure. Let us enjoy the flowers that bloom upon it. And if there be another world, I will be just as happy when we get there as any fellow in this world or in that; and if there be no such, we will have enjoyed this. While I live, I want to be free. That is what Thomas Paine wanted to be—not only free, but he wanted to be free to do good; because the more liberty you have, the more obligation there is upon you.

And this man (I can hardly stop speaking about him), said another thing: "Any system of religion that shocks the mind of a child can not be a true system." Nothing was ever said better than that. And this same man made a creed for himself: "The world is my country; to do good my religion." That man was brave enough to write and fight for liberty here—brave enough in the shadow of the guillotine, to say in the French chamber, "Let us destroy

monarchy, not the man"—great enough to say, "It was his misfortune to be a king."

I want you just to think of the diameter and of the circumference of that splendid expression, made under those circumstances. I want you to see just how splendid and noble this man was; and then I want you to know that all the men who have ever maligned and slandered him, from that day to this, compared with him are vermin. And yet I do not blame them; they have done the best they knew. It is our duty to tell them who Thomas Paine was. That man, after having done all that he did, received nothing from the United States, for many, many years, except scorn, derision, contempt, falsehood, slander. And the church has been like a coiled viper on the grave of Thomas Paine since 1809—like a coiled viper, and whoever has attempted to defend him, it has attacked.

There is another little thing connected with this—and I am going to say a word about myself. The first speech I ever made in public was an address at a Sunday-school celebration, when the other man did not come; and in that speech I defended the memory of Thomas Paine. I made use of the first chance I had. I am the friend of every human being who has been the friend of man—no matter where he lived—in what age or time. Every man who

has lifted his voice for human rights—I am his friend. Every man who has defended freedom of thought, I am his admirer to-night. And every man who has endeavored to enslave his fellows, and every man who has persecuted his fellow-men, I hate with all my heart and soul; and yet, if they were alive, the only injury I would do them would be to enlighten them. What would the world have been without these men?—without such men as Voltaire, one of the noblest men who ever lived, and whose name I never see and never repeat without a thrill—never.

I think of a soldier, with a plume over his helmet, riding to a walled city, demanding surrender; and I see the hosts of superstition on the beleaguered walls, and I see them with a white flag in their trembling hands. Voltaire—Thomas Paine—take the two, and they did more for human liberty than any other two men who ever lived.

Now, all I want is for you to know the truth—and in a little while it will be published—about Thomas Paine; and after that book has been published by Mr. Conway, and sufficient time has elapsed for intelligent people to read it, and then if any occupant of a pulpit tells the old lies again, I intend to hold him responsible—at least, by calling his attention to the fact; and I want everyone who hears me to-

night to make up his or her mind—especially her mind—that from this night forth you will always have the womanhood and the manhood to defend the memory of the friend of man, Thomas Paine.

THE GREAT INFIDELS

[This lecture was delivered in the Academy of Music on the evening of May 1, 1881, before an audience of not less than three thousand persons.]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: There is nothing grander in this world than to rescue from the leprosy of slander a great and splendid name. [Applause.] There is nothing nobler than to benefit our benefactors. The infidels of one age have been the aureole saints of the next. The destroyers of the old have always been the creators of the new. The old passes away and the new becomes old. There is in the intellectual world, as in the material, decay and growth; and even by the sunken grave of age stand youth and joy. The history of progress is written in the lives of infidels. Political rights have been preserved by traitors; intellectual rights by infidels. [Applause.] To attack the kings was treason; to dispute the priests blasphemy. The sword and cross have always been allies; they defended each other. The throne and altar are twins,—vultures born of the same egg. It was James I[1] who said: "No king, no bishop; no church, no crown; no tyrant

[1] James I, King of England, Scotland, and Ireland; born,

in heaven, no tyrant on earth." [Applause.] Every monarchy that has disgraced the world, every despotism that has covered the cheeks of men with fear has been copied after the supposed despotism of hell. The king owned the bodies and the priest owned the souls; one lived on taxes and the other on alms; one was a robber and the other a beggar. [Applause and laughter.]

The history of the world will not show you one charitable beggar. He who lives on charity never has anything to give away. The robbers and beggars controlled not only this world, but the next. The king made laws, the priest made creeds: with bowed backs the people received and bore the burdens of the one, and with the open mouth of wonder the creed of the other. If any aspired to be free they were crushed by the king, and every priest was a hero who slaughtered the children of the brave. The king ruled by force, the priest by fear and by the Bible. The king said to the people: "God made you peasants and me a king; He clothed you in rags and housed you in hovels; upon me He put robes and gave me a palace." Such is the justice of God. The priest said to the people: "God made you ignorant and vile; me holy and wise; obey me or God will punish you

1566; ascended Scottish throne, 1567; ascended English and Irish thrones, 1603; died, 1625.

here and hereafter." Such is the mercy of God. [Applause.]

Infidels are the intellectual discoverers. Infidels have sailed the unknown sea and have discovered the isles and continents in the vast realms of thought. What would the world have been had infidels never existed? What the infidel is in religion, the inventor is in mechanics. What the infidel is in religion the man willing to fight the hosts of tyranny is in the political world. An infidel is a gentleman who has discovered a fact and is not afraid to talk about it. [Applause.]

There has been for many thousands of years an idea prevalent that in some way you can prove whether the theories defended or advanced by a man are right or wrong by showing what kind of a man he was, what kind of a life he lived, and what manner of death he died. There is nothing to this. It makes no difference what the character of the man was who made the first multiplication table. It is absolutely true, and whenever you find an absolute fact, it makes no difference who discovered it.

The golden rule would have been just as good if it had first been whispered by the devil. [Applause.] It is good for what it contains, not because a certain man said it. Gold is just as good in the hands of crime as in the hands of

virtue. Whatever it may be, it is gold. A statement made by a great man is not necessarily true. A man entertains certain opinions, and then he is proscribed because he refuses to change his mind. He is burned to ashes, and in the midst of the flames he cries out that he is of the same opinion still. Hundreds then say that he has sealed his testimony with his blood, and that his doctrines must be true. All the martyrs in the history of the world are not sufficient to establish the correctness of any one opinion. Martyrdom, as a rule, establishes the sincerity of the martyr, not the correctness of his thought. Things are true or false independently of the man who entertains them. Truth can not be affected by opinion and error can not be believed sincerely enough to make it a truth.

No Christian will admit that any amount of heroism displayed by a Mormon is sufficient to show that Joseph Smith[1] was an inspired prophet. All the courage and culture, all the poetry and art of ancient Greece did not even tend to establish the truth of any myth. The testimony of the dying, concerning some other world, or in regard to the supernatural, can not be any better than that of the living.

In the early days of Christian experience an intrepid faith was regarded as a testimony in

[1] Joseph Smith, a Mormon prophet; born, 1805; killed, 1844.

favor of the church. No doubt in the arms of death many a one went back and died in the lap of the old faith. After a while Christians got to dying and clinging to their faith; and then it was that Christians began to say: "No man can die serenely without clinging to the cross." According to the theologians, God has always punished the dying who did not happen to believe in Him. As long as men did nothing except to render their fellow-men wretched, God maintained the strictest neutrality, but when some honest man expressed a doubt as to the Jewish Scriptures, or prayed to the wrong God, or to the right God by the wrong man, then the real God leaped like a wounded tiger upon this dying man, and from his body tore his wretched soul. There is no recorded instance where the uplifted hand of murder has been paralyzed, or the innocent have been shielded by God. Thousands of crimes are committed every day and God has no time to prevent them. [Applause.] He is too busy numbering hairs and matching sparrows; He is listening for blasphemy; He is looking for persons who laugh at priests; He is examining baptismal registers; He is watching professors in colleges who begin to doubt the geology of Moses or the astronomy of Joshua. All kinds of criminals, except infidels, meet death with reasonable serenity. As a rule, there is nothing in the death of a pirate to

cast discredit upon his profession. The murderer upon the scaffold smilingly exhorts the multitude to meet him in heaven. The Emperor Constantine,[1] who lifted Christianity into power, murdered his wife and oldest son.

Now and then, in the history of the world, there has been a man of genius, a man of intellectual honesty. These men have denounced the superstition of their day. They were honest enough to tell their thoughts. Some of them died naturally in their beds, but it would not do for the church to admit that they died peaceably; that would show that religion was not necessary in the last moments. The first grave, the first cathedral, the first corpse was the first priest. If there was no death in the world, there would be no superstition. The church has taken great pains to show that the last moments of all infidels have been infinitely wretched. Upon this point Catholics and Protestants have always stood together. They are no longer men; they become hyenas; they dig open graves. They devour the dead. It is an *auto da-fé*[2] presided over by God and His angels. These men be-

[1] Constantine (I) the Great, a Roman emperor; born, 272 A.D.; appointed Cæsar, 306 A.D.; became sole emperor, 323 A.D.; put his eldest son Crispus to death for high treason, 324 A.D.; according to a tradition with no historical foundation, this son was the victim of an intrigue of his step-mother, who was killed in a bath when Constantine discovered his son's innocence; the emperor died 337 A.D.

[2] *Auto da-fé,* a Portuguese phrase, meaning an act of faith; it

lieved in the accountability of men, in the practice of virtue and justice. They believed in liberty, but they did not believe in the inspiration of the Bible. That was their crime. In order to show that infidels died overwhelmed with remorse and fear they have generally selected from all the infidels since the days of Christ, until now they have five men—the Emperor Julian,[1] Bruno,[2] Diderot,[3] David Hume,[4] and Thomas Paine.[5] They forget that Christ Himself was not a Christian; that He did what He could to tear down the religion of His day; that He held the temple in contempt. I like Him because He held the old Jewish religion in contempt; because He had sense enough to to say that that doctrine was not true. In vain have their calumniators been called upon to prove their statements. They simply charge it, they simply relate it, but that is no evidence. The Emperor Julian did what he could to prevent Christians from destroying each other.

is the name given in Spain and Portugal to the burning of Jews and heretics.

[1] Julian (Flavius Claudius Julianus) the Apostate, a Roman emperor; born, 331 A.D.; emperor, 361-363 A.D.; died, 363 A.D.

[2] Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher; born about 1548; died, 1600.

[3] Denis Diderot, a French philosopher and writer; born, 1713; died, 1784.

[4] David Hume, a Scottish philosopher and historian; born, 1711; died, 1776.

[5] Thomas Paine, an Anglo-American political writer and freethinker; born, 1737; died, 1809.

He held pomp and pride in contempt. In battle with the Persians he was mortally wounded. Feeling that he had but a short time to live, he spent his last hours in discussing with his friends the immortality of the soul. He declared that he was satisfied with his conduct, and that he had no remorse to express for any act he had ever done.

The first great infidel was Giordano Bruno. He was born in the year of grace 1550. He was a Dominican friar,—Catholic,—and afterwards he changed his mind. The reason he changed was because he had a mind. [Applause.] He was a lover of nature, and said to the poor hermits in their caves, to the poor monks in their monasteries, to the poor nuns in their cells, "Come out in the glad fields; come and breathe the fresh, free air; come and enjoy all the beauty there is in this world. There is no God who can be made happier by your being miserable; there is no God who delights to see upon the human face the tears of pain, of grief, of agony; come out and enjoy all there is of human life; enjoy progress, enjoy thought, enjoy being somebody and belonging to yourself." [Applause.]. He revolted at the idea of transubstantiation; he revolted at the idea that the eternal God could be in a wafer. [Laughter.] He revolted at the idea that you could make the Trinity out of

dough,—bake God in an oven as you would a biscuit. [Laughter.] I should think he would have revolted. The idea of a man devouring the Creator of the universe by swallowing a piece of bread! [Laughter.] And yet that is just as sensible as any of it. Those who, when smitten on one cheek turn the other, threatened to kill this man. He fled from his native land and was a vagabond in nearly every nation of Europe.

He declared that he fought not what men really believed, but what they pretended to believe, and, do you know, that is the business I am in? [Laughter.] I am simply saying what other people think; I am furnishing clothes for their children, I am putting on exhibition their offspring, and they like to hear it, they like to see it. We have passed midnight in the history of this world.

Bruno was driven from his native country because he taught the rotation of the earth; you can see what a dangerous man he must have been in a well-regulated monarchy. [Laughter.] You see he had found a fact, and a fact has the same effect upon religion that dynamite has upon a Russian Czar. A fellow with a new fact was suspected and arrested, and they always thought they could destroy it by burning him, but they never did. All the fires of martyrdom never destroyed one truth; all the

churches of the world have never made one lie true. [Applause.] Germany and France would not tolerate Bruno.

According to the Christian system this world was the center of everything. The stars were made out of what little God happened to have left when He got the world done. [Laughter.] God lived up in the sky, and they said this earth must rest upon something, and finally science passed its hand clear under, and there was nothing. It was self-existent in infinite space. Then the church began to say they did not say it was flat,—[laughter]—not so awful flat,—it was kind of rounding. [Laughter.] According to the ancient Christians, God lived from all eternity, and never worked but six days in His whole life, and then had the impudence to tell us to be industrious. [Laughter.]

I heard of a man going to California over the plains, and there was a clergyman on board and he had a great deal to say, and finally he fell into conversation with the forty-niner, and the latter said to the clergyman, "Do you believe that God made this world in six days?" "Yes, I do." They were then going along the Humboldt.[1] Says he, "Do you not think He could put in another day to advantage right around here?" [Laughter.]

[1] Humboldt Lake, or Humboldt Sink, a lake in the western part of Nevada, with no outlet to the sea.

Bruno went to England and delivered lectures at Oxford. He found that there was nothing taught there but superstition, and so called Oxford the "wisdom of learning." Then they told him they did not want him any more. He went back to Italy, where there was a kind of fascination that drew him back to the very doors of the Inquisition. He was arrested for teaching that there were other worlds, and that stars were suns around which revolve other planets. He was in prison for six years. During those six years Galileo [1] was teaching mathematics: six years in a dungeon, and then he was tried, denounced by the Inquisition, excommunicated, condemned by brute force, pushed upon his knees while he received the benediction of the church, and on the 16th of February, in the year of our Lord 1600, he was burned at the stake.

He believed that the world is animated by an intelligent soul, the cause of force, but not of matter, that matter and force have existed from eternity; that this force lives in all things, even in such as appear not to live, in the rock as much as in the man; that matter is the mother of forms and the grace of forms; that the matter and force together constitute God. He was a pantheist,—that is to say, he was an atheist. He had the courage to die for what he believed

[1] Galileo Galilei, an Italian physicist and astronomer; born, 1564; died, 1642.

to be right. The murder of Bruno will never, in my judgment, be completely and perfectly revenged until from the city of Rome shall be swept every vestige of priests and pope;—[applause]—until from the shapeless ruins of St. Peter's, the crumbled Vatican, and the fallen cross of Rome, rises a monument sacred to the philosopher, the benefactor, and the martyr—Bruno. [Applause.]

Voltaire[1] was born in 1694. When he was born, the natural was about the only thing that the church did not believe in. Monks sold amulets, and the priests cured in the name of the church. The worship of the devil was actually established, which to-day is the religion of China. They say, "God is good; He will not bother you: Joss is the one." They offer him gifts, and try to soften his heart; so in the Middle Ages the poor people tried to see if they could not get a short-cut, and trade directly with the devil, instead of going round-about through the church. In these days witnesses were cross-examined with instruments of torture.

Voltaire did more for human liberty than any other man who ever lived or died. He appealed to the common sense of mankind,—he held up the great contradictions of the sacred Scriptures in a way that no man once having read him

[1] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

could forget. For one, I thank Voltaire for the liberty I am enjoying this moment. How small a man a priest looked when he pointed his finger at him; how contemptible a king.

Toward the last of May, 1778, it was whispered in Paris that Voltaire was dying. He expired with the most perfect tranquillity. There have been constructed more shameless lies about the death of this great and wonderful man, compared with whom all of his calumniators, living or dead, were but dust and vermin. [Applause.] From his throne at the foot of the Alps he pointed the finger of scorn at every hypocrite in Europe. He was the pioneer of his century.

In 1771, in Scotland, David Hume was born.

Scotch Presbyterianism is the worst form of religion that has ever been produced. [Laughter.] The Scotch kirk had all the faults of the Church of Rome, without a redeeming feature. The church hated music, despised painting, abhorred statuary, and held architecture in contempt. Anything touched with humanity, with the weakness of love, with the dimple of joy, was detested by the Scotch kirk. God was to be feared; God was infinitely practical; no nonsense about God. They used to preach four times a day. They preached on Friday before the Sunday upon which they partook of the sacrament, and then on Saturday; four sermons on

Sunday, and two or three on Monday to sober up on. [Laughter.] They were bigoted and heartless.

One case will illustrate. In the beginning of this nineteenth century a boy seventeen years of age was indicted at Edinburgh for blasphemy. He had given it as his opinion that Moses had learned magic in Egypt, and had fooled the Jews. [Laughter.] They proved that on two or three occasions, when he was real cold, he jocularly remarked that he wished he was in hell, so that he could warm up. [Laughter.] He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged. He recanted; he even wrote that he believed the whole business, and that he just said it for pure devilment. It made no difference. They hung him, and his bruised and bleeding corpse was denied to his own mother, who came and besought them to let her take her boy home. That was Scotch Presbyterianism. If the devil had been let loose in Scotland, he would have improved that country at that time. [Laughter.]

David Hume was one of the few Scotchmen who was not owned by the church. He had the courage to examine things for himself, and to give his conclusion to the world. His life was unstained by an unjust act. He did not, like Abraham, turn a woman from his door with his child in her arms. [Applause.] He did not,

like King David, murder a man that he might steal his wife. [Applause.] He did not believe in Scotch Presbyterianism. I do not see how any good man ever did. Just think of going to the day of judgment, if there is one, and standing up before God and admitting without a blush that you have lived and died a Scotch Presbyterian. [Laughter.] I would expect the next sentence would be, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire." [Laughter.]

Hume took the ground that a miracle could not be used as evidence until you had proved the miracle. Of course that excited the church. Why? Because they could not prove one of them. How are you going to prove a miracle? Who saw it, and who would know a devil if he did see him? [Laughter.]

Hume insisted that at the bottom of all good is something useful; that after all, human happiness was the great object, end, and aim of life; that virtue was not a termagant, with sunken cheeks and frightened eyes, but was the most beautiful thing in the world, and would strew your path with flowers from the cradle to the grave. When he died they gave an account of how he had suffered. They knew that the horror of death would fall upon him, and that God would get His revenge. But his attending physician said that his death was the most serene and most perfectly tranquil of any he

had ever seen. Adam Smith[1] said he was as near perfect as the frailty incident to humanity would allow human being to be.

The next is Benedict Spinoza,[2] a Jew, born at Amsterdam in 1632. He studied theology, and asked the rabbis too many questions, and talked too much about what he called reason, and finally he was excommunicated from the synagogue and became an outcast at the age of twenty-four, without friends. Cursed, anathematized, bearing upon his forehead the mark of Cain, he undertook to solve the problem of the universe. To him the universe was one. The infinite embraced the all. That all was God. He was right, the universe is all there is, and if God does not exist in the universe He exists nowhere. The idea of putting some little Jewish Jehovah outside the universe, as if to say that from an eternity of idleness He woke up one morning and thought He would make something! [Laughter.]

The propositions of Spinoza are as luminous as the stars, and his demonstrations, each one of them, is a Gibraltar, behind which logic sits laughing at all the sophistries of theological thought. [Applause.] In every relation of life

[1] Adam Smith, a Scottish political economist; born, 1723; died, 1790.

[2] Benedict (or Baruch) Spinoza, a Dutch-Jewish philosopher; born, 1632; died, 1677.

he was just, true, gentle, patient, loving, affectionate. He died in 1677. In his life of forty-four years he had climbed to the very highest alpine of human thought. He was a great and splendid man, an intellectual hero, one of the benefactors, one of the Titans of our race. [Applause.]

And now I will say a few words about our infidels. We had three, to say the least of them, —Paine, Franklin,[1] Jefferson.[2] [Applause.] In their day the colonies were filled with superstition and the Puritans with the spirit of persecution. Laws—savage, ignorant, and malignant—had been passed in every colony for the purpose of destroying intellectual liberty. Manly freedom was unknown. The toleration act of Maryland tolerated only chickens, not thinkers, not investigators. It tolerated faith, not brains. The charity of Roger Williams[3] was not extended to one who denied the Bible. Let me show you how we have advanced. Suppose you took every man and woman out of the penitentiary in New England and shipped them to a new country, where man before had never trod, and told them to make a government, and

[1] Benjamin Franklin, an American philosopher, statesman, inventor, and author; born, 1706; died, 1790.

[2] Thomas Jefferson, an American statesman; born, 1743; died, 1826.

[3] Roger Williams, an English colonist, founder of Rhode Island; born about 1600; died, 1684.

constitution, and a code of laws for themselves. I say to-night that they would make a better constitution and a better code of laws than any that were made in any of the original thirteen colonies of the United States. [Applause.] Not that they are better men, not that they are more honest, but that they have got more sense. They have been touched with the dawn of the eternal day of liberty that will finally come to this world. They would have more respect for others' rights than they had at that time.

But the churches were jealous of each other, and we got a constitution without religion in it from the mutual jealousies of the church, and from the genius of men like Paine, Franklin, and Jefferson. [Applause.] We are indebted to them for a constitution without a God in it. They knew that if you put God in there, an infinite God, there would not be any room for the people. [Laughter.] Our fathers retired Jehovah from politics. [Laughter.] Our fathers, under the direction and leadership of those infidels, said, "All power comes from the consent of the governed." [Applause.] George Washington[1] wanted to establish a church by law in Virginia. Thomas Jefferson prevented it. [Applause.] Under the guaranty of liberty of conscience which was given, our legis-

[1] *George Washington, an American statesman; born, 1732; president of the United States, 1789-1797; died, 1799.*

lation has improved, and it will not be many years before all laws touching liberty of conscience, excepting it may be in the State of Delaware—[laughter]—will be blotted out, and when that time comes we or our children may thank the infidels of 1776.

The church never pretended that Franklin died in fear. Franklin wrote no books against the Bible. He thought it useless to cast the pearls of thought before the swine of his generation. Jefferson was a statesman. He was the author of the Declaration of Independence, founder of a university, father of a political body, President of the United States, a statesman, and a philosopher. He was too powerful for the churches of his day.

Paine attacked the Trinity and the Bible both. He had done these things openly. His arguments were so good that his reputation got bad. [Laughter.] I want you to recollect to-night that he was the first man who wrote these words: "The United States of America." [Applause.] I want you to know to-night that he was the first man who suggested the Federal Constitution. I want you to know that he did more for the actual separation from Great Britain than any man that ever lived. [Applause.] I want you to know that he did as much for liberty with his pen as any soldier did with his sword. [Applause.] I want you to know that

during the Revolution his *Crisis* was the pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. I want you to know that his *Common Sense* was the one star in the horizon of despotism. I want you to know that he did as much as any living man to give our free flag to the free air. [Applause.] He was not content to waste all his energies here. When the volcano covered Europe with the shreds of robes and the broken fragments of thrones, Paine went to France. He was elected by four constituencies. He had the courage to vote against the death of Louis,[1] and was imprisoned. He wrote to Washington, the President, and asked him to interfere. Washington threw the letter in the waste-basket of forgetfulness. When Paine was finally released, he gave his opinion of George Washington, and under such circumstances, I say, a man can be pardoned for having said even unjust things. [Applause.]

The eighteenth century was crowning its gray hairs with the wreaths of progress, and Thomas Paine said: "I will do something to liberate mankind from superstition." He wrote the *Age of Reason.* For his good he wrote it too soon; for ours not a day too quick. [Applause.] From that moment he was a despised and calumniated man. When he came back to this coun-

[1] Louis XVI, king of France; born, 1754; ascended the throne, 1774; deposed, 1792; guillotined, 1793.

try he could not safely walk the streets for fear of being mobbed. Under the Constitution he had suggested, his rights were not safe; under the flag that he had helped give to heaven, with which he had enriched the air, his liberty was not safe.

Is it not a disgrace to us that all the lies that have been told about him, and will be told about him, are a perpetual disgrace? I tell you that upon the grave of Thomas Paine the churches of America have sacrificed their reputation for veracity. [Laughter.] Who can hate a man who has for a creed: "I believe in one God and no more, and I hope for immortality; I believe in the equality of man, and that religious duty consists in doing justice, in doing mercy, and in endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy. It is necessary to the happiness of man that he be faithful to himself. One good schoolmaster is worth a thousand priests. Man has no property in man, and the key of heaven is in the keeping of no saint." [Applause.]

Grand, splendid, brave man! with some faults, with many virtues; the world is better because he lived,—and, if Thomas Paine had not lived, I could not have delivered this lecture here to-night. [Applause.]

Did all the priests of Rome increase the mental wealth of man as much as Bruno? Did all the priests of France do as great a work for the

civilization of this world as Diderot and Voltaire? Did all the ministers of Scotland add as much to the sum of human knowledge as did David Hume? Have all the clergymen, monks, friars, ministers, priests, bishops, cardinals, and popes from the Day of Pentecost to the last election done as much for human liberty as Thomas Paine? [Applause.]

What would the world be now if infidels had never been? Infidels have been the flower of all this world.

Recollect, by infidels I mean every man who has made an intellectual advance. [Laughter.] By orthodox I mean a gentleman who is petrified in his mind, hopping around intellectually, simply to save the funeral expenses of his soul. [Laughter.]

Infidels are the creditors of all the years to come. They have made this world fit to live in, and without them the human brain would be as empty as the churches soon will be. [Laughter.] Unless they preach something that the people want to hear, it is not a crime to benefit our fellow-man intellectually. The churches point to their decayed saints and their crumbled popes and say, "Do you know more than all the ministers that ever lived?" And without the slightest egotism or blush I say, yes, and the name of Humboldt outweighs them all.

The men who stand in the front rank, the men

who know most of the secrets of nature, the men who know most are to-day the advanced infidels of this world. I have lived long enough to see the brand of intellectual inferiority on every orthodox brain. [Applause.]

Preface to Professor Van Buren Denslow's

"MODERN THINKERS"

If others who read this book get as much information as I did from the advance sheets, they will feel repaid a hundred times. It is perfectly delightful to take advantage of the conscientious labors of those who go through volume after volume, divide with infinite patience the gold from the dross, and present us with the pure and shining coin. Such men may be likened to bees who save us numberless journeys by giving us the fruit of their own.

While this book will greatly add to the information of all who read it, it may not increase the happiness of some to find that Swedenborg [1] was really insane. But when they remember that he was raised by a bishop, and disappointed in love, they will cease to wonder at his mental condition. Certainly an admixture of theology and "disprized love" is often sufficient to compel reason to abdicate the throne of the mightiest soul. The trouble with Swedenborg was that he changed realities into dreams, and then,

[1] Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish philosopher and theosophist; born, 1688; died, 1772.

out of the dreams, made facts, upon which he built, and with which he constructed his system.

He regarded all realities as shadows cast by ideas. To him the material was the unreal, and things were definitions of the ideas of God. He seemed to think that he had made a discovery when he found that ideas were back of words, and that language had a subjective as well as an objective origin; that is, that the interior meaning had been clothed upon. Of course, a man capable of drawing the conclusion that natural reason can not harmonize with spiritual truth because he had seen a beetle, in a dream, that could not use its feet, is capable of any absurdity of which the imagination can conceive. The fact is that Swedenborg believed the Bible. That was his misfortune. His mind had been overpowered by the bishop, but the woman had not utterly destroyed his heart. He was shocked by the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and sought to avoid the difficulty by giving new meanings consistent with the decency and goodness of God. He pointed out a way to preserve the old Bible with a new interpretation. In this way infidelity could be avoided; and, in his day, that was almost a necessity. Had Swedenborg taken the ground that the Bible was not inspired, the ears of the world would have been stopped. His readers believed in the dogma of inspiration, and asked not how to destroy the

Scriptures, but for some way in which they might be preserved. He and his followers unconsciously rendered immense service to the cause of intellectual enfranchisement by their efforts to show the necessity of giving new meanings to the barbarous laws and cruel orders of Jehovah. For this purpose they attacked with great fury the literal text, taking the ground that if the old interpretation was right, the Bible was the work of savage men. They heightened in every way the absurdities, cruelties, and contradictions of the Scriptures, for the purpose of showing that a new interpretation must be found, and that the way pointed out by Swedenborg was the only one by which the Bible could be saved.

Great men are, after all, the instrumentalities of their time. The heart of the civilized world was beginning to revolt at the cruelties ascribed to God, and was seeking for some interpretation of the Bible that kind and loving people could accept. The method of interpretation found by Swedenborg was suitable for all. Each was permitted to construct his own "science of correspondence" and gather such fruits as he might prefer. In this way the ravings of revenge can be instantly changed to mercy's melting tones, and murder's dagger to a smile of love. In this way, and in no other, can we explain the numberless mistakes and crimes ascribed to God. Thousands of most excellent

people, afraid to throw away the idea of inspiration, hailed with joy a discovery that allowed them to write a Bible for themselves.

But, whether Swedenborg was right or not, every man who reads a book necessarily gets from that book all that he is capable of receiving. Every man who walks in the forest, or gathers a flower, or looks at a picture, or stands by the sea, gets all the intellectual wealth he is capable of receiving. What the forest, the flower, the picture, or the sea, is to him, depends upon his mind, and upon the stage of development he has reached. So that, after all, the Bible must be a different book to each person who reads it, as the revelations of nature depend upon the individual to whom they are revealed, or by whom they are discovered. And the extent of the revelation or discovery depends absolutely upon the intellectual and moral development of the person to whom, or by whom, the revelation or discovery is made. So that the Bible can not be the same to any two people, but each one must, necessarily, interpret it for himself. Now, the moment the doctrine is established that we can give to this book such meanings as are consistent with our highest ideals, that we can treat the old words as purses or old stockings in which to put our gold, then each one will, in effect, make a new inspired Bible for himself, and throw the old away. If his mind

is narrow, if he has been raised by ignorance and nursed by fear, he will believe in the literal truth of what he reads. If he has a little courage, he will doubt, and the doubt will with new interpretations modify the literal text; but if his soul is free, he will with scorn reject it all.

Swedenborg did one thing for which I feel almost grateful. He gave an account of having met John Calvin[1] in hell.

Nothing connected with the supernatural could be more perfectly natural than this. The only thing detracting from the value of this report is that, if there is a hell, we know without visiting the place that John Calvin must be there.

All honest founders of religions have been the dreamers of dreams, the sport of insanity, the prey of visions, the deceivers of others and of themselves. All will admit that Swedenborg was a man of great intellect, of vast acquirements, and of honest intentions; and I think it equally clear that upon one subject, at least, his mind was touched, shattered, and shaken.

Misled by analogies, imposed upon by the bishop, deceived by the woman, borne to other worlds upon the wings of dreams, living in the twilight of reason and the dawn of insanity, he regarded every fact as a patched and ragged

[1] John Calvin, a French-Swiss Protestant reformer and theologian; born, 1509; died, 1564.

garment with a lining of costly silk, and insisted that the wrong side, even of the silk, was far more beautiful than the right.

Herbert Spencer[1] is almost the opposite of Swedenborg. He relies upon evidence, upon demonstration, upon experience, and occupies himself with one world at a time. He perceives that there is a mental horizon that we can not pierce, and beyond that is the unknown—possibly the unknowable. He endeavors to examine only that which is capable of being examined, and considers the theological method as not only useless, but hurtful. After all, God is but a guess, throned and established by arrogance and assertion. Turning his attention to those things that have in some way affected the condition of mankind, Spencer leaves the unknowable to priests and to the believers in the "moral government" of the world. He sees only natural causes and natural results, and seeks to induce man to give up gazing into void and empty space, that he may give his entire attention to the world in which he lives. He sees that right and wrong do not depend upon the arbitrary will of even an infinite being, but upon the nature of things; that they are relations, not entities, and that they can not exist, so far as we know, apart from human experience.

[1] Herbert Spencer, an English philosopher; born, 1820; died, 1903.

It may be that men will finally see that selfishness and self-sacrifice are both mistakes; that the first devours itself; that the second is not demanded by the good, and that the bad are unworthy of it. It may be that our race has never been, and never will be, deserving of a martyr. Some time we may see that justice is the highest possible form of mercy and love, and that all should not only be allowed, but compelled to reap exactly what they sow; that industry should not support idleness, and that they who waste the spring, and summer, and autumn of their lives should bear the winter when it comes. The fortunate should assist the victims of accident; the strong should defend the weak, and the intellectual should lead, with loving hands, the mental poor, but justice should remove the bandage from her eyes long enough to distinguish between the vicious and the unfortunate.

Mr. Spencer is wise enough to declare that "acts are called good or bad according as they are well or ill-adjusted to ends"; and he might have added, that ends are good or bad according as they affect the happiness of mankind.

It would be hard to over-estimate the influence of this great man. From an immense intellectual elevation he has surveyed the world of thought.

He has rendered absurd the idea of special Providence, born of the egotism of slavery. He

has shown that the "will of God" is not a rule for human conduct; that morality is not a cold and heartless tyrant; that by the destruction of the individual will a higher life can not be reached, and that, after all, an intelligent love of self extends the hand of help and kindness to all the human race.

But, had it not been for such men as Thomas Paine,[1] Herbert Spencer could not have existed for a century to come. Someone had to lead the way, to raise the standard of revolt, and draw the sword of war. Thomas Paine was a natural revolutionist. He was opposed to every government existing in his day. Next to establishing a wise republic, based upon the equal rights of man, the best thing that can be done is to destroy a monarchy.

Paine had a sense of justice, and had imagination enough to put himself in the place of the oppressed. He had, also, what in these pages is so felicitously expressed, "A haughty, intellectual pride, and a willingness to pit his individual thought against the clamor of a world."

I can not believe that he wrote the letters of Junius,[2] although the two critiques combined in

[1] Thomas Paine, an Anglo-American political writer and free-thinker; born, 1737; died, 1809.

[2] Junius, the pseudonym of the unknown author of a series of letters in the London *Public Advertiser* from November 21, 1766 to January 21, 1772, which were directed against the British ministry.

this volume, entitled Paine and Junius, make by far the best argument upon that subject that I have ever read. First—Paine could have had no personal hatred against the men so bitterly assailed by Junius. Second—He knew, at that time, but little of English politicians, and certainly had never associated with men occupying the highest positions, and could not have been personally acquainted with the leading statesmen of England. Third—He was not an unjust man. He was neither a coward, a calumniator, nor a sneak. All these delightful qualities must have lovingly united in the character of Junius. Fourth—Paine could have had no reason for keeping the secret after coming to America.

I have always believed that Junius, after having written his letters, accepted office from the very men he had maligned, and at last became a pensioner of the victims of his slander. "Had he as many mouths as Hydra, such a course must have closed them all." Certainly, the author must have kept the secret to prevent the loss of his reputation.

It can not be denied that the style of Junius is much like that of Paine. Should it be established that Paine wrote the letters of Junius, it would not, in my judgment, add to his reputation as a writer. Regarded as literary efforts, they can not be compared with

Common Sense, The Crisis, or *The Rights of Man.*

The claim that Paine was the real author of the Declaration of Independence is much better founded. I am inclined to think that he actually wrote it; but whether this is true or not, every idea contained in it had been written by him long before. It is now claimed that the original document is in Paine's handwriting. It certainly is not in Jefferson's. Certain it is that Jefferson could not have written anything so manly, so striking, so comprehensive, so clear, so convincing, and so faultless in rhetoric and rhythm, as the Declaration of Independence.

Paine was the first man to write these words: "The United States of America." He was the first great champion of absolute separation from England. He was the first to urge the adoption of a federal constitution; and, more clearly than any other man of his time, he perceived the future greatness of this country.

He has been blamed for his attack on Washington. The truth is, he was in prison in France. He had committed the crime of voting against the execution of the king. It was the grandest act of his life, but at that time to be merciful was criminal. Paine, being an American citizen, asked Washington, then President,

to say a word to Robespierre[1] in his behalf. Washington remained silent. In the calmness of power, the serenity of fortune, Washington, the President, read the request of Paine, the prisoner, and with the complacency of assured fame, consigned to the waste-basket of forgetfulness the patriot's cry for help.

> "Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
> Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
> A great-sized monster of ingratitudes.
> Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devour'd
> As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
> As done."

In this controversy my sympathies are with the prisoner.

Paine did more to free the mind, to destroy the powers of ministers and priests in the new world, than any other man. In order to answer his arguments, the churches found it necessary to attack his character. There was a general resort to falsehood. In trying to destroy the reputation of Paine, the churches have demoralized themselves. Nearly every minister has been a willing witness against the truth. Upon the grave of Thomas Paine the churches of America have sacrificed their honor. The influence of the hero author increases every day, and there are more copies of the *Age of Reason* sold in the

[1] Maximilien Marie Isidore Robespierre, surnamed "The Incorruptible," a French Revolutionist; born, 1758; guillotined, 1794.

United States than of any work written in defense of the Christian religion. Hypocrisy, with its forked tongue, its envious and malignant heart, lies coiled upon the memory of Paine, ready to fasten its poisonous fangs in the reputation of any man who dares defend the great and generous dead.

Leaving the dust and glory of revolutionists, let us spend a moment of quiet with Adam Smith.[1]

I was glad to find that a man's ideas upon the subject of protection and free trade depend almost entirely upon the country in which he lives, or the business in which he happens to be engaged, and that, after all, each man regards the universe as a circumference of which he is the center. It gratified me to learn that even Adam Smith was no exception to this rule, and that he regarded all "protection as a hurtful and ignorant interference," except when exercised for the good of Great Britain. Owing to the fact that his nationality quarreled with his philosophy, he succeeded in writing a book that is quoted with equal satisfaction by both parties. The protectionists rely upon the exceptions he made for England, and the free-traders upon the doctrines he laid down for other countries.

[1] Adam Smith, a Scottish political economist; born, 1723; died, 1790.

He seems to have reasoned upon the question of money precisely as we have, of late years, in the United States; and he has argued both sides equally well. Poverty asks for inflation. Wealth is conservative, and always says there is money enough.

Upon the question of money, this volume contains the best thing I have ever read. "The only mode of procuring the services of others, on any large scale, in the absence of money, is by force, which is slavery. Money, by constituting a medium in which the smallest services can be paid for, substitutes wages for the lash, and renders the liberty of the individual consistent with the maintenance and support of society." There is more philosophy in that one paragraph than Adam Smith expresses in his whole work. It may truthfully be said that, without money, liberty is impossible. No one, whatever his views may be, can read the article on Adam Smith without profit and delight.

The discussion of the money question is in every respect admirable, and is as candid as able. The world will, sooner or later, learn that there is nothing miraculous in finance; that money is a real and tangible thing, a product of labor, serving not merely as a medium of labor, but as a basis of credit as well; that it can not be created by an act of

the legislature; that dreams can not be coined, and that only labor, in some form, can put upon the hand of want Aladdin's magic ring.

Adam Smith wrote upon the wealth of nations, while Charles Fourier[1] labored for the happiness of mankind. In this country few seem to understand communism. While, here, it may be regarded as vicious idleness, armed with the assassin's knife and the incendiary torch, in Europe it is a different thing. There is a reaction from feudalism. Nobility is communism in its worst possible form. Nothing can be worse than for idleness to eat the bread of industry. Communism in Europe is not the "stand and deliver" of the robber, but the protest of the robbed. Centuries ago, kings and priests, that is to say, thieves and hypocrites, divided Europe among themselves. Under this arrangement, the few were masters and the many slaves. Nearly every government in the old world rests upon simple brute force. It is hard for the many to understand why the few should own the soil. Neither can they clearly see why they should give their brain and blood to those who steal their birthright and their bread. It has occurred to them that they who do the most should not receive the least, and that, after all, an industrious peasant is of far

[1] François Marie Charles Fourier, a French socialist; born, 1772; died, 1837.

more value to the world than a vain and idle king.

The communists of France, blinded as they were, made the Republic possible. Had they joined with their countrymen, the invaders would still have occupied the throne. Socialism perceives that Germany has been enslaved by victory, while France found liberty in defeat. In Russia the nihilists prefer chaos to the government of the bayonet, Siberia, and the knout, and these intrepid men have kept upon the coast of despotism one beacon-fire of hope.

As a matter of fact, every society is a species of communism—a kind of coöperation in which selfishness, in spite of itself, benefits the community. Every industrious man adds to the wealth, not only of his nation, but to that of the world. Every inventor increases human power, and every sculptor, painter, and poet adds to the value of human life.

Fourier, touched by the sufferings of the poor, as well as by the barren joys of hoarded wealth, and discovering the vast advantage of combined effort, and the immense economy of coöperation, sought to find some way for men to help themselves by helping each other. He endeavored to do away with monopoly and competition, and to ascertain some method by which the sensuous, the moral, and the intellectual passions of man could be gratified.

For my part I can place no confidence in any system that does away, or tends to do away, with the institution of marriage. I can conceive of no civilization of which the family must not be the unit.

Societies can not be made; they must grow. Philosophers may predict, but they can not create. They may point out as many ways as they please; but, after all, humanity will travel in paths of its own.

Fourier sustained about the same relation to this world that Swedenborg did to the other. There must be something wrong about the brain of one who solemnly asserts that "the elephant, the ox, and the diamond were created by the sun; the horse, the lily, and the ruby, by Saturn; the cow, the jonquil, and topaz, by Jupiter; and the dog, the violet, and the opal-stones, by the earth itself."

And yet, forgetting these aberrations of the mind, this lunacy of a great and loving soul, for one, I hold in tenderest regard the memory of Charles Fourier, one of the best and noblest of our race.

While Fourier was in his cradle, Jeremy Bentham,[1] who read history when three years old, played on the violin at five, "and at fifteen

[1] Jeremy Bentham, an English jurist and utilitarian philosopher; born, 1748; died, 1832.

detected the fallacies of Blackstone,"[1] was demonstrating that the good was the useful; that a thing was right because it paid in the highest and best sense; that utility was the basis of morals; that without allowing interest to be paid upon money, commerce could not exist; and that the object of all human governments should be to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. He read Hume[2] and Helvétius,[3] threw away the Thirty-nine Articles, and endeavored to impress upon the English law the fact that its ancestor was a feudal savage. He held the past in contempt, hated Westminster, and despised Oxford. He combated the idea that governments were originally founded on contract. Locke[4] and Blackstone talked as though men originally lived apart, and formed societies by agreement. These writers probably imagined that at one time the trees were separated like telegraph poles, and finally came together and made groves by agreement. I believe that it was Pufendorf[5] who said that slavery was originally

[1] Sir William Blackstone, an English jurist; born, 1723; died, 1780.

[2] David Hume, a Scottish philosopher and historian; born, 1711; died, 1776.

[3] Claude Adrien Helvétius, a French philosopher and littérateur; born, 1715; died, 1771.

[4] John Locke, an English philosopher; born, 1632; died, 1704.

[5] Baron Samuel von Pufendorf, a German jurist, publicist, and historian; born, 1632; died, 1694.

founded on contract. To which Voltaire[1] replied: "If my lord Pufendorf will produce the original contract, signed by the party who was to be the slave, I will admit the truth of his statement."

A contract back of society is a myth manufactured by those in power to serve as a title to place, and to impress the multitude with the idea that they are, in some mysterious way, bound, fettered, and even benefited by its terms.

Many scientists have favored the theologians. They have admitted that these questions could not, at present, be solved. These admissions have been thankfully received by the clergy, who have always begged for some curtain to be left, behind which their God could still exist. Men calling themselves "scientific" have tried to harmonize the "apparent" discrepancies between the Bible and the other works of Jehovah. In this way they have made reputations. They were at once quoted by the ministers as wonderful examples of piety and learning. These men discounted the future that they might enjoy the ignorant praise of the present. Agassiz[2] preferred the applause of Boston, while he lived, to the reverence of a world after he was dead.

[1] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

[2] Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz, a Swiss-American naturalist; born, 1807; died, 1873.

Small men appear great only when they agree with the multitude.

The last scientific congress in America was opened with prayer. Think of a science that depends upon the efficacy of words addressed to the unknown and unknowable!

In our country, most of the so-called scientists are professors in sectarian colleges, in which Moses is considered a geologist and Joshua an astronomer. For the most part their salaries depend upon the ingenuity with which they can explain away facts and dodge demonstration.

The situation is about the same in England. When Mr. Huxley[1] saw fit to attack the Mosaic account of the creation, he did not deem it advisable to say plainly what he meant. He attacked the account of creation as given by Milton, although he knew that the Mosaic and Miltonic were substantially the same. Science has acted like a guest without a wedding garment, and has continually apologized for existing. In the presence of arrogant absurdity, overawed by the patronizing airs of a successful charlatan it has played the rôle of a "poor relation," and accepted, while sitting below the salt, insults as honors.

There can be no more pitiable sight than a

[1] Thomas Henry Huxley, an English biologist; born, 1825; died, 1895.

scientist in the employ of superstition dishonoring himself without assisting his master. But there are a multitude of brave and tender men who give their honest thoughts, who are true to nature, who give the facts and let consequences shirk for themselves, who know the value and meaning of a truth, and who have bravely tried the creeds by scientific tests.

Among the bravest, side by side with the greatest of the world, in Germany, the land of science, stands Ernst Haeckel,[1] who may be said to have not only demonstrated the theories of Darwin,[2] but the monistic conception of the world. Rejecting all the puerile ideas of a personal creator, he has had the courage to adopt the noble words of Bruno:[3] "A spirit exists in all things, and no body is so small but it contains a part of the divine substance within itself, and by which it is animated." He has endeavored—and I think with complete success—to show that there is not, and never was, and never can be, the *creator* of anything. There is no more a personal creator than there is a personal destroyer. Matter and force must have existed from eternity, all generation must have been spontaneous, and the simplest organisms

[1] Ernst Heinrich Haeckel, a German naturalist; born, 1834.

[2] Charles Robert Darwin, an English naturalist; born, 1809; died, 1882.

[3] Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher; born about 1548; died, 1600.

must have been the ancestors of the most perfect and complex.

Haeckel is one of the bitterest enemies of the church, and is, therefore, one of the bravest friends of man.

Catholicism was, at one time, the friend of education—of an education sufficient to make a Catholic out of a barbarian. Protestantism was also in favor of education—of an education sufficient to make a Protestant out of a Catholic. But now, it having been demonstrated that real education will make freethinkers, Catholics and Protestants both are the enemies of true learning.

In all countries where human beings are held in bondage, it is a crime to teach a slave to read and write. Masters know that education is an abolitionist, and theologians know that science is the deadly foe of every creed in Christendom.

In the age of faith a personal god stood at the head of every department of ignorance, and was supposed to be the king of kings, the rewarder and punisher of individuals, and the governor of nations.

The worshipers of this god have always regarded the men in love with simple facts as atheists in disguise. And it must be admitted that nothing is more atheistic than a fact. Pure science is necessarily godless. It is incapable of

worship. It investigates, and can not afford to shut its eyes even long enough to pray. There was a time when those who disputed the divine right of kings were denounced as blasphemous; but the time came when liberty demanded that a personal god should be retired from politics. In our country this was substantially done in 1776, when our fathers declared that all power to govern came from the consent of the governed. The cloud theory was abandoned, and one government has been established for the benefit of mankind. Our fathers did not keep God out of the Constitution from principle, but from jealousy. Each church, in colonial times, preferred to live in single blessedness rather than see some rival wedded to the State. Mutual hatred planted our tree of religious liberty. A constitution without a god has at last given us a nation without a slave.

A personal god sustains the same relation to religion as to politics. The Deity is a master and man a serf, and this relation is inconsistent with true progress. The universe ought to be a true democracy—an infinite republic without a tyrant and without a chain.

Auguste Comte [1] endeavored to put humanity in the place of Jehovah, and no conceivable change can be more desirable than this. This

[1] Isidore Auguste Marie François Xavier Comte, a French philosopher; born, 1798; died, 1857.

great man did not, like some of his followers, put a mysterious something called law in the place of God, which is simply giving the old master a new name. Law is this side of phenomena, not the other. It is not the cause, neither is it the result of phenomena. The fact of succession and resemblance, that is to say, the same thing happening under the same conditions, is all we mean by law. No one can conceive of a law existing apart from matter, or controlling matter, any more than he can understand the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost, or motion apart from substance. We are beginning to see that law does not, and can not exist as an entity, but that it is only a conception of the mind to express the fact that the same entities, under the same conditions, produce the same results. Law does not produce the entities, the conditions, of the results, or even the sameness of the results. Neither does it affect the relations or entities, nor the result of such relations, but it stands for the fact that the same causes under the same conditions, eternally have, and eternally will, produce the same results.

The metaphysicians are always giving us explanations of phenomena which are as difficult to understand as the phenomena they seek to explain; and the believers in God establish their dogmas by miracles, and then substantiate the miracles by assertions.

The designer of the teleologist, the first cause of the religious philosopher, the vital force of the biologist, and the law of the half-orthodox scientists, are all the shadowy children of ignorance and fear.

The universe is all there is. It is both subject and object; contemplator and contemplated; creator and created; destroyer and destroyed; preserver and preserved; and within itself are all causes, modes, motions, and effects.

Unable in some things to rise above the superstitions of his day, Comte adopted not only the machinery, but some of the prejudices of Catholicism. He made the mistake of Luther.[1] He tried to reform the church of Rome. Destruction is the only reformation of which that church is capable. Every religion is based upon a misconception, not only of the cause of phenomena, but of the real object of life, that is to say, upon falsehood; and the moment the truth is known and understood, these religions must fall. In the field of thought, they are briers, thorns, and noxious weeds; on the shores of intellectual discovery, they are sirens, and in the forests that the brave thinkers are now penetrating, they are the wild beasts, fanged and monstrous. You can not reform these weeds. Sirens can not be changed into good citizens; and such wild beasts, even when tamed, are of no possible use. De-

[1] Martin Luther, a German reformer; born, 1483; died, 1546.

struction is the only remedy. Reformation is a hospital where the new philosophy exhausts its strength nursing the old religion.

There was, in the brain of the great Frenchman, the dawn of that happy day in which humanity will be the only religion, good the only god, happiness the only object, restitution the only atonement, mistake the only sin, and affection, guided by intelligence, the only savior of mankind. This dawn enriched his poverty, illuminated the darkness of his life, peopled his loneliness with the happy millions yet to be, and filled his eyes with proud and tender tears.

A few years ago I asked the superintendent of Père La Chaise if he knew where I could find the tomb of Auguste Comte. He had never heard even the name of the author of the positive philosophy. I asked him if he had ever heard of Napoleon Bonaparte.[1] In a half-insulted tone, he replied, "Of course I have; why do you ask me such a question?" "Simply," was my answer, "that I might have the opportunity of saying that, when everything connected with Napoleon, except his crimes, shall have been forgotten, Auguste Comte will be lovingly remembered as a benefactor of the human race."

The Jewish God must be dethroned! A personal Deity must go back to the darkness of

[1] Napoleon (I) Bonaparte, a French general and emperor; born, 1769; emperor of the French, 1804-1814; died, 1821.

barbarism from whence he came. The theologians must abdicate, and popes, priests, and clergymen, labeled as "extinct species," must occupy the mental museums of the future.

In my judgment, this book, filled with original thought, will hasten the coming of that blessed time.

A REVIEW OF HIS REVIEWERS

[The following address was delivered in the Grand Opera House, San Francisco, in the summer of 1877, in reply to Colonel Ingersoll's critics. He began by stating that the object of his lecture was to reply to some of the aspersions of the pulpit and the press. He claimed that he represented in part the glorious and holy cause of intellectual liberty, a cause too holy to be touched or smirched and defiled by any single person. What he had said he dared say, because he believed it would make men more just, the father more tender, the mother more loving, the child more affectionate, and the rose bloom in the pathway of every human being. "What have I said?" asked the lecturer vehemently. "What has been my offense? I have been spoken of as if I were a wolf endeavoring to devour the entire fold of sheep in the absence of the shepherd." He repeated his definition of human liberty as laid down in his lecture on the "Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child," and asseverated that he believed in Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, and all that that glorious trinity involved and insured. He believed in the trinity of Observation, Reason, and Science, the trinity of Man, Woman, and Child; the trinity of Love, Joy, and Hope; and thought that every man has a right to think for himself, and no other man has the right to debar him of this privilege by torture, by social ostracism, or any of the numerous other expedients resorted to by the enemies of advancement. He asked:]

Does God wish the lip-worship of a slave? a sneak? of a man that dares not reason? If I

were the infinite God, I would rather have the worship of one good man of brains than of a world of such men. I am told that I am in danger of everlasting fire, and that I shall burn forever in hell. I tell you, my friends, if I were going to hell to-night I would take an overcoat with me. Do not tell me that the eternal future of a man may depend upon his belief. I deny it. That a man should be punished for having come to an honest conclusion, the honest production of his brain; that an honest conclusion should be deemed a crime and so declared, it is an infamous, monstrous assertion, and I would rather go to hell than to keep the company of a God who would damn His child for an honest belief.

Next I "preached" that a woman was the equal of man, entitled to everything that he is entitled to, to be his partner, and to be cherished and respected because she is the weaker, to be treated as a splendid flower. I said that man should not be cross to her, but fill the house that she is in with such joy that it would burst out at the window. I have said that matrimony is the holiest of sacraments, and I have said that the Bible took woman up thousands of years ago and handed her down to man as a slave, and I have said that the Bible is a barbarous book for teaching that she is a slave. And I repeat it, and will prove later what I have said.

I have pleaded for the rights of man, of wife, and of the little child; I have said we can govern children by love and affection; I have asked for tender treatment for the child of crime; I have asked mothers to cease beating their children and to take them to their hearts; and for this I am denounced by the religious press and men in the pulpits as a demon and a monster of heresy, who should be driven out from among you as an unclean thing.

But I should not complain. Only a few years ago I should have been compelled to look at my denouncers through flame and smoke; but they dare not treat me so now or they would. One hundred years ago I should have been burned for claiming the right of reason; fifty years ago I should have been imprisoned and my wife and children would have been torn away from me, and twenty-five years ago I could not have made a living in the United States in my profession—the law. But I live now and can see through it all, and all is light.

I delivered another lecture, on "Ghosts," in which I sought to show that man had been controlled in the past by phantoms created by his own imagination; in which the pencil of fear had drawn pictures for him on the canvas of superstition, and that men had groveled in the dirt before their own superstitious creations. I endeavored to show that man had received

nothing from these ghosts but hatred, blood, ignorance, and unhappiness, and that they had filled our world with woe and tears. This is what I endeavored to show—no more. Now, everyone has as much right to differ with me as I with them, but it does not make the slightest difference for the purpose of argument whether I am a good man or a bad, whether I am ugly or handsome—although I would not object to resting my case on that issue; the only thing to be considered and discussed is, is what I have said true, or is it untrue?

Now, I said that the Bible came from the ghosts, and that they gave us the doctrine of immortality of the soul, which I deny. Now, the immortality of the soul, if there is such a thing, is a fact, and therefore no book could make it. If I am immortal, I am ; if not, no book could make me so. The doctrine of immortality is based in the hope of the human heart, and is not derived from any book or creed. It has its origin in the ebb and flow of the human affections, and will continue as long as affection, and is the rainbow in the sky of hope. It does not depend on a book, on ghosts, on superstition of any kind; it is a flower of the human heart. I did say that these ghosts, or the book, taught that human slavery was right, that most monstrous of all crimes, that makes miserable the victim and debases the master, for a slave can

have all the virtues while the master can not. I did say that it riveted the chains upon the oppressed, and that it counseled the robbing of that most precious of all boons—Liberty. I add that the book upheld all this, that it sustained and sanctified the institution of human slavery. I did also assert that this same book, which my critics claim was inspired by God, inculcated the doctrine of witchcraft, for which people through its teaching were hanged and burned for bringing disease upon the regal persons of kings, and for souring beer. I did say that this book upheld that worst of all infamies, polygamy, and that it did not teach political liberty or religious toleration, but political slavery and the most wretched intolerance. I did try to prove that these ghosts knew less than nothing about medicine, politics, legislation, astronomy, geology, and astrology, but I am also aware that in saying these things I have done what my censors think I ought not to have done. But the victor ought not to feel malice, and I shall have none.

As soon as I had said all these things, some gentlemen felt called upon to answer them, which they had a right to do. Now, I like fairness, am enamored with it, probably because I get so little of it. I can say a great many mean things, for I have read all the religious papers, and I ought to be able to account

for every motive in a mean manner after that, but I will not.

The first gentleman whom I shall call your attention to is the Rev. Dr. Woodbridge.

It seems that when I delivered my lectures the conclusion was come to that "that man does not believe in anything but matter and force—that man does not believe in spirit." Why not? If by spirit you mean that which thinks, I am one of them myself. If you mean by spirit that which hopes and reasons and loves and aspires, why, then I am a believer in spirits; but whatever spirit there is in this universe I will take my oath is a natural product and not superimposed upon this world. All I will say is that whatever is, is natural, and there is, in my judgment, as much goodness, as much spirit here in this world as in any other, and you are just as near the heart of the universe here as you ever can be.

But, they say, "there is matter, and there is force, and there is spirit." Well, what of it? There is no matter without force. What would keep it together unless there was force? Can you imagine matter without force? Honor bright, can you conceive of force without matter? And what is spirit? They say spirit is the first thing that ever was. It seems to me sometimes as though spirit was the blossom and fruit of all, and not the commencement. But

they say spirit was first. What could that spirit do? No force—no matter—a spirit living in an infinite vacuum without side, edge, or bottom. This spirit created the world; and if this spirit did, there must have been a time when it commenced to create, and back of that an eternity spent in absolute idleness. Can a spirit exist without matter or without force? I honestly say I do not know what matter is, what force is, what spirit is; but if you mean by matter anything that I can touch, or by force anything that we can overcome, then I believe in them. If you mean by spirit anything that can think and love, I believe in spirits.

The next critic who assailed me was the Rev. Mr. Kalloch. I am going to show you what I can understand. I am not going to say a word about the reputation of this man, although he took some liberties with mine.

This gentleman says negation is a poor thing to die by. I would just as lief die by that as the opposite. He spoke of the last hours of Paine [1] and Voltaire [2] and the terrors of their death-beds but the question arises, Is there a word of truth in all he said? I have observed that the murderer dies with courage and firm-

[1] Thomas Paine, an Anglo-American political writer and free-thinker; born, 1737; died, 1809.

[2] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

ness in many instances, but that does not make me think that it sanctified his crime; in fact, it makes no impression upon me one way or the other. When a man through old age or infirmity approaches death the intellectual faculties are dimmed, his senses become less and less, and as he loses these he goes back to his old superstition. Old age brings back the memories of childhood. And the great bard [1] gave even in the corrupt and besotted Falstaff [2]—who prattled of babbling brooks and green fields—an instance of the retracing steps taken by the memory at the last gasp.

It has been said that the Bible was sanctified by our mothers. Every superstition in the world, from the beginning of all time, has had such a sanctification. The Turk dying on the Russian battle-field pressing the Koran to his bosom, breathes his last thinking of the loving adjuration of his mother to guard it. Every superstition has been rendered sacred by the love of a mother. I know what it has cost the noble and the brave to throw to the winds these superstitions.

Since the death of Voltaire, who was innocent of all else than a desire to shake off the superstitions of the past, the curse of Rome has pur-

[1] Shakespeare.

[2] A character in Shakespeare's plays, *Henry IV,* Parts I and II, and in *The Merry Wives of Windsor.*

sued him, and ignorant Protestants have echoed that curse. I like Voltaire. Whenever I think of him it is as a plumed knight coming from the fray with victory shining upon his brow. He was once in the Bastile, and while there he changed his name from François Marie Arouet to Voltaire; and when the Bastile was torn down "Voltaire" was the battle-cry of those who did it. He did more to bring about religious toleration than any man in the galaxy of those who strove for the privilege of free thought. He was always on the side of justice. He was full of faults and had many virtues. His doctrines have never brought unhappiness to any country. He died as serenely as anyone could. Speaking to his servant, he said, "Farewell, my faithful friend." Could he have done a more noble act than to recognize as a man him who had served him faithfully? What more could be wished?

And now let me say here, I will give one thousand dollars in gold to any clergyman who can substantiate that the death of Voltaire was not as peaceful as the dawn. And of Thomas Paine, whom they assert died in fear and agony, frightened by the clanking chains of devils, in fact, frightened to death by God—I will give one thousand dollars likewise to anyone who can substantiate this absurd story—a story without a word of truth in it.

And let me ask, who dies in the most fear, the man who, like the saint, exclaims: "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" or Voltaire, who peacefully and quietly bade his servant farewell?

The question is not who died right, but who lived right.

I look upon death as the most unimportant moment of life, and believe that not half the responsibility is attached to dying that is to living properly.

This Rev. Mr. Kalloch is a Baptist. He has a right to be a Baptist. The first Baptist, though, was a heretic; but it is among the wonders that when a heretic gets fifteen or twenty to join him he suddenly begins to be orthodox. Roger Williams[1] was a Baptist, but how he, or anyone not destitute of good sense, could be one, passes my comprehension. Let me illustrate:

Suppose it was the Day of Judgment tonight and we were all assembled, as the ghosts say we will be, to be judged, and God should ask a man:

"Have you been a good man?"

"Yes."

"Have you loved your wife and children?"

"Yes."

[1] Roger Williams, an English colonist, the founder of Rhode Island; born about 1600; died, 1684.

"Have you taken good care of them and made them happy?"

"Yes."

"Have you tried to do right by your neighbors?"

"Yes."

"Paid all your debts?"

"Yes."

And then cap the climax by asking:

"Were you ever baptized?"

Could a solitary being hear that question without laughing? I think not.

I once happened to be in the company of six or seven Baptist elders (I never have been able to understand since how I got into such bad company), and they wanted to know what I thought of baptism. I answered that I had not given the matter any attention, in fact I had no special opinion upon the subject. But they pressed me and finally I told them that I thought with soap baptism was a good thing.

The Rev. Mr. Guard has attacked me, and has described me, among other things, as a dog barking at a train. Of course he was the train. He said, first, the Bible is not an immoral book, because I swore upon it when I joined the Free and Accepted Masons. That settles the question. Secondly, he says that Solomon had softening of the brain and fatty degeneration of the

heart; thirdly, that the Hebrews had the right to slay all the inhabitants of Canaan according to the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. He says that the destruction of these Canaanites, the ripping open by the bloody sword of women with child was an act of sublime mercy. Think of that! He says that the Canaanites should have been driven from their homes, and not only driven, but that the men who simply were guilty of the crime of fighting for their native land—the old men with gray hairs; the old mothers, the young mothers, the little dimpled, prattling child—that it was an act of sublime mercy to plunge the sword of religious persecution into old and young.

If that is mercy, let us have injustice. If there is that kind of a God, I am sorry that I exist.

Fourthly, Mr. Guard said God has the right to do as He pleases with the beings He has created; and, fifthly, that God, by choosing the Jews and governing them personally, spoiled them to that degree that they crucified Him the first opportunity they had. That shows what a good administration will do. Sixthly, he says polygamy is not a bad thing when compared with the picture of Antony and Cleopatra, now on exhibition in this city.

I will just say one word about art. I think this is one of the most beautiful words in our

language, and do you know, it never seemed to me necessary for art to go into partnership with a rag? I like the paintings of Angelo,[1] of Raphael [2]—I like those splendid souls that are put upon canvas—all there is of human beauty. There are brave souls in every land who worship nature, grand and nude, and who, with swift, indignant hand, tear off the fig leaves of the prude.

Seventhly, it may be said that the Bible sanctions slavery, but that it is not an immoral book if it does. Mr. Guard playfully says that he is a puppy nine days old; that he was only eight days old when I came here. I'm inclined to think he has overstated his age. I account for his argument precisely as he did for the sin of Solomon, softening of the brain, or fatty degeneration of the heart.

It does seem to me that if I were a good Christian and knew that another man was going down to the bottomless pit to be miserable and in agony forever I would try to stop him, and instead of filling my mouth with epithet and invective, and drawing the lips of malice back from the teeth of hatred, my eyes would be filled with tears, and I would do what I could to re-

[1] Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, an Italian sculptor, painter, architect, and poet; born, 1475; died, 1564.

[2] Raphael Sanzio (or Santi), an Italian painter; born, 1483; died, 1520.

claim him and take him up in the arms of my affection.

The next gentleman is the Rev. Mr. Robinson, who delivered a sermon entitled, "Ghost against God, or Ingersoll against Honesty." Of course he was honesty. He apologized for attending an infidel lecture upon the ground that he hated to contribute to the support of a materialistic showman. I am willing to trade fagots for epithets, and the rack for anything that may be said in his sermon. I am willing to trade the instrument of torture with which they could pull the nails from my fingers for anything which the ingenuity of orthodoxy can invent. When I saw the report—although I do not know that I ought to tell it—I felt bad. I knew that man's conscience must be rankling like a snake in his bosom that he had contributed a dollar to the support of a man as bad as I.

I wrote him a letter, in which I said: "The Rev. Samuel Robinson, *My Dear Sir:* In order to relieve your conscience of the stigma of having contributed to the support of an unbeliever in Ghosts, I herewith inclose the dollar you paid to attend my lecture." I then gave him a little good advice to be charitable, and regretted exceedingly that any man could listen to me for an hour and a half and not go away satisfied that other men had the same right to think that he had.

[The speaker went on to answer the argument of Mr. Robinson with regard to persecution, contending that Protestants had been guilty of it no less than Catholics; and showing that the first people to pass an act of toleration in the New World were the Catholics in Maryland. The reverend gentleman has stated also that Infidelity has done nothing for the world in the development of art and science. Orthodoxy never advances; when it does advance, it ceases to be orthodoxy. A reply to certain strictures in the *Occident* led the lecturer up to another ministerial critic, the Rev. W. E. Ijams.]

I want to say that, so far as I can see, in his argument this gentleman has treated me in a kind and considerate spirit. He makes two or three mistakes, but I suppose they are the fault of the report from which he quoted. I am made to say in his sermon that there is no sacred place in the universe. What I did say was: "There is no sacred place in all the universe of thought; there is nothing too holy to be investigated, nothing too sacred to be understood, and I said that the fields of thought were fenceless and that they should be without a wall." I say so to-night. He further said that I said that a man had not only the right to do right, but to do wrong. What I did say, was: "Liberty is the right to do right, and the right to think right, and the right to think wrong," not the right to do wrong. That is all I have to say in regard to that gentleman, except that, so far as I could see, he was perfectly fair, and

treated me as though I was a human being as well as he.

[The speaker referred to the slurs thrown upon him by his reviewers, who have claimed that his theories have no foundation, his arguments no reason, and that his utterances are vapid, blasphemous, and unworthy a reply. He said that their statements and their actions were sadly at variance, for, while declaring him a senseless idiot, they spent hours in striving to prove themselves not idiots; in other words, in one breath they declare that his views were absolutely without point, and needed no explaining away; while in direct rebuttal of this declaration, they devoted time and labor in attempts to disprove the very things they called self-evident absurdities. Turning from this subject, Mr. Ingersoll read numerous extracts from the Bible, with interpolated comments. He claimed that the Bible authorized slavery, and that many devoted believers in that book had turned the cross of Christ into a whipping-post. He did not wish it understood that he could find no good in believers in creeds; far from it, for some of his dearest friends were most orthodox in their religious ideas, and there had been hundreds of thousands of good men among both clergy and laymen. History has shown no people more nobly self-sacrificing than the Jesuit Fathers who first visited this country to proselyte among the Indians. But these men and their like were better than their creeds; better than the book in which their faith was centered. He said that the Bible tells us distinctly that the world was made in six days—not periods, but actual, *bona fide* days—a statement which it iterates and re-iterates; it also tells us that God lengthened the day for the benefit of a gentleman named Joshua, in other words, that He stopped the rotary motion of the earth; motion is changed into heat by

stoppage, and the world turns with such velocity that its sudden stoppage would create a heat of intensity beyond the wildest flight of our imagination, and yet this impossible feat was performed that Joshua might have longer time to expend in slaying a handful of Amorites; the Bible also upholds the doctrines of witchcraft and spiritualism, for Saul visited the witch of Endor, and she, after preparing the cabinet, trotted out the spirit of Samuel, said spirit kindly joining in conversation with Saul, without requiring the aid of a trance medium. The speaker then quoted at length from Leviticus concerning wizards and evil spirits, described the temptation of Christ by Satan, and the driving of devils from man into swine. He sneered at the rights of children as biblically described, citing the law which sentenced them to be stoned to death for disobedience to parents, the almost sacrifice of Isaac by his father, and the actual murder of Jephthah's daughter, asking if a God who could demand such worship was worthy the love of man. He next referred to the conversation between God and Satan concerning the man Job, and to the reward given to the latter for his long continued patience. His three daughters and his seven sons had been taken from him merely to test his patience, and the merciful God gave him in exchange three other daughters and seven sons, but they were not the children whom he had loved and lost. The Bible represents woman as vastly inferior to man, while he believed, with Bobbie Burns, that God made man with a prentice-hand, and woman after He had learned the trade. Polygamy, also, was a doctrine supported by this pure and pious work; a doctrine so foul that language is not strong enough to express its infamy. The Bible taught, as a religious creed, that if your wife, your sister, your brother, your dearest friend, tempted you to change from the religion of your fathers, your duty to God demanded that you should at once strike a blow at the life of your tempter.

Let us suppose, then, that in truth God went to Palestine and selected the scanty tribes of Israel as His chosen people, and supposing that He afterward came to Jerusalem in the shape of a man and taught a different doctrine from the one prescribed by their book and their clergy, and that the chosen people, in obedience to the education He had prepared for them, struck at the life of Him who tempted them. Were they to be cursed by God and man because the former had reaped the harvest of his own sowing?

The speaker then brought his address to a close, with a happy compliment to San Francisco and her people.]

REPLY TO T. DE WITT TALMAGE

[This interview is reprinted from *The Chicago Tribune* of February 4, 1882.]

I want to ask you a few questions about the second sermon of Mr. Talmage; have you read it, and what do you think of it?

The text taken by the reverend gentleman is an insult, and was intended as such: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." Mr. Talmage seeks to apply this text to anyone who denies that the Jehovah of the Jews was and is the infinite and eternal Creator of all. He is perfectly satisfied that any man who differs with him on this question is a "fool," and he has the Christian forbearance and kindness to say so. I presume he is honest in this opinion, and no doubt regards Bruno,[1] Spinoza,[2] and Humboldt[3] as idiots. He entertains the same opinion of some of the greatest, wisest, and best of Greece and Rome.

No man is fitted to reason upon this question

[1] Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher; born about 1548; died, 1600.

[2] Benedict Spinoza, a Dutch-Jewish philosopher; born, 1632; died, 1677.

[3] Alexander von Humboldt, a German scientist and author; born, 1769; died, 1859.

who has not the intelligence to see the difficulties in all theories. No man has yet evolved a theory that satisfactorily accounts for all that is. No matter what his opinion may be, he is beset by a thousand difficulties, and innumerable things insist upon an explanation. The best that any man can do is to take that theory which to his mind presents the fewest difficulties. Mr. Talmage has been educated in a certain way—has a brain of a certain quantity, quality, and form—and accepts, in spite it may be, of himself, a certain theory. Others, formed differently, having lived under different circumstances, can not accept the Talmagian view, and thereupon he denounces them as fools. In this he follows the example of David the murderer; of David, who advised one of his children to assassinate another; of David, whose last words were those of hate and crime. Mr. Talmage insists that it takes no especial brain to reason out a "design" in nature, and in a moment afterward says that "when the world slew Jesus, it showed what it would do with the eternal God, if once it could get its hands on Him." Why should a God of infinite wisdom create people who would gladly murder their Creator? Was there any particular "design" in that? Does the existence of such people conclusively prove the existence of a good Designer? It seems to me—and I take

it that my thought is natural, as I have only been born once—that an infinitely wise and good God would naturally create good people, and if He has not, certainly the fault is His. The God of Mr. Talmage knew, when He created Guiteau,[1] that he would assassinate Garfield.[2] Why did He create him? Did He want Garfield assassinated? Will somebody be kind enough to show the design in this transaction? Is it possible to see design in earthquakes, in volcanoes, in pestilence, in famine, in ruthless and relentless war? Can we find design in the fact that every animal lives upon some other—that every drop of every sea is a battlefield where the strong devour the weak? Over the precipice of cruelty rolls a perfect Niagara of blood. Is there design in this? Why should a good God people a world with men capable of burning their fellow-men—and capable of burning the greatest and best? Why does a good God permit these things? It is said of Christ that He was infinitely kind and generous, infinitely merciful, because when on earth He cured the sick, the lame, and the blind. Has He not as much power now as He had then? If He was kind and is the God of all worlds,

[1] Charles Guiteau, an American assassin of French-Canadian extraction; born about 1840; hanged, 1882.

[2] James Abram Garfield, an American statesman; born, 1831; inaugurated president of the United States, March 4, 1881; shot by Guiteau, July 2, 1881; died, September 19, 1881.

why does He not give back to the widow her son? Why does He withhold light from the eyes of the blind? And why does One who had the power miraculously to feed thousands allow millions to die for want of food? Did Christ only have pity when He was part human? Are we indebted for His kindness to the flesh that clothed His spirit? Where is He now? Where has He been through all the centuries of slavery and crime? If this universe was designed, then all that happens was designed. If a man constructs an engine the boiler of which explodes, we say either that he did not know the strength of his materials or that he was reckless of human life. If an infinite being should construct a weak or imperfect machine, he must be held accountable for all that happens. He can not be permitted to say that he did not know the strength of the materials. He is directly and absolutely responsible. So, if this was designed by a being of infinite power and wisdom, he is responsible for the result of that design.

My position is this: I do not know. But there are so many objections to the personal God theory that it is impossible for me to accept it. I prefer to say that the universe is all the God there is. I prefer to make no being responsible. I prefer to say: If the naked are clothed, man must clothe them; if the hungry are fed, man must feed them. I prefer to

rely upon human endeavor, upon human intelligence, upon the heart and brain of man. There is no evidence that God has ever interfered in the affairs of man. The hand of earth is stretched uselessly toward heaven. From the clouds there comes no help. In vain the shipwrecked cry to God. In vain the imprisoned ask for release—the world moves on, and the heavens are deaf and dumb and blind. The frost freezes, the fire burns, slander smites, the wrong triumphs, the good suffer, and prayer dies upon the lips of faith.

Mr. Talmage charges you with being "the champion blasphemer of America." What do you understand blasphemy to be?

Blasphemy is an epithet bestowed by superstition upon common sense. Whoever investigates a religion as he would any department of science is called a blasphemer. Whoever contradicts a priest, whoever has the impudence to use his own reason, whoever is brave enough to express his honest thought is a blasphemer in the eyes of the religionist. When a missionary speaks slightingly of the wooden god of a savage the savage regards him as a blasphemer. To laugh at the pretentions of Mohammed in Constantinople is blasphemy. To say in St. Petersburg that Mohammed was a prophet of God is also blasphemy. There was a time when to acknowledge the divinity of Christ was blas-

phemy in Jerusalem. To deny His divinity is now a blasphemy in New York. Blasphemy is to a considerable extent a geographical question. It depends not only on what you say, but where you are when you say it. Blasphemy is what the old calls the new. The founder of every religion was a blasphemer. The Jews regarded Christ as a blasphemer. The Athenians had the same opinion of Socrates.

The Catholics have always looked upon the Protestants as blasphemers, and the Protestants have always held the same generous opinion of the Catholics. To deny that Mary is the mother of God is blasphemy. To say that she is the mother of God is blasphemy. Some savages think that a dried snake skin stuffed with leaves is sacred, and he who thinks otherwise is a blasphemer. It was once blasphemy to laugh at Diana of the Ephesians. Many people think that it is blasphemous to tell your real opinion of the Jewish Jehovah. Others imagine that words can be printed upon paper, and the paper bound into a book covered with sheep-skin, and that the book is sacred, and that to question its sacredness is blasphemy. Blasphemy is also a crime against God, and yet nothing can be more absurd than a crime against God. If God is infinite you can not injure Him. You can not commit a crime against any being that you can not injure. Of course, the infinite can

not be injured. Man is a conditioned being. By changing his condition, his surroundings, you can injure him, but if God is infinite He is conditionless. If He is conditionless, He can not by any possibility be injured. You can neither increase nor decrease the well-being of the infinite. Consequently, a crime against God is a demonstrated impossibility. The cry of blasphemy means only that the argument of the blasphemer can not be answered. The sleight-of-hand performer, when someone tries to raise the curtain behind which he operates, cries "blasphemer!" The priest, finding that he has been attacked by common sense, by a fact, resorts to the same cry. Blasphemy is the black flag of theology, and it means no argument and no quarter! It is an appeal to prejudices, to passions, and ignorance. It is the last resort of a defeated priest. Blasphemy marks the point where argument stops and slander begins. In old times it was the signal for throwing stones, for gathering fagots, and for tearing flesh; now it means falsehood and calumny.

Then you think there is no such thing as the crime of blasphemy, and that no such offense can be committed?

Anyone who knowingly speaks in favor of injustice is a blasphemer. Whoever wishes to destroy liberty of thought, the honest expression

of ideas, is a blasphemer. Whoever is willing to malign his neighbor simply because he differs with him upon a subject about which neither of them knows anything for certain, is a blasphemer. If a crime can be committed against God, he commits it who imputes to God the commission of crime. The man who says that God ordered the assassination of women and babes, that He gave maidens to satisfy the lust of soldiers, that He enslaved His own children, that man is a blasphemer. In my judgment, it would be far better to deny the existence of God entirely. It seems to me that every man ought to give his honest opinion. No man should suppose that any infinite God requires him to tell as truth what he knows nothing about.

Mr. Talmage, in order to make a point against infidelity, states from his pulpit that I was in favor of poisoning the minds of children by the circulation of immoral books. This statement was entirely false. He ought to have known that I withdrew from the Liberal League upon the very question whether the law should be repealed or modified. I favored a modification of that law so that books and papers could not be thrown from the mails simply because they were infidel. I was and am in favor of the destruction of every immoral book in the world. I was and am in favor not only of the law against the circulation of such filth, but

wanted it executed to the letter in every State in the Union. Long before he made that statement I had introduced a resolution to that effect, and supported the resolution in a speech. Notwithstanding these facts, hundreds of clergymen have made haste to tell the exact opposite of the truth. This they have done in the name of Christianity, under the pretense of pleasing their God. In my judgment it is far better to tell your honest opinions, even upon the subject of theology, than to knowingly tell a falsehood about a fellow-man. Mr. Talmage may have been ignorant of the truth. He may have been misled by other ministers, and for his benefit I make this explanation. I wanted the laws modified so that bigotry could not interfere with the literature of intelligence, but I did not want in any way to shield the writers or publishers of immoral books.

Upon this subject I used, at the last meeting of the Liberal League that I attended, the following language: "But there is a distinction, wide as the Mississippi, yes, wider than the Atlantic, wider than all the oceans, between the literature of immorality and the literature of free thought. One is a crawling, slimy lizard, and the other an angel with wings of light. Let us draw this distinction. Let us understand ourselves. Do not make the wholesale statement that all these laws ought to be repealed.

They ought not to be repealed. Some of them are good, and the law against sending instruments of vice through the mails is good. The law against sending obscene pictures and books is good. The law against sending bogus diplomas through the mails, to allow a lot of ignorant hyenas to prey upon the sick people of the world, is a good law. The law against rascals who are getting up bogus lotteries, and send their circulars in the mails is a good law. You know, as well as I, that there are certain books not fit to go through the mails. You know that. You know there are certain pictures not fit to be transmitted, not fit to be delivered to any human being. When these books and pictures come into the control of the United States I say, burn them up! And when any man has been trying to make money by pandering to the lowest passions in the human breast, then I say, Prosecute him! let the law take its course."

I can hardly convince myself that when Mr. Talmage made this charge he was acquainted with the facts. It seems incredible that any man pretending to be governed by the law of common honesty could make a charge like this, knowing it to be untrue. Under no circumstances would I charge Mr. Talmage with being an infamous man, unless the evidence was complete and overwhelming. Even then, I should

hesitate long before making the charge. The side I take on the theological questions does not render a resort to slander or calumny a necessity. If Mr. Talmage is an honorable man he will take back the statement he has made.

What have you to say to the charge that you are endeavoring to "assassinate God," and that you are "far worse than the man who attempts to kill his father, or his mother, or his sister, or his brother"?

Well I think that is about as reasonable as anything he says. No one wishes, so far as I know, to assassinate God. The idea of assassinating an infinite being is, of course, infinitely absurd. One would think Mr. Talmage had lost his reason! And yet this man stands at the head of the Presbyterian clergy. It is for this reason that I answer him. He is the only Presbyterian minister in the United States, so far as I know, able to draw a big audience. He is, without doubt, the leader of that denomination. He is orthodox and conservative. He believes implicitly in the Five Points of Calvin, and says nothing simply for the purpose of attracting attention. He believes that God damns a man for His own glory; that He sends babes to hell to establish His mercy, and that He filled the world with disease and crime simply to demonstrate His wisdom. He believes that billions of years before the earth was God had made up

His mind as to the exact number that He would certainly damn, and had counted His saints. This doctrine he calls "glad tidings of great joy." He really believes that every man who is true to himself is waging war against God; that every infidel is a rebel; that every freethinker is a traitor; and that only those are good subjects who have joined the Presbyterian Church, know the Shorter Catechism by heart, and subscribe liberally toward lifting the mortgage on the Brooklyn Tabernacle. All the rest are endeavoring to assassinate God, plotting murder of the Holy Ghost, and applauding the Jews for the crucifixion of Christ. If Mr. Talmage is correct in his views as to the power and wisdom of God, I imagine that his enemies at last will be overthrown, that the assassins and murderers will not succeed, and that the infinite, with Mr. Talmage's assistance, will finally triumph. If there is an infinite God, certainly He ought to have made man grand enough to have and express an opinion of his own. Is it possible that God can be gratified with the applause of moral cowards? Does He seek to enhance His glory by receiving the adulation of cringing slaves? Is God satisfied with the adoration of the frightened?

You notice that Mr. Talmage finds nearly all the inventions of modern times mentioned in the Bible?

Yes; Mr. Talmage has made an exceedingly important discovery. I admit that I am somewhat amazed at the wisdom of the ancients. This discovery has been made just in the nick of time. Millions of people were losing their respect for the Old Testament. They were beginning to think that there was some discrepancy between the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel and the latest developments in physical science. Thousands of preachers were telling their flocks that the Bible is not a scientific book; that Joshua was not an inspired astronomer, that God never enlightened Moses about geology, and that Ezekiel did not understand the entire art of cookery. These admissions caused some young people to suspect that the Bible, after all, was not inspired; that the prophets of antiquity did not know as much as the discoverers of to-day. The Bible was falling into disrepute. Mr. Talmage has rushed to the rescue. He shows, and shows as conclusively as anything can be shown from the Bible, that Job understood all the law of light thousands of years before Newton [1] lived; that he anticipated the discoveries of Descartes,[2] Huxley,[3] and

[1] Sir Isaac Newton, an English mathematician and natural philosopher; born, 1642; died, 1727.

[2] René Descartes, a French philosopher; born, 1596; died, 1650.

[3] Thomas Henry Huxley, an English biologist; born, 1825; died, 1895.

Tyndall;[1] that he was familiar with the telegraph and telephone; that Morse,[2] Bell,[3] and Edison[4] simply put his discoveries in successful operation; that Nahum was, in fact, a master-mechanic; that he understood perfectly the modern railway, and described it so accurately that Trevithick[5] and Stephenson[6] had no difficulty in constructing a locomotive. He also has discovered that Job was well acquainted with the trade winds, and understood the mysterious currents, tides, and pulses of the sea, that Lieutenant Maury[7] was a plagiarist, that Humboldt was simply a Biblical student. He finds that Isaiah and Solomon were not behind Galileo,[8] Morse,[9] Meyer,[10] and Watt.[11] This is a discovery

[1] John Tyndall, a British physicist; born, 1820; died, 1893.

[2] Samuel Finley Breese Morse, an American inventor of the telegraph; born, 1791; died, 1872.

[3] Alexander Graham Bell, a Scottish-American physicist and inventor of the telephone; born, 1847.

[4] Thomas Alva Edison, an American inventor; born, 1847.

[5] Richard Trevithick, an English inventor; born, 1771; died, 1833.

[6] George Stephenson, an English inventor, the perfector of the locomotive; born, 1781; died, 1848.

[7] Matthew Fontaine Maury, an American hydrographer and naval officer; born, 1806; died, 1873; he was the first to mark out specific routes to be followed in crossing the Atlantic.

[8] Galileo Galilei, an Italian physicist and astronomer; born, 1564; died, 1642.

[9] Jedidiah Morse, an American geographer; born, 1761; died, 1826.

[10] Hans Meyer, a German African explorer; born, 1858.

[11] James Watt, a British mechanician, inventor, and civil engineer; born, 1736; died, 1819.

wholly unexpected to me. If Mr. Talmage is right, I am satisfied the Bible is an inspired book. If it shall turn out that Joshua was superior to Laplace,[1] that Moses knew more about geology than Humboldt, that Job as a scientist was the superior of Kepler,[2] that Isaiah knew more than Copernicus,[3] and that even the minor prophets excelled the inventors and discoverers of our time—then I will admit that infidelity must become speechless forever. Until I read this sermon I had never even suspected that the inventions of modern times were known to the ancient Jews. I never supposed that Nahum knew the least thing about railroads, or that Job would have known a telegraph if he had seen it. I never supposed that Joshua comprehended the three laws of Kepler. Of course I have not read the Old Testament with as much care as some other people have, and when I did read it I was not looking for inventions and discoveries. I had been told so often that the Bible was no authority upon scientific questions that I was lulled almost into a state of lethargy. What is amazing to me is that so many men did read it without getting the slightest hint of the smallest invention. To think

[1] Marquis Pierre Simon de Laplace, a French astronomer and mathematician; born, 1749; died, 1827.

[2] Johann Kepler, a German astronomer; born, 1571; died, 1630.

[3] Copernicus, a Prussian astronomer; born, 1473; died, 1543.

that the Jews read that book for hundreds and hundreds of years, and yet went to their graves without the slightest notion of astronomy or geology or railroads, telegraphs, or steamboats. And then to think that the early fathers made it the study of their lives and died without inventing anything! I am astonished that Mr. Talmage does not figure in the records of the Patent Office himself. I can not account for this, except upon the supposition that he was too honest to infringe on the patents of the patriarchs. After this, I shall read the Old Testament with more care.

Do you see that Mr. Talmage endeavors to convict you of great ignorance in not knowing that the word translated "rib" should have been translated "side," and that Eve, after all, was not made out of a rib, but out of Adam's side?

I may have been misled by taking the Bible as it is translated. The Bible account is simply this: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." If Mr. Talmage is right, then the account should be as follows:

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his sides, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the side which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now side of my side, and flesh of my flesh." I do not see that the story is made any better by using the word "side" instead of "rib." It would be just as hard for God to make a woman out of a man's side as out of a rib. Mr. Talmage ought not to question the power of God to make a woman out of a bone, and he must recollect that the less the material the greater the miracle. There are two accounts of the creation of man in Genesis, the first being in the twenty-first verse of the first chapter and the second being in the twenty-first and twenty-second verses of the second chapter. According to the second account, "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." And after this "God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and put the man" in this garden. After this "He made every tree to grow that was good for food and pleasant to the sight," and, in addition, "the tree of life in the midst of the garden," beside "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." And He "put the man in the garden to dress it and keep it," telling him that he might

eat of everything he saw except of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. After this, God having noticed that it "was not good for man to be alone, formed out of the ground every beast of the field, every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them, and Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found an helpmeet for him." We are not told how Adam learned the language, nor how he understood what God said. I can hardly believe that any man can be created with the knowledge of a language. Education can not be ready made and stuffed into a brain. Each person must learn a language for himself. Yet in this account we find a language ready made for man's use. And not only man was enabled to speak, but a serpent also has the power of speech, and the woman holds a conversation with this animal and with her husband; and yet no account is given of how any language was learned. God is described as walking in the garden in the cool of the day, speaking like a man—holding conversations with the man and woman, occasionally addressing the serpent. In the nursery rhymes of the world there is nothing more childish than the creation of man and woman. The early fathers of the church held that woman was inferior to man, because man was not made

for woman, but woman for man, because Adam was made first and Eve afterward. They had not the gallantry of Robert Burns,[1] who accounted for the beauty of woman from the fact that God practiced on man first, and then gave woman the benefit of His experience. Think, in this age of the world, of a well educated, intelligent gentleman telling his little child that about six thousand years ago a mysterious being called God made the world out of His omnipotence; then made a man out of some dust which He is supposed to have molded into form; that He put this man in a garden for the purpose of keeping the trees trimmed; that after a little while He noticed that the man seemed lonesome, not particularly happy, almost homesick; that then it occurred to this God that it would be a good thing for the man to have some company, somebody to help him trim the trees, to talk to him and cheer him up on rainy days; that thereupon this God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man, took a knife, or a long, sharp piece of omnipotence, and took out one of the man's sides, or a rib, and of that made a woman; that then this man and woman got along real well till a snake got into the garden and induced the woman to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; that the woman got the man to take a bite; that afterwards both

[1] Robert Burns, a Scottish poet; born, 1759; died, 1796.

of them were detected by God, who was walking around in the cool of the evening, and thereupon they were turned out of the garden, lest they should put forth their hands and eat of the tree of life and live forever. This foolish story has been regarded as the sacred, inspired truth, as an account substantially written by God Himself; and thousands and millions of people have supposed it necessary to believe this childish falsehood, in order to save their souls. Nothing more laughable can be found in the fairy tales and folk-lore of savages. Yet this is defended by the leading Presbyterian divine, and those who fail to believe in the truth of this story are called "brazen-faced fools," "deicides," and "blasphemers." By this story woman in all Christian countries was degraded. She was considered too impure to preach the gospel, too impure to distribute the sacramental bread, too impure to hand about the sacred bread, too impure to step within the "holy of holies," in the Catholic churches, too impure to be touched by a priest. Unmarried men were considered purer than husbands and fathers. Nuns were regarded as superior to mothers, a monastery holier than a home, a nunnery nearer sacred than the cradle. And through all these years it has been thought better to love God than to love man, better to love God than to love your wife and children, better to worship

an imaginary deity than to help your fellow-men.

I regard the rights of men and women equal. In love's fair realm husband and wife are king and queen, sceptered and crowned alike, and seated on the self-same throne.

Do you still insist that the Old Testament upholds polygamy? Mr. Talmage denies this charge, and shows how terribly God punished those who were not satisfied with one wife.

I see nothing in what Mr. Talmage has said calculated to change my opinion. It has been admitted by thousands of theologians that the Old Testament upholds polygamy. Mr. Talmage is among the first to deny it. It will not do to say that David was punished for the crime of polygamy or concubinage. The Bible says he was "a man after God's own heart." He was made a king. He was a successful general, and his blood is said to have flowed in the veins of God. Solomon was, according to the account, enriched with wisdom above all human beings. Was that a punishment for having had so many wives? Was Abraham pursued by the justice of God because of the crime against Hagar, or for the crime against his own wife? The verse quoted by Mr. Talmage to show that God was opposed to polygamy—namely: the eighteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus—can not by any ingenuity be tor-

tured into a command against polygamy. The most that can be possibly said of it is, that you shall not marry the sister of your wife while your wife is living. Yet this passage is quoted by Mr. Talmage as "a thunder of prohibition against having more than one wife." In the twentieth chapter of Leviticus it is enacted: "That if a man take a wife and her mother they shall be burned with fire." A commandment like that shows that he might take his wife and somebody else's mother. These passages have nothing to do with polygamy. They show whom you may marry, not how many; and there is not in Leviticus a solitary word against polygamy—not one. Nor is there such a word in Genesis, or Exodus, or in the entire Pentateuch—not one word. And yet these books are filled with the most minute directions about killing sheep, and goats, and doves—about making clothes for priests, about fashioning tongs and snuffers—and yet, not one word against polygamy. It never occurred to the inspired writers that polygamy was a crime. It was taken as a matter of course. Women were simply property. Mr. Talmage, however, insists that, although God was against polygamy, He permitted it, and at the same time threw His moral influence against it.

Upon this subject he says: "No doubt God permitted polygamy to continue for some time,

just as He permits murder, arson, theft, and gambling to-day to continue, although He is against them." If God is the author of the Ten Commandments, He prohibited murder and theft, but He said nothing about polygamy. If He was so terribly against that crime, why did He forget to mention it? Was there not room enough on the tables of stone for just one word on this subject? Had He not time to give a commandment against slavery? Mr. Talmage, of course, insists that God has to deal with these things gradually, his idea being that if God had made a commandment against it all at once the Jews would have had nothing more to do with Him. Mr. Talmage insists that polygamy can not exist among people who believe the Bible. In this he is mistaken. The Mormons all believe the Bible. There is not a single polygamist in Utah who does not insist upon the inspiration of the Old and New Testaments. The Rev. Mr. Newman, a kind of peripatetic theologian, once had a discussion, I believe, with Elder Heber Kimball at Salt Lake City, upon the question of polygamy. It is sufficient to say of this discussion that it is now circulated by the Mormons as a campaign document. The elder overwhelmed the parson. Passages of Scripture in favor of polygamy were quoted by the hundred. The lives of all the patriarchs were brought forward and poor

Parson Newman was driven from the field. The truth is, the Jews at that time were much like our forefathers. They were barbarians, and many of their laws were unjust and cruel. Polygamy was the right of all, practiced, as a matter of fact, by the rich and powerful, and the rich and powerful were envied by the poor. In such esteem did the ancient Jews hold polygamy, that the number of Solomon's wives was given simply to enhance his glory. My own opinion is, that Solomon had very few wives and that polygamy was not general in Palestine. The country was too poor, and Solomon, in all his glory, was hardly able to support one wife. He was a poor barbarian king with a limited revenue, with a poor soil, with a sparse population, without art, without science, and without power. He sustained about the same relation to other kings that Delaware does to other States. Mr. Talmage says that God persecuted Solomon, and yet, if he will turn to the twenty-second chapter of I. Chronicles, he will find what God promised to Solomon. God, speaking to David, says, "Behold a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from his enemies around about; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build a house in my name, and he shall be my son,

and I will be his Father, and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom over Israel forever." Did God keep His promise? So he tells us that David was persecuted by God on account of his offenses, and yet I find in the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of I. Chronicles, the following account of the death of David: "And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor." Is this true?

What have you to say to the charge that you were mistaken in the number of years that the Hebrews were in Egypt? Mr. Talmage says that they were there four hundred and thirty years, instead of two hundred and fifteen years.

If you will read the third chapter of Galatians, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, you will find that it was four hundred and thirty years from the time God made the promise to Abraham to the giving of the law from Mount Sinai. The Hebrews did not go to Egypt for two hundred and fifteen years after the promise was made to Abraham, and consequently did not remain in Egypt more than two hundred and fifteen years. If Galatians is true I am right.

Strange that Mr. Talmage should try to belittle the miracles. The trouble with this defender of the faith is that he cares nothing for facts. He makes the strangest statements, and cares the least for proof, of any man I know.

I can account for what he says of me only upon the supposition that he has not read my lectures.

Did you ever attack the character of Queen Victoria,[1] *or did you draw any parallel between her and George Eliot,*[2] *calculated to depreciate the reputation of the Queen?*

I never said a word against Victoria. The fact is, I am not acquainted with her—never met her in my life, and know but little of her. I never happened to see her "in plain clothes, reading the Bible to the poor in the lane"—neither did I ever hear her sing. I most cheerfully admit that her reputation is good in the neighborhood where she resides. In one of my lectures I drew a parallel between George Eliot and Victoria. I was showing the difference between a woman who had won her position in the world of thought and one who was queen by chance. This is what I said: "It no longer satisfies the ambition of a great man to be a king or emperor. The last Napoleon was not satisfied with being the emperor of the French. He was not satisfied with having a circlet of gold about his head—he wanted some evidence that he had something of value in his head. So he

[1] Victoria I, an English queen; born, 1819; ascended the throne, 1837; died, 1901.

[2] George Eliot, the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans Lewes Cross, an English novelist; born, 1819; died, 1880.

wrote *The Life of Julius Cæsar* that he might become a member of the French Academy. The emperors, the kings, the popes no longer tower above their fellows. Compare King William[1] with the philosopher Haeckel.[2] The King is one of the 'anointed by the Most High'—as they claim—one upon whose head has been poured the divine petroleum of authority. Compare this king with Haeckel, who towers an intellectual Colossus above the crowned mediocrity. Compare George Eliot with Queen Victoria. The queen is clothed in garments given her by blind fortune and unreasoning chance, while George Eliot wears robes of glory woven in the loom of her own genius. The world is beginning to pay homage to intellect, to genius, to heart."

I said not one word against Queen Victoria, and did not intend to even intimate that she was not an excellent woman, wife, and mother. I was simply trying to show that the world was getting great enough to place the genius above an accidental queen. Mr. Talmage, true to the fawning, cringing spirit of orthodoxy, lauds the living queen and cruelly maligns the dead genius. He digs open the grave of George Eliot, and tries to stain the sacred dust of one

[1] William I, German ruler; born, 1797; became king of Prussia, 1861; emperor of Germany, 1871; died, 1888.

[2] Ernst Heinrich Haeckel, a German naturalist; born, 1834.

who was the greatest woman England has produced. He calls her an adulteress. He attacks her because she was an atheist—because she abhorred Jehovah, denied the inspiration of the Bible, denied the dogma of eternal pain, and with all her heart despised the Presbyterian creed. He hates her because she was great and brave and free—because she lived without faith and died without fear—because she dared to give her honest thought, and grandly bore the taunts and slanders of the Christian world. George Eliot tenderly carried in her heart the burdens of our race. She looked through pity's tears upon the faults and frailties of mankind. She knew the springs and seeds of thought and deed, and saw the cloudless eyes through all the winding ways of greed, ambition, and deceit, where folly vainly plucks with thorn-pierced hands the fading flowers of selfish joy—the highway of eternal right. What her relations may have been—no matter what I think or others say, or how much all regret the one mistake in all her self-denying, loving life—I feel and know that in the court where her own conscience sat as judge she stood acquitted—pure as light and stainless as a star. How appropriate here, with some slight change, the wondrously poetic and pathetic words of Laertes at Ophelia's grave:[1]

[1] Quoted from Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*

"Leave her i' the earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall this woman be,
When thou liest howling!"

I have no words with which to tell my loathing for a man who violates a noble woman's grave.

TALMAGIAN THEOLOGY

[This lecture was delivered in New York and in Chicago in the year 1882. The following report is reprinted from the *Chicago Tribune* of November 13, 1882:]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Nothing can be more certain than that no human being can by any possibility control his thought. We are in this world—we see, we hear, we feel, we taste; and everything in nature makes an impression upon the brain, and that wonderful something, enthroned there with these materials, weaves what we call thought, and the brain can no more help thinking than the heart can help beating. The blood pursues its old accustomed round without our will. The heart beats without asking leave of us, and the brain thinks in spite of all that we can do. This being true, no human being can justly be held responsible for his thought any more than for the beating of his heart, any more than for the course pursued by the blood, any more than for breathing air. And yet for thousands of years thinking has been thought to be a crime, and thousands and millions have threatened us with eternal fire if we give the product of that brain.

Each brain, in my judgment, is a field where nature sows the seeds of thought, and thought is the crop that man reaps, and it certainly can not be a crime to gather; it certainly can not be a crime to tell it, which simply amounts to the right to sell your crop or to exchange your product for the product of some other man's brain. That is all it is. Most brains—at least some—are rather poor fields, and the orthodox worst of all. [Laughter.] That field produces mostly sorrel and mullein,—[laughter]—while there are fields which, like the tropic world, are filled with growth, and where you find the vine and palm, royal children of the sun and brain.

I then stand simply for absolute freedom of thought—[applause]—absolute, and I do not believe, if there be a God, that it will be or can be pleasing to Him to see one of His children afraid to express what he thinks. [Applause.] And, if I were God, I never would cease making men until I succeeded in making one grand enough to tell his honest opinion. [Applause.]

Now there has been a struggle, you know, a long time between the believers in the natural and the supernatural—between gentlemen who are going to reward us in another world and those who propose to make life worth living here and now. In all ages the priest, the medicine man, the magician, the astrologer, in other words, the gentlemen who have traded upon the

fear and ignorance of their fellow-man in all countries, they have all sought to make their living out of others. There was a time when a God presided over every department of human interest, when a man about to take a voyage bribed the priest of Neptune so that he might have a safe journey, and, when he came back, he paid more, telling the priest that he was infinitely obliged to him that he had kept waves from the sea and the storms in their caves. And so, when one was sick he went to a priest; when one was about to take a journey he visited the priest of Mercury; if he were going to war he consulted the representative of Mars. We have gone along. When the poor agriculturist plowed his ground and put in the seed he went to the priest of some god and paid him to keep off the frost. [Laughter.] And the priest said he would do it;—[renewed laughter]—"but," added the priest, "you must have faith." If the frost came early he said, "You did not have faith." [Great laughter.] And besides all that he says to him: "Anything that has happened badly, after all, was for your good." [Laughter.]

Well, we found out, day by day, that a good boat for the purpose of navigating the sea was better than prayers, better than the influence of priests and you had better have a good captain attending to business than thousands of

priests ashore praying. [Laughter and applause.]

We also found that we could cure some diseases, and just as soon as we found that we could cure diseases we dismissed the priest. We have left him out of all of them now except, it may be, cholera and smallpox. [Laughter.] When visited by a plague some people get frightened enough to go back to the old idea—go back to the priest, and the priest says: "It has been sent as a punishment." Well, sensible people began to look about; they saw that the good died as readily as the bad; they saw that this disease would attack the dimpled child in the cradle and allow the murderer to go unpunished; and so they began to think in time that it was not sent as a punishment; that it was a natural result; and so the priest stepped out of medicine. [Laughter and applause.]

In agriculture we need him no longer; he has nothing to do with the crops. All the clergymen in this world can never get one drop of rain out of the sky; and all the clergymen in the civilized world could not save one human life if they tried it.

"Oh, but," they say, "we do not expect a direct answer to prayer; it is the reflex action we are after." [Laughter.] It is like a man endeavoring to lift himself up by the straps of his boots; he will never do it, but he will get

a great deal of useful exercise. [Laughter and applause.]

The missionary goes to some pagan land, and there finds a man praying to a god of stone, and it excites the wrath of the missionary. I ask you to-night, Does not that stone god answer prayer just as well as ours? Does he not cause rain? Does he not delay frost? Does he not snatch the ones that we love from the grasp of death, precisely the same as ours? [Laughter and applause.] Yet we have ministers that are still engaged in that business. [Laughter.] They tell us that they have been "called"; that they do not go at their professions as other people do, but they are "called"; that God, looking over the world, carefully selects His priests, His ministers, and His exhorters. [Laughter and applause.]

I do not know. They say their calling is sacred. I say to you to-night that every kind of business that is honest, that a man engages in for the purpose of feeding his wife and children, for the purpose of building up his home, for the purpose of feeding and clothing the ones he loves—that business is sacred. [Applause.] They tell us that statesmen and poets, philosophers, heroes, and scientists, and inventors come by chance; that all other departments depend entirely upon luck; but when God wants exhorters, He selects. [Laughter and applause.]

They also tell us that it is infinitely wicked to attack the Christian religion, and when I speak of the Christian religion, I do not refer especially to the Christianity of the New Testament I refer to the Christianity of the orthodox church, and when I refer to the clergy I refer to the clergy of the orthodox church. There was a time when men of genius were in the pulpits of the orthodox church; that time is past. [Applause.] When you find a man with brains now occupying an orthodox pulpit you will find him touched with heresy—[laughter]—every one of them.

How do they get most of these ministers? There will be a man in the neighborhood not very well,—[laughter]—not having constitution enough to be wicked; and it instantly suggests itself to everybody who sees him he would make an excellent minister. [Laughter.] There are so many other professions, so many cities to be built, so many railways to be constructed, so many poems to be sung, so much music to be composed, so many papers to edit, so many books to read, so many splendid things, so many avenues to distinction and glory, so many things beckoning from the horizon of the future to every great and splendid man that the pulpit has to put up with the leavings,—[laughter]—ravelings, selvages. [Renewed laughter.]

These preachers say, "How can any man be wicked and infamous enough to attack our religion and to take from the world the solace of orthodox Christianity?" What is that solace? Let us be honest. What is it? If the Christian religion be true, the grandest, greatest, noblest of the world are now in hell, and the narrowest and meanest are now in heaven. Humboldt,[1] the Shakespeare of science, the most learned man of the most learned nation, with a mind grand enough to grasp not only simply this globe, but this constellation—a man who shed light upon the whole earth—a man who honored human nature, and who won all his victories on the field of thought—that man, pure and upright, noble beyond description, if Christianity be true, is in hell this moment. That is what they call "solace,"—[laughter]—"tidings of great joy." [Renewed laughter.] Laplace,[2] who read the heavens like an open book, who enlarged the horizon of human thought, is there too. [Laughter.] Beethoven,[3] master of melody and harmony, who added to the joy of human life, and who has borne upon the wings of harmony and

[1] Alexander von Humboldt, a German scientist and author; born, 1769; died, 1859.

[2] Marquis Pierre Simon de Laplace, a French astronomer and mathematician; born, 1571; died, 1630.

[3] Ludwig von Beethoven, an Austrian composer; born, 1770; died, 1827.

melody millions of spirits to the height of joy, with his heart still filled with melody—he is in hell to-day. [Laughter.] Robert Burns,[1] poet of love and liberty, and from his heart, like a spring gurgling and running down the highways, his poems have filled the world with music. They have added luster to human love. That man who, in four lines, gave all the philosophy of life—

> "To make a happy fireside clime
> For weans and wife
> Is the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life."

—he is there with the rest. [Laughter.] Charles Dickens,[2]—[applause]—whose genius will be a perpetual shield, saving thousands and millions of children from blows, who did more to make us tender with children than any other writer that ever touched a pen—he is there with the rest,—[laughter]—according to our Christian religion.

A little while ago there died in this country a philosopher—Ralph Waldo Emerson[3]—[applause]—a man of the loftiest ideal, a perfect model of integrity, whose mind was like a placid

[1] Robert Burns, a Scottish poet; born, 1759; died, 1796.

[2] Charles Dickens, an English novelist; born, 1812; died, 1870.

[3] Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American essayist, lecturer, and poet; born, 1803; died, 1882.

lake and reflected truths like stars. If the Christian religion be true, he is in perdition today. And yet he sowed the seeds of thought, and raised the whole world intellectually. And Longfellow,[1] whose poems, tender as the dawn, have gone into millions of homes, not an impure, not a stained word in them all; but he was not a Christian. He did not believe in the "tidings of great joy." [Laughter.] He did not believe that God so loved the world that He intended to damn most everybody. [Laughter.] And now he has gone to his reward. [Laughter.] And Charles Darwin[2]—[applause]—a child of nature—one who knew more about his mother than any other child she ever had. [Laughter.]

What is philosophy? It is to account for phenomena by which we are surrounded—that is, to find the hidden cord that unites everything. Charles Darwin threw more light upon the problem of human existence than all the priests who ever lived from Melchisedek to the last exhorter. [Applause.] He would have traversed this globe on foot had it been possible to have found one new fact or to have corrected one error that he had made. [Applause.] No

[1] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, an American poet; born, 1807; died, 1882.

[2] Charles Robert Darwin, an English naturalist; born, 1809; died, 1882.

nobler man has lived—no man who has studied with more reverence (and by reverence I mean simply one who lives and studies for the truth) —no man who has studied with more reverence than he. And yet, according to orthodox religion, Charles Darwin is in hell. Consolation! [Laughter.] So, if Christianity be true, Shakespeare,[1] the greatest man who ever touched this planet,—[applause]—within whose brain were the fruits of all thought past, the seeds of all to be—Shakespeare, who was an intellectual ocean toward which all rivers ran, and from which now the isles and continents of thought receive their dew and rain,—[applause]—that man who has added more to the intelligence of the world than any other who ever lived—that man, whose creations will live as long as man has imagination, and who has given more happiness upon the stage and more instruction than has flown from all the pulpits of this earth,—[applause]—that man is in hell too. [Laughter.] And Harriet Martineau,[2] who did as much for English liberty as any man, brave and free—she is there. George Eliot,[3] the greatest woman the English-speaking people ever produced—[applause]—she is with the rest.

[1] William Shakespeare, an English poet, dramatist, and actor; born, 1564; died, 1616.

[2] Harriet Martineau, an English author; born, 1802; died, 1876.

[3] George Eliot, the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans Lewes Cross, an English novelist; born, 1819; died, 1880.

And this is called "Tidings of Great Joy." [Laughter.]

Who are in heaven? [Laughter.] How could there be much of a heaven without the men I have mentioned—the great men that have endeavored to make the world grander—such men as Voltaire,[1] such men as Diderot,[2] such men as the Encyclopedists, such men as Hume,[3] such men as Bruno,[4] such men as Thomas Paine?[5] [Loud applause.]

If Christianity is true, that man who spent his life in breaking chains is now wearing the chains of God; that man who wished to break down the prison walls of tyranny is now in the prison of the most merciful Christ. [Applause.] It will not do. I can hardly express to you to-day my contempt for such a doctrine; and if it be true, I make my choice to-day, and I prefer hell. [Applause.]

Who is in heaven? John Calvin![6] [Laugh-

[1] Voltaire, the surname of François Marie Arouet, a French writer; born, 1694; died, 1778.

[2] Denis Diderot, a French philosopher and writer; born, 1713; died, 1784.

[3] David Hume, a Scottish philosopher and historian; born, 1711; died, 1776.

[4] Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher; born about 1548; died, 1600.

[5] Thomas Paine, an Anglo-American political writer and free-thinker; born, 1737; died, 1809.

[6] John Calvin, a French-Swiss religious reformer; born, 1509; died, 1564.

ter.] John Knox![1] [Laughter.] Jonathan Edwards![2] Torquemada![3]—the builders of dungeons, the men who have obstructed the march of the human race. These are the men who are in heaven; and who else? Those who never had brain enough to harbor a doubt. [Laughter and cheers.] And they ask me: "How can you be wicked enough to attack the Christian religion?" [Laughter and applause.]

"Oh," but they say, "God will never forgive you if you attack the orthodox religion."

Now, when I read the history of this world, and when I think of the experience of my fellow-men, when I think of the millions living in poverty and when I know that in the very air we breathe and in the sunlight that visits our homes there lurks an assassin ready to take our lives, and even when we believe we are in the fullness of health and joy, they are undermining us with their contagion—when I know that we are surrounded by all these evils, and when I think of what man has suffered, I do not wonder if God can forgive man, but I often

[1] John Knox, a Scottish religious reformer; born, 1505; died, 1572.

[2] Jonathan Edwards, an American theologian and metaphysician; born, 1703; died, 1758.

[3] Tomas de Torquemada, a Spanish Dominican prior; born about 1420; appointed the first inquisitor-general for Castile, 1483; died, 1498.

ask myself, "Can man forgive God?" [Great applause.]

There is another thing. Some of these ministers have talked about me, and have made it their business to say unpleasant things. Among others the Rev. Mr. Talmage of Brooklyn—a man of not much imagination, but of most excellent judgment—charges that I am a "blasphemer." A frightful charge! Terrible, if true!

What is blasphemy? It is a sin, as I understand, against God. Is God infinite? He is, so they say; He is infinite; absolutely conditionless. Can I injure the conditionless? No. Can I sin against anything that I can not injure? No. That is a perfectly plain proposition. I can injure my fellow-man, because he is a conditioned being, and I can help to change those conditions. He must have air; he must have food; he must have clothing; he must have shelter; but God is conditionless, and I can not by any possibility affect Him. Consequently I can not sin against Him. But I can sin against my fellow-man, so that I ought to be a thousand times more fearful of doing injustice than of uttering blasphemy. [Applause.]

There is no blasphemy but injustice, and there is no worship except the practice of justice. [Applause.] It is a thousand times more important that we should love our fellow-men

than that we should love God. It is better to love wife and children than to love Jesus Christ. He is dead; they are alive. [Applause.] I can make their lives happy and fill all their hours with the fullness of joy. [Applause.] That is my religion; and the holiest temple ever erected beneath the stars is the home; the holiest altar is the fireside. [Applause.]

What is this blasphemy? First, it is a geographical question. [Laughter and applause.] There was a time when it was blasphemy in Jerusalem to say that Christ was God. In this country it is now blasphemy to say that He was not. It is blasphemy in Constantinople to deny that Mohammed was the prophet of God; it is blasphemy here to say that he was. It is a geographical question; you can not tell whether it is blasphemy or not without looking at the map. [Laughter and cheers.]

What is blasphemy? It is what the mistake says about the fact. [Laughter.] It is what the last year's leaf says about this year's bud. It is the last cry of the defeated priest. [Laughter and applause.] Blasphemy is the little breastwork behind which hypocrisy hides; behind which mental impotency feels safe. [Applause.] There is no blasphemy but the avowal of thought, and he who speaks what he thinks blasphemes. [Loud applause.]

What is the next thing? That I have had

the hardihood—it does not take much—to attack the sacred Scriptures. I have simply given my opinion; and yet they tell me that that book is holy—that you can take rags, make pulp, put ink on it, bind it in leather, and make something holy. [Laughter.] The Catholics have a man for a pope; the Protestants have a book. The Catholics have the best of it. [Laughter.] If they elect an idiot he will not live forever—[great laughter]—and it is impossible for us to get rid of the barbarisms in our book. [Laughter.]

The Catholics said, "We will not let the common people read the Bible." That was right. [Laughter.] If it is necessary to believe it in order to get to heaven no man should run the risk of reading it. [Laughter.] To allow a man to read the Bible on such conditions is to set a trap for his soul. The right way is never to open it, and when you get to the day of judgment, and they ask you if you believe it say, "Yes, I have never read it." [Roars of laughter.]

The Protestant gives the book to a poor man and says, "Read it. You are at liberty to read it." "Well, suppose I do not believe it, when I get through?" "Then you will be damned." [Laughter.] No man should be allowed to read it on those conditions. And yet Protestants have done that infinitely cruel thing. If

I thought it was necessary to believe it I would say never read another line in it but just believe it—[laughter]—and stick to it. [Renewed laughter.] And yet these people really think that there is something miraculous about that book. They regard it as a fetish—a kind of amulet—a something charmed, that will keep off evil spirits, or bad luck,—[laughter]—stop bullets, and do a thousand handy things for the preservation of life.

I heard a story upon that subject. You know that thousands of them are printed in the Sunday-school books. Here is one they do not print. [Laughter.]

There was a poor man who had belonged to the church, but he got cold, and he rather neglected it, and he had bad luck in his business, and he went down and down and down until he had not a dollar—not a thing to eat and his wife said to him, "John, this comes of your having abandoned the church. This comes of your having done away with family worship. Now, I beg of you, let us go back." Well, John said it would not do any harm to try. So he took down the Bible, blew the dust off it, read a little from a chapter, and had family worship. As he was putting it up he opened it again, and there was a ten-dollar bill between the leaves. He rushed out to the butcher's and bought meat, to the grocer's and bought tea and bread and butter

and eggs, and rushed back home and got them cooked, and the house was filled with the perfume of food; and he sat down at the table, tears in every eye and a smile on every face. She said, "What did I tell you?" Just then there was a knock on the door, and in came a constable who arrested him for passing a ten-dollar counterfeit bill. [Long continued laughter.]

They tell me that I ought not to attack the Bible—that I have misrepresented it, and among other things that I have said that, according to the Bible, the world was made of nothing. Well, what was it made of? They say God created everything. Consequently, there must have been nothing when He commenced. If He did not make it of nothing what did He make it of—[laughter]—when there was nothing. He made something. Yes; out of what? I do not know. [Laughter.]

This doctor of divinity, and I should think such a divinity would need a doctor—[laughter]—says that God made the universe out of His omnipotence. [Laughter.] Why not out of His omniscience, or His omnipresence? Omnipotence is not a raw material. It is the something to work raw material with. Omnipotence is simply all-powerful, and what good would strength do with nothing? The weakest man ever born could lift as much nothing as God.

[Laughter.] And he could do as much with it after he got it lifted. [Renewed laughter.] And yet a doctor of divinity tells me that this world was made of omnipotence.

And right here let me say I find even in the mind of the clergyman the seeds of infidelity. He is trying to explain things. [Laughter.] That is a bad symptom. [Laughter.] The greater the miracle the greater the reward for believing it. God can not afford to reward a man for believing anything reasonable. Why, even the scribes and Pharisees would believe a reasonable thing. Do you suppose God is to crown you with eternal joy and give you a musical instrument for believing something where the evidence is clear? No, sir. The larger the miracle the more grace. And let me advise the ministers of Chicago and of this country, never to explain a miracle; it can not be explained. [Laughter.] If you succeed in explaining it, the miracle is gone. If you fail, you are gone. [Great laughter and applause.] My advice to the clergy is, use assertion, just say, "it is so," and the larger the miracle the greater the glory reaped by the eternal. And yet this man is trying to explain, pretending that He had some raw material of some kind on hand.

And then I objected to the fact that He did not make the sun until the fourth day, and

that, consequently, the grass could not have grown—could not have thrown its mantle of green over the shoulders of the hill—and that the trees would not blossom and cast their shade upon the sod without some sunshine and what does this man say? Why, that the rocks, when they crystallized, emitted light, even enough to raise a crop by. And he says "vegetation might have depended on the glare of volcanoes in the moon." [Laughter.] What do you think would be the fate of agriculture depending on "the glare of volcanoes in the moon"? [Laughter.] Then he says "the aurora borealis." Why, you could not raise cucumbers by the aurora borealis. [Laughter.] And he says "liquid rivers of molten granite." I would like to have a farm on that stream. [Laughter.] He guesses everything of the kind except lightning-bugs and fox-fire.

Now, think of that explanation in the last half of the nineteenth century by a minister. The truth is, the gentleman who wrote the account knew nothing of astronomy—knew as little as the modern preacher does—[laughter]—just about the same; and if they do not know more about the next world than they do about this, it is hardly worth while talking with them on the subject.

There was a time, you know, when the minister was the educated man in the country,

and when, if you wanted to know anything, you asked him. Now you do if you don't. [Laughter.]

So I find this man expounding the flood, and he says it was not very wet. [Laughter.] He begins to doubt whether God had water enough to cover the whole earth. Why not stand by His book? He says that some of the animals got in there to keep out of the wet. [Laughter.] I believe that is the way the Democrats got to the polls last Tuesday. [Laughter and applause.]

Another divine says that God would have drowned them all, but it was purely for the sake of economy that He saved any of them. Just think of that! According to this Christian religion all the people in the world were totally depraved through the fall, and God found He could not do anything with them, so He drowned them. Now, if God wanted to get up a flood big enough to drown sin, why did He not get up a flood big enough to drown the snake? That was His mistake. [Laughter.]

Now, these people say that if Jonah had walked rapidly up and down in the Whale's belly he would have avoided the action of its gastric juice. [Laughter and applause.] Imagine Jonah sitting in the whale's mouth, on the back of a molar-tooth; and yet this doctor of divinity would have us believe that

the infinite God of the universe was sitting under his gourd and made the worm that was at the root of Jonah's vine. Great business. [Laughter.]

David is said to have been a man after God's own heart, and if you will read the twenty-eighth chapter of Chronicles you will find that David died full of years and honors. So I find in the great book of prophecy, concerning Solomon, "He shall reign in peace and quietness, he shall be my son, and I shall be his father, and I will preserve his kingdom." Was that true? [Applause.]

It will not do. But they say God could not do away with slavery suddenly, nor with polygamy all at once—that He had to do it gradually—that if He had told this man you must not have slaves, and one man that he must have one wife, and one wife that she must have one husband, He would have lost the control over them, notwithstanding all the miraculous power.

Is it not wonderful that, when they did all these miracles, nobody paid any attention to them? [Laughter.] Is it not wonderful that, in Egypt, when they performed these wonders —when the waters were turned into blood, when the people were smitten with disease and covered with horrible animals—is it not wonderful that it had no influence on them? Do you know why all these miracles did not affect the Egyptians?

They were there at the time. Is it not wonderful, too, that the Jews who had been brought from bondage—had followed a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night—who had been miraculously fed, and for whose benefit water had leaked from the rocks and followed them up and down hill through all their journeying—is it not wonderful, when they had seen the earth open and their companions swallowed, when they had seen God Himself write in robes of flames from Sinai's crags, when they had seen Him talking face to face with Moses—is it not a little wonderful that He had no more influence over them? They were there at the time. [Applause.] And that is the reason they did not mind it—they were there. [Laughter.]

And yet, with all these miracles, this God could not prevent polygamy and slavery. Was there no room on the two tables of stone to put two more commandments? Better have written them on the back, then. [Laughter.] Better have left the others all off and put these two on: Man shall not enslave his brother, you shall not live on unpaid labor, and the one man shall have the one wife. [Applause.] If these two had been written and the other ten left off, it would have been a thousand times better for this world. [Applause.]

But, they say, God works gradually. No hurry about it. [Laughter.] He is not gradual

about keeping Sunday, because, if he met a man picking up sticks, He killed him; but in other things He is gradual. Suppose we wanted now to break certain cannibals of eating missionaries—[laughter]—wanted to stop them from eating them raw? Of course we would not tell them, in the first place, it was wrong. That would not do. We would induce them to cook them. That would be the first step toward civilization. [Laughter.] We would have them stew them. [Laughter.] We would not say it is wrong to eat missionary, but it is wrong to eat missionary raw. [Laughter.] Then, after they began stewing them, we would put in a little mutton—not enough to excite suspicion—[laughter]—but just a little, and so, day by day, we would put in a little more mutton and a little less missionary until, in about what the Bible calls "the fullness of time," we would have clear mutton and no missionary. [Laughter.] That is God's way. [Renewed laughter.]

The next great charge against me is that I have disgraced my parents by expressing my honest thoughts. No man can disgrace his parents that way. I want my children to express their real opinions, whether they agree with mine or not. [Applause.] I want my children to find out more than I have found, and I would be gratified to have them discover the errors I have made. And if my father and

mother were still alive I feel and know that I am pursuing a course of which they would approve. I am true to my manhood. [Applause.] But think of it! Suppose the father of Dr. Talmage had been a Methodist and his mother an infidel. Then what? Would he have to disgrace them both to be a Presbyterian. [Applause and laughter.] The disciples of Christ, according to this doctrine, disgraced their parents. The founder of every new religion, according to this doctrine, was a disgrace to his father and mother. Now there must have been a time when a Talmage was not a Presbyterian, and the one that left something else to join that church disgraced his father and mother. [Applause.]

Why, if this doctrine be true, why do you send missionaries to other lands and ask those people to disgrace their parents? [Applause.] If this doctrine be true nobody has religious liberty except foundlings;—[great laughter]—and it should be written over every Foundling Hospital: "Home for Religious Liberty." [Laughter.] It will not do.

What is the next thing I have said? I have taken the ground, and I take it again to-day, that the Bible has only words of humiliation for woman. The Bible treats woman as the slave, the serf of man, and wherever that book is believed in thoroughly woman is a slave.

[Applause.] It is the infidelity in the church that gives her what liberty she has to-day. [Applause.] Oh! but, says the gentleman, think of the heroines in the Bible. How could a book be opposed to woman which has pictured such heroines. Well, this is a good argument. Let us answer it. Who are the heroines? He tells us. The first is Esther. Who was she? Esther is a very peculiar book, and the story is about this: Ahasuerus was a king. His wife's name was Vashti. She did not please him. He divorced her, and advertised for another. [Laughter.] A gentleman by the name of Mordecai had a good-looking niece, and he took her to market. Her name was Esther. I do not feel like reading the whole of the second chapter. It is sufficient to say she was selected. After a time there was a gentleman by the name of Haman who, I should think, was in the cabinet, according to the story. [Laughter.] And this man Mordecai began to put on considerable style—[laughter]—because his niece was the king's wife, and he would not bow, or he would not rise, or he would not meet this gentleman with marks of distinguished consideration, so he made up his mind to have him hung. Then they got out an order to kill the Jews, and this Esther went to see the king. In those days they believed in the Bismarckian style of government—all power came from the

king, not from the people; and if anybody went to see this king without an invitation, and he failed to hold out his scepter to him, the person was killed just to preserve the dignity of the monarch. [Laughter.] When Esther arrived he held out the scepter, and thereupon she induced him to send out another order for the fellows who were to kill the Jews, and they killed seventy-five or eighty thousand of them. And they came back and said, "Kill Haman and his ten sons," and they hung the family up. That is all there is to the story. [Laughter.] And yet this Esther is held up as a model of womanly grace and tenderness, and there is not a more infamous story in the literature of the world.

The next heroine is Ruth. I admit, that is a very pretty story. But Ruth was guilty of more things that would be deemed indiscreet than any girl in Brooklyn. That is all there is about Ruth. [Laughter.] The next heroine is Hannah. And what do you suppose was the matter with her? [Laughter.] She made a coat for her boy; that is all. [Laughter.] I have known a woman to make a whole suit! [Applause.] The next heroine was Abigail. She was the wife of Nabal. King David had a few soldiers with him, and he called at the house of Nabal, and he asked if he could not get food for his men. Abigail went down to give

him something to eat, and she was very much struck with David. David evidently fancied her. Nabal died within a week. I think he was poisoned. David and Abigail were married. If that had happened in Chicago there would have been a coroner's jury, and an inquest; but that is all there was to that. [Laughter and applause.]

The next is Dorcas. She was in the New Testament. She was real good to the ministers. Those ladies have always stood well with the church. [Laughter and applause.] She was real good to the poor. She died one day, and you never hear of her again. [Laughter and applause.]

Then there was that person that was raised from the dead. I would like to know from a person that had recently been raised from the dead, where he was when he was wanted, what he was traveling about, and what he was engaged in. [Laughter and applause.] I can not imagine a more interesting person than one that has just been raised from the dead. Lazarus comes from the tomb, and I think sometimes that there must be a mistake about it, because when they come to die again thousands of people would say, "Why, he knows all about it!" Would it not be noted? Would it not be noted if a man had two funerals? [Laughter.]

Now, then, these are all the heroines to show you how little they thought of women in that day. In the days of the Old Testament they did not even tell us when the mother of us all (Eve) died, nor where she is buried, nor anything about it. They do not even tell us where the mother of Christ sleeps, nor when she died. Never is she spoken of after the morning of the resurrection. He who descended from the cross went not to see her; and the son had no word for the broken-hearted mother. [Sensation.]

The story is not true. I believe Christ was a great and good man, but He had nothing about Him miraculous except the courage to tell what He thought about the religion of His day. [Applause.] The New Testament, in relating what occurred between Christ and His mother, mentions three instances: once, when they thought He had been lost in Jerusalem, when He said to them, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Next, at the marriage of Cana, when He said to the woman, "What have I to do with thee?"—words which He never said; and again from the cross, "Mother, behold thy son"; and to the Disciple, "Behold thy mother!"

So of Mary Magdalene. In some respects there is no character in the New Testament that so appeals to us as loving Christ—first at the sepulcher—and yet when He meets her after

the resurrection He had for her the comfort only of the chilling words, "Touch me not!" I do not believe it. [Applause.] There were thousands of heroic women then. There are heroic women now. Think of the women who cling to fallen and disgraced husbands day by day, until they reach the gutter, and who stoop down to lift them from that position, and raise them up to be men once more! [Applause.]

Every country is civilized in proportion as it honors women. There are women in England working in mines, deformed by labor, that would become wild beasts were it not for the love they bear for home. [Applause.] Can you find among the women of the New Testament any women that can equal the women born of Shakespeare's brain? You can find no woman like "Isabella," where reason and purity blend into perfect truth; no woman like "Juliet," where passion and purity meet like red and white within the bosom of a flower; no woman like "Imogen," who said, "What is it to be false?" no woman like "Cordelia," that would not show her wealth of love in hope of gain; nor like "Hermione," who bore the cross of shame for years; nor like "Miranda," who told her love as the flower exposes its bosom to the sun; nor like "Desdemona," who was so pure that she could not suspect that another could suspect her of crime. [Applause.]

And we are told that woman sinned first and man second; that man was made first and woman not till afterwards. The idea is that we could have gotten along without the women well enough, but they never could have gotten along without us. I tell you that love is better than piety, love is better than all the ceremonial worship of the world, and it is better to love something than to believe anything on this globe. [Applause.]

So this minister, seeking a mark to throw an arrow somewhere—trying to find some little place in the armor—charges me with having disparaged Queen Victoria.[1] That you know is next to blasphemy. [Laughter.] Well, I never did anything of the kind—never said a word against her in my life, neither as wife, or mother, or queen—never doubted but that she is a good woman enough, and I have always admitted that her reputation was good in the neighborhood where she resided. [Laughter.] I never had any other opinion. All I said in the world was—I was endeavoring to show that we are now to have an aristocracy of brain and heart—that is all—and I said, speaking of Louis Napoleon,[2] he was not satis-

[1] Victoria I, an English queen; born, 1819; ascended the throne, 1837; died, 1901.

[2] Napoleon III, French ruler; born, 1808; elected president of the republic, 1848; proclaimed emperor, 1852; deposed, 1870; died, 1873.

fied with simply being an emperor and having a little crown on his head, but wanted to prove that he had something in his head, so he wrote *The Life of Julius Cæsar,* and that made him a member of the French Academy; and speaking of King William,[1] upon whose head is the divine petroleum of authority, I asked how he would like to exchange brains with Haeckel,[2] the philosopher. Then I went over to England, and said, "Queen Victoria wears the garment of power given her by blind fortune, by eyeless chance; George Eliot is arrayed in robes of glory woven in the loom of her own genius." Thereupon I am charged with disparaging a woman. And this priest, in order to get even with me, digs open the grave of George Eliot and endeavors to stain her unresisting dust. He calls her an adulteress—the vilest word in the languages of men, and he does it because she hated the Presbyterian creed, because she, according to his definition, was an atheist, because she lived without faith and died without fear, because she grandly bore the taunts and slanders of the Christian world. George Eliot carried tenderly in her heart the faults and frailties of her race. She saw the highway of eternal right through all the winding paths,

[1] William I, German ruler; born, 1797; became king of Prussia, 1861; emperor of Germany, 1871; died, 1888.

[2] Ernst Heinrich Haeckel, a German naturalist; born, 1834.

where folly vainly stalks with thorn-pierced hands, the fading flowers of selfish joy; and whatever you may think or I may think of the one mistake in all her sad and loving life, I know and feel that in the court where her conscience sat as judge she stood acquitted pure as light and stainless as a star. [Applause.] George Eliot has joined the choir invisible whose music is the gladness of this world, and her wondrous lines, her touching poems, will be read hundreds of years after every sermon in which a priest has sought to stain her name shall have vanished utterly from human speech. [Applause.] How appropriate here, with some slight change, the words of Laertes at Ophelia's grave:[1]

> "Lay her in the earth;
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring;
> I tell thee, priest and minister,
> A ministering angel shall this woman be
> When thou liest howling." [Applause.]

I have no words with which to express my loathing hatred and condemn the man who will stain a noble woman's grave. [Applause.]

The next argument in favor of the sacred Scriptures is the argument of numbers; and this minister congratulates himself that the in-

[1] Quoted from Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*

fidels could not carry a precinct or a county or a State in the United States. Well, I tell you, they can come proportionally near it—just in proportion that that part of the country is educated. [Applause.] The whole world does not move together in one life. There has to be some man to take a step forward and the people follow; and when they get where that man was, some other Titan has taken another step, and you can see him there on the great mountain of progress. That is why the world moves. There must be pioneers, and if nobody is right except he who is with the majority, then we must turn and walk toward the setting sun.

He says, "We will settle this by suffrage." The Christian religion was submitted to a popular vote in Jerusalem, and what was the result? "Crucify Him!"—[applause]—an infamous result, showing that you can not depend on the vote of barbarians. [Applause and laughter.]

But I am told that there are three hundred million of Christians in the world. Well, what of it? There are more Buddhists. And they say, what a number of Bibles are printed!—more Bibles than any other book. Does this prove anything? Suppose you should find published in the *New York Herald* something about you, and you should go to the editor and tell him: "That is a lie," and he should say, "That

can not be; the *Herald* has the largest circulation of any paper in the world." [Laughter.]

Three hundred millions of Christians, and here are the nations that prove the truth of Christianity: Russia, eighty millions of Christians. I am willing to admit it;—[laughter]—a country without freedom of speech, without freedom of press—a country in which every mouth is a bastile and every tongue a prisoner for life—[applause]—a country in which assassins are the best men in it. [Applause.] They call that Christian. Girls sixteen years of age for having spoken in favor of human liberty are now working in Siberian mines. That is a Christian country. Only a little while ago a man shot at the emperor twice. The emperor was protected by his armor. The man was convicted, and they asked him if he wished religious consolation. "No." "Do you believe in a God?" "No; if there was a God there would be no Russia."

Sixteen millions of Christians in Spain—Spain that never touched a shore except as a robber—Spain that took the gold and silver of the New World and used it as an engine of oppression in the Old—a country in which cruelty was worship, in which murder was prayer—a country where flourished the inquisition—I admit Spain is a Christian country. [Applause.] If you do not believe it, I do. Read the history

of Holland, read the history of South America, read the history of Mexico—a chapter of cruelty beyond the power of language to express. I admit that Spain is orthodox. [Laughter.] If you will go there you will find the man who robs you and asks God to forgive you—a country where infidelity has not made much headway, but, thank God, where there is even yet a dawn, where there are such men as Castelar [1] and others, who begin to see that one schoolhouse is equal to three cathedrals and one teacher worth all the priests. [Applause.]

Italy is another Christian nation, with twenty-eight millions of Christians. In Italy lives the only authorized agent of God, the Pope. [Laughter.] For hundreds of years Italy was the beggar of the earth, and held out both hands. Gold and silver flowed from every land into her palms, and she became covered with nunneries, monasteries, and the pilgrims of the world. Italy was sacred dust. Her soil was a personal blessing, her sky was an eternal shine. Italy was guilty not simply of the death of the Catholic Church, but Italy was dead and buried and would have been in her grave still had it not been for Mazzini,[2] Gari-

[1] Emilio Castelar, a Spanish statesman, orator, and author; born, 1832; died, 1899.

[2] Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian patriot and revolutionist; born, 1805 or 1808; died, 1872.

baldi,[1] and Cavour.[2] [Applause.] When the prophecy of Garibaldi shall be fulfilled, when the priests, with spades in their hands, shall dig ditches to drain the Pontine marshes, when the monasteries shall be factories, when the whirling wheels of industry shall drown the drowsy and hypocritical prayers, then, and not till then, will Italy be great and free. [Applause.] Italy is the only instance in our history and in the history of the world, so far as we know, of the resurrection of a nation. She is the first fruits of them that sleep. [Applause.]

Portugal is another Christian country. She made her living in the slave-trade for centuries. I admit that all the blessings that that country enjoyed flowed naturally from Catholicism, and we believe in the same Scriptures. If you do not believe it, read the history of the persecution of the Jewish people.

I admit that Germany is a Christian nation; that is, Christians are in power. When the bill was introduced for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the Jews, Bismarck[3] spoke against it, and said, "Germany is a Christian nation, and therefore we can not pass the bill."

Austria is another Christian nation. If you

[1] Giuseppe Garibaldi, an Italian patriot; born, 1807; died, 1882.

[2] Camillo Benso, Count di Cavour, an Italian statesman; born, 1810; died, 1861.

[3] Otto Eduard Leopold, Prince von Bismarck, a Prussian statesman; born, 1815; died, 1898.

do not believe it, read the history of Hungary, and, if you still have doubts, read the history of the partition of Poland. But there is one good thing in that country. They believe in education, and education is the enemy of ecclesiasticism. [Applause.] Every thoroughly educated man is his own church, and his own pope, and his own priest. [Applause.]

They tell me that the United States—our country—is Christian. I deny it. [Applause.] It is neither Christian nor pagan; it is human. [Applause.] Our fathers retired all the gods from politics. [Laughter and applause.] Our fathers laid down the doctrine that the right to govern comes from the consent of the governed, and not from the clouds. [Applause.] Our fathers knew that if they put an infinite God in the Constitution there would be no room left for the people. [Laughter and applause.] Our fathers used the language of Lincoln, and they made a government for the people by the people. [Applause.] This is not a Christian country. Some gentleman said, "How about Delaware?" I told him there was a man in Washington some twenty or thirty years ago who came there and said he was a Revolutionary soldier and wanted a pension. He was so bent and bowed over that the wind blew his shoestrings into his eyes. They asked him how old he was, and he said fifty years. "Why, good

man, you can not get a pension because the war was over before you were born. You must not fool us." "Well," said he, "I'll tell you the truth: I lived sixty years in Delaware, but I never count it, and I hope God won't." [Laughter.]

And these Christian nations which have been brought forward as the witnesses of the truth of the Scriptures owe twenty-five billion dollars, which represents Christian war, Christian cannon, Christian shot, and Christian shell. The sum is so great that the imagination is dazed in its contemplation. That is the result of loving your neighbor as yourself. [Laughter.]

The next great argument brought forward by these gentlemen is the persecution of the Jews. We are told in the nineteenth century that God has the Jews persecuted simply for the purpose of establishing the authenticity of the Scriptures, and every Jewish home burned in Russia throws light on the gospel,—[laughter] —and every violated Jewish maiden is another evidence that God still takes an interest in the Holy Scriptures. [Laughter.] That is their doctrine. They are "fulfilling prophecy." The Christian grasps the Jew, strips him, robs him, makes him an outcast, and then points to him as a fulfillment of prophecy; and we are to-day laying the foundation of future persecution—we are teaching our children the monstrous

falsehood that Jews crucified God and the nation consented.

They crucified a good man. What nation has not? What race has not? Think of the number killed by the Presbyterians; by the Catholics. Every sect, with maybe two or three exceptions, has crucified its fellows, and every race has burned its greatest and its best. And yet we are filling the minds of children with hatred of the Jewish people. It is a poor business. Ah! but they say, "These people are cursed by God." I say they never had any good fortune until the Jehovah of the Bible deserted them. [Applause.] Whenever they have had a reasonable chance they have been the most prosperous people in the world. I never saw one begging. I never saw one in the criminal dock. For hundreds of years they were not allowed to own any land, for hundreds of years they were not allowed to work at any trade, they were driven simply to dealing in money, and in precious stones, and things of that character, and, by a kind of poetic justice, they have to-day the control of the money of the world. [Applause.] I am glad to see that kings and emperors go to the offices of the Jews, with their hats in their hands, to have their notes discounted. [Applause.]

And yet I am told by clergymen that all this infamy has been kept up simply to establish

the truth of the gospel. I despise such doctrine. [Applause.] As long as the liberty of one Jew is unsafe, my liberty is not secure. [Applause.] Liberty for all, and not until then will the liberty of any be assured.

Ah! but says this man, "Nobody ever died cheerfully for a lie. The Jewish people have suffered persecution for sixteen hundred years, and they have suffered cheerfully." If this doctrine is true, then Judaism must be true and Christianity must be false. But martyrdom does not prove the truth even if the martyr knows it. It simply proves the barbarity of his persecutors, and has no sincerity. That is all it proves.

But you must remember that this gentleman who believes in this doctrine is a Presbyterian, and why should a Presbyterian object? After a few hundred years of burning he expects to enjoy the eternal *auto da-fé* of hell—an *auto da-fé* that will be presided over by God and His angels, and they will be expected to applaud. He is a Presbyterian; and what is that? It is the worst religion of this earth. [Applause.] I admit that thousands and millions of Presbyterians are good people, no man ever being half so bad as his creed. [Applause.] I am not attacking them. I am attacking their creed. I am attacking what this religion call "Tidings of great joy." [Laughter.]

And, according to that, hundreds of billions and billions of years ago our fate was irrevocably and forever fixed, and God, in the secret counsels of His own inscrutable will, made up His mind whom He would save and whom He would damn.

When thinking of that God I always think of the mistake of a Methodist preacher during the war. He commenced the prayer—and never did one more appropriate for the Presbyterian God or the Methodist go up—"O Thou great and unscrupulous God." [Great laughter.]

This Presbyterian believes that, billions of years before that baby in the cradle—that little dimpled child, basking in the light of a mother's smile—was born, God had made up His mind to damn it; and when Talmage looks at one of those children who will probably be damned he is cheerful about it; he enjoys it. That is Presbyterianism—that God made man and damned him for His own glory. If there is such a God, I hate Him with every drop of my blood; —[applause]—and if there is a heaven it must be where He is not. [Applause.] Now think of that doctrine! Only a little while ago there was a ship from Liverpool out eighty days with its rudder washed away; for ten days nothing to eat—nothing but the bare decks and hunger; and the captain took a revolver in his hand and put it to his brain and said: "Some of us must

die for the others. And it might as well be I." One of his companions grasped the pistol and said, "Captain, wait; wait one day more. We can live another day." And the next morning the horizon was rich with a sail, and they were saved. And yet if Presbyterianism is true; if that man had put the bullet through his infinitely generous brain so that his comrades could have eaten of his flesh and reached their homes and felt about their necks the dimpled arms of children and the kisses of wives upon their lips—if Presbyterianism be true, God had a constable ready there to clutch that soul and thrust it down to eternal hell. [Applause.]

Tidings of great joy! [Laughter.] And yet this is religion.

Why, if that doctrine be true, every soldier in the Revolutionary War who died not a Christian has been damned; everyone in the War of 1812 who kept our flag upon the sea if he died not a Christian has been damned; and everyone in the Civil War who fought to keep our flag in heaven, not a Christian, and the ones who died in Andersonville and Libby, not Christians, are now in the prison of God, where the famine of Andersonville and Libby would be regarded as a joy. Orthodox Christianity!

Why, we have an account in the Bible—it comes from the other world—from both countries—from heaven and from hell—let us see

what it is. Here is a rich man who dies. The only fault about him was, he was rich; no other crime was charged against him. We are told that the rich man died, and when he lifted up his eyes he found no sympathy, yet even in hell he remembered his five brethren, and prayed that someone should be sent to them so that they should not come there. I tell you I had rather be in hell with human sympathy than in heaven without it. [Applause.]

The Bible is not inspired, and ministers know nothing about another world. They do not know. I am satisfied there is no world of eternal pain. If there is a world of joy, so much the better. I have never put out the faintest star of human hope that ever trembled in the night of life. [Applause.] There was a time when I was not; after that I was; now I am. [Laughter.] And it is just as probable that I will live again as it was that I could have lived before I did. [Laughter and applause.] Let it go.

Ah! but what will life be? The world will be here. Men and women will be here. The page of history will be open. The walls of the world will be adorned with art, the niches with sculpture; music will be here, and all there is of life and joy. And there will be homes here, and the fireside, and there will be a common hope without a common fear. Love will be here, and love is the only bow on life's dark

cloud. Love was the first to dream of immortality. Love is the morning and the evening star. It shines upon the child; it sheds its radiance upon the peaceful tomb. Love is the mother of beauty—the mother of melody, for music is its voice. Love is the builder of every hope, the kindler of every fire on every hearth. Love is the enchanter, the magician that changes worthless things to joy, and makes right royal kings and queens out of common clay. Love is the perfume of that wondrous flower, the heart. Without that divine passion, without that divine sway, we are less than beasts, and with it earth is heaven and we are gods. [Great applause.]

ANSWER TO JUDGE COMEGYS OF DELAWARE

[This interview is reprinted from the Chicago *Times*.]

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 1882.—No attack upon Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll has attracted so much attention as the recent charge of Chief Justice Comegys to the Delaware grand jury. Everyone has been looking to the eloquent radical for a reply. For several days he has been silent, too much occupied with his large law business to give the subject attention. This morning the *Times'* correspondent succeeded in persuading Colonel Ingersoll to make his answer to the Delaware judge through the columns of the *Times*. It will be found below.

"*Have you read Chief Justice Comegys' compliments to you before the Delaware grand jury?*"

"Yes, I have seen his charge, in which he relies upon the law passed in 1740. After reading his charge, it seemed to me as though he had died about the date of the law, had risen from the dead, and gone right on where he left off. I presume he is a good man, but compared with other men something like his

State when compared with other States. A great many people will probably regard the charge of Judge Comegys as unchristian, but I do not. I consider that the law of Delaware is in exact accord with the Bible, and that the pillory, the whipping-post, and the suppression of free speech, are the natural fruit of the Old and New Testament. Delaware is right. Christianity can not succeed, can not exist, without the protection of law. Take from orthodox Christianity the protection of the law, and all church property would be taxed like other property. The Sabbath would be no longer a day devoted to superstition. Everyone could express his honest thought upon every possible subject. Everyone, notwithstanding his belief, could testify in a court of justice. In other words, honesty would be on an equality with hypocrisy. Science would stand on a level, so far as the law is concerned, with superstition. Whenever this happens, the end of orthodox Christianity will be near. By Christianity I do not mean charity, mercy, kindness, forgiveness. I mean no natural mercy, because all the natural virtues existed and had been practiced by hundreds and thousands of millions before Christ was born. There certainly were some good men even in the days of Christ in Jerusalem, before His death. By Christianity I mean the ideas

of redemption, atonement, a good man dying for a bad man; and the bad man getting a receipt in full. By Christianity I mean that system that insists that in the next world a few will be forever happy, while the many will be eternally miserable.

"Christianity, as I have explained it, must be protected, guarded, and sustained by law. It was founded by the sword—that is to say by physical force,—and must be preserved by like means. In many of the States of the Union an infidel is not allowed to testify. In the State of Delaware, if Alexander von Humboldt[1] were living, he could not be a witness, although he had more brains than the State of Delaware has ever produced, or is likely to produce as long as the laws of 1740 remain in force. Such men as Huxley,[2] Tyndall,[3] and Haeckel[4] could be fined and imprisoned in the State of Delaware, and, in fact, in many States of this Union. Christianity, in order to defend itself, puts the brand of infamy on the brow of honesty. Christianity marks with a letter 'C,' standing for 'convict,' every brain that is great enough to discover the frauds. I have no doubt

[1] Alexander von Humboldt, a German scientist and author; born, 1769; died, 1859.

[2] Thomas Henry Huxley, an English biologist; born, 1825; died, 1895.

[3] John Tyndall, a British physicist; born, 1820; died, 1893.

[4] Ernst Heinrich Haeckel, a German naturalist; born, 1834.

but that Judge Comegys is a good and sincere Christian. I believe that he in his charge gives an exact reflection of the Jewish Jehovah. I believe that every word he said was in exact accord with the spirit of orthodox Christianity. Against this man personally I have nothing to say. I know nothing of his character except as I gather it from this charge, and after reading the charge I am forced simply to say, Judge Comegys is a Christian.

"It seems, however, that the grand jury dared to take no action, notwithstanding they had been counseled to do so by the judge. Although the judge had quoted to them the words of George I[1] of blessed memory; although he had quoted to them the words of Lord Mansfield,[2] who became a judge simply because of his hatred of the English colonists, simply because he despised the liberty of the new world; notwithstanding the fact that I could have been punished with insult, with imprisonment, and with stripes, and with every form of degradation; notwithstanding that only a few years ago I could have been branded upon the forehead, bored through the tongue, maimed, and disfigured, still, such has been the advance even in the State of Delaware, owing, it may

[1] George I, an English king; born, 1660; ascended the throne, 1714; died, 1727.

[2] William Murray, first Earl of Mansfield, a British statesman and jurist; born, 1705; died, 1793.

be in great part to the one lecture delivered by me, that the grand jury absolutely refused to indict me. The grand jury satisfied themselves and their consciences simply by making a report in which they declared that my lecture had 'no parallel in the habits of respectable vagabondism'; that I was an 'arch blasphemer and reviler of God and religion,' and recommended that should I ever attempt to lecture again I should be taught 'that in Delaware blasphemy is a crime punishable by fine and imprisonment.' I have no doubt but what every member of the grand jury signing this report was entirely honest; that he acted in exact accord with what he understood to be the demand of the Christian religion. I must admit that for Christians the report is exceedingly mild and gentle. I have now in the house letters that passed between certain bishops in the fifteenth century, in which they discussed the propriety of cutting out the tongues of heretics before they were burned. Some of the bishops were in favor of and some against it. One argument for cutting out their tongues which seemed to have settled the question was that unless the tongues of heretics were cut out they might scandalize the gentlemen who were burning them by blasphemous remarks during the fire. I would recommend these letters to Judge Comegys and the members of his grand jury.

"I want it distinctly understood that I have nothing against Judge Comegys or the grand jury. They acted as most anybody would, raised in Delaware, in the shadow of the whipping-post and the pillory. We must remember that Delaware was a slave State; that the Bible became extremely dear to the people because it upheld the peculiar institution. We must remember that the Bible was the block on which mother and child stood for sale when they were separated by the Christians of Delaware. The Bible was regarded as the title papers to slavery, and as the book of all books that gave the right to masters to whip mothers and to sell children. There are many offenses now for which the punishment is whipping and standing in the pillory; where persons are convicted of certain crimes and sent to the penitentiary, and upon being discharged from the penitentiary are furnished by the State with a dark jacket plainly marked on the back with a large Roman 'C,' the letter to be of a light color. This they are to wear for six months after being discharged, and if they are found at any time without the dark jacket and the illuminated 'C,' they are to be punished with twenty lashes upon the bare back.

"The object, I presume, of this law is to drive from the State all the discharged convicts for the benefit of New Jersey, Pennsyl-

vania, and Maryland—that is to say, other Christian communities. A cruel people make cruel laws. The objection I have to the whipping-post is that it is a punishment which can not be inflicted by a gentleman. The person who administers the punishment must, of necessity, be fully as degraded as the person who receives it. I am opposed to any kind of punishment that can not be administered by a gentleman. I am opposed to corporal punishment everywhere. It should be taken from the asylums and penitentiaries, and any man who would apply the lash to the naked back of another is beneath the contempt of honest people."

"*Have you seen that Henry Bergh*[1] *has introduced in the New York legislature a bill providing for whipping as a punishment for wife-beating?*"

"The objection I have mentioned is fatal to Mr. Bergh's bill. He will be able to get persons to beat wife-beaters who, under the circumstances, would be wife-beaters themselves. If they are not wife-beaters when they commence the business of beating others, they soon will be. I think that wife-beating in great cities could be stopped by putting all the wife-beaters at work at some government employment; the value of the work, however, to go to

[1] Henry Bergh, the founder and president of the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; born, 1823; died, 1888.

their wives and children. The trouble now is that most of the wife-beating is among the extremely poor, so that the wife, by informing against her husband, takes the last crust out of her own mouth.

"If you substitute whipping or flogging for the prison here you will in the first place prevent thousands of wives from informing, and in many cases where the wife would inform she would afterwards be murdered by the flogged brute. This brute would naturally resort to the same means to reform his wife that the State had resorted to for the purpose of reforming him. Flogging would beget flogging. Mr. Bergh is probably a man of great kindness of heart. When he reads that a wife has been beaten, he says the husband deserves to be beaten himself. But if Mr. Bergh was to be the executioner, I imagine that you could not prove by the back of the man that the punishment had been inflicted.

"Another good remedy for wife-beating is the abolition of the Catholic Church. We should also do away with the idea that a marriage is a sacrament and that there is any God who is rendered happy by seeing a husband and wife live together, although the husband gets most of his earthly enjoyment from whipping his wife. No woman should live with a man a moment after he has struck her. Just

as the ideas of liberty enlarge, confidence in the whip and fist, in the kick and blow will diminish.

"Delaware occupies toward free-thinkers precisely the position that the wife-beater does toward the wife. Delaware knows that there are no reasons sufficient to uphold Christianity, consequently these reasons are supplemented with the pillory and the whipping-post. The whipping-post is considered one of God's arguments, and the pillory is a kind of moral suasion, the use of which fills heaven with a kind of holy and serene delight. I am opposed to the religion of brute force, but all these frightful things have grown principally out of belief in eternal punishment, and out of the further idea that a certain belief is necessary to avoid eternal pain. If Christianity is right, Delaware is right. If God will damn everybody forever, simply for being intellectually honest, surely He ought to allow the good people of Delaware to imprison the same gentleman for two months.

"Of course, there are thousands of good people in Delaware, people who have been in other States, people who have listened to Republican speeches, people who have read the works of scientists, who hold the laws of 1740 in utter abhorrence; people who pity Judge Comegys and who have a kind of sympathy for the grand jury. You will see that at the last election

Delaware lacked only six or seven hundred of being a civilized State, and probably in 1884 will stand redeemed and regenerated, with the laws of 1740 expunged from the statute book. Delaware has not had the best of opportunities. You must remember that it is next to New Jersey, which is quite an obstacle in the path of progress. It is just beyond Maryland, which is another obstacle.

"I heard the other day that God originally made oysters with legs, and afterwards took them off, knowing that the people of Delaware would starve to death before they would run to catch anything.

"Judge Comegys is the last judge who will make such a charge in the United States. He has immortalized himself as the last mile-stone on that road. He is the last of his race. No more can be born. Outside of this he is probably a very clever man, and it may be, does not believe a word that he utters. The probability is that he has underestimated the intelligence of the people of Delaware. I am afraid to think that he is entirely honest for fear that I may underestimate him morally. Nothing could tempt me to do this man injustice, though I could hardly add to the injury he has done himself. He has called attention to laws that ought to have been repealed, and to lectures that ought to be repeated. I feel in my heart

that he has done me a great service, second only to that for which I am indebted to the grand jury. Had the judge known me personally, he probably would have said nothing. Should I have the misfortune to be arrested in his State and sentenced to two months of solitary confinement, the judge having become acquainted with me during the trial would probably insist on spending the most of his time in my cell. At the end of the two months he would, I think, lay himself liable to the charge of blasphemy, providing he had honor enough to express his honest thought.

"After all, it is all a question of honesty. Every man is right. I can not convince myself there is any God who will ever damn a man for having been honest. This gives me a certain hope for the judge and the grand jury. For two or three days I have been thinking what joy there must have been in heaven when Jehovah heard that Delaware was on his side, and remarked to the angels in the language of the late Adjutant-General Thomas:[1] 'The eyes of all Delaware are upon you.'"

[1] Lorenzo Thomas, an American soldier; born, 1804; died, 1875.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS ON ROSCOE CONKLING

[Delivered before the New York State Legislature, at Albany, N. Y., May 9, 1888.]

ROSCOE CONKLING—a great man, an orator, a statesman, a lawyer, a distinguished citizen of the Republic, in the zenith of his fame and power has reached his journey's end; and we are met, here in the city of his birth, to pay our tribute to his worth and work. He earned and held a proud position in the public thought. He stood for independence, for courage, and above all for absolute integrity, and his name was known and honored by many millions of his fellow-men.

The literature of many lands is rich with the tributes that gratitude, admiration, and love have paid to the great and honored dead. These tributes disclose the character of nations, the ideals of the human race. In them we find the estimates of greatness—the deeds and lives that challenged praise and thrilled the hearts of men.

In the presence of death, the good man judges as he would be judged. He knows that men are only fragments—that the greatest

walk in shadow, and that faults and failures mingle with the lives of all.

In the grave should be buried the prejudices and passions born of conflict. Charity should hold the scales in which are weighed the deeds of men. Peculiarities, traits born of locality and surroundings—these are but the dust of the race—these are accidents, drapery, clothes, fashions, that have nothing to do with the man except to hide his character. They are the clouds that cling to mountains. Time gives us clearer vision. That which was merely local fades away. The words of envy are forgotten, and all there is of sterling worth remains. He who was called a partisan is a patriot. The revolutionist and the outlaw are the founders of nations, and he who was regarded as a scheming, selfish politician becomes a statesman, a philosopher, whose words and deeds shed light.

Fortunate is that nation great enough to know the great. When a great man dies—one who has nobly fought the battle of a life, who has been faithful to every trust, and has uttered his highest, noblest thought—one who has stood proudly by the right in spite of jeer and taunt, neither stopped by foe nor swerved by friend—in honoring him, in speaking words of praise and love above his dust, we pay a tribute to ourselves.

How poor this world would be without its graves, without the memories of its mighty dead! Only the voiceless speak forever.

Intelligence, integrity, and courage are the great pillars that support the State.

Above all, the citizens of a free nation should honor the brave and independent man—the man of stainless integrity, of will, and intellectual force. Such men are the Atlases on whose mighty shoulders rest the great fabric of the Republic. Flatterers, cringers, crawlers, time-servers are the dangerous citizens of a democracy. They who gain applause and power by pandering to the mistakes, the prejudices, and the passions of the multitude, are the enemies of liberty.

When the intelligent submit to the clamor of the many, anarchy begins and the republic reaches the edge of chaos. Mediocrity, touched with ambition, flatters the base anl calumniates the great, while the true patriot, who will do neither, is often sacrificed.

In a government of the people a leader should be a teacher—he should carry the torch of truth.

Most people are the slaves of habit—followers of custom—believers in the wisdom of the past—and were it not for brave and splendid souls, "the dust of antique time would lie unswept, and mountainous error be too highly

heaped for truth to overpeer." Custom is a prison, locked and barred by those who long ago were dust, the keys of which are in the keeping of the dead.

Nothing is grander than when a strong, intrepid man breaks chains, levels walls, and breasts the many-headed mob like some great cliff that meets and mocks the innumerable billows of the sea.

The politician hastens to agree with the majority—insists that their prejudice is patriotism, that their ignorance is wisdom;—not that he loves them, but because he loves himself. The statesman, the real reformer, points out the mistakes of the multitude, attacks the prejudices of his countrymen, laughs at their follies, denounces their cruelties, enlightens and enlarges their minds, and educates the conscience—not because he loves himself, but because he loves and serves the right and wishes to make his country great and free.

With him defeat is but a spur to further effort. He who refuses to stoop, who can not be bribed by the promise of success, or the fear of failure—who walks the highway of the right, and in disaster stands erect, is the only victor. Nothing is more despicable than to reach fame by crawling,—position by cringing.

When real history shall be written by the truthful and the wise, these men, these kneelers

at the shrines of chance and fraud, these brazen idols worshiped once as gods, will be the very food of scorn, while those who bore the burden of defeat, who earned and kept their self-respect, who would not bow to man or men for place or power, will wear upon their brows the laurel mingled with the oak.

Roscoe Conkling was a man of superb courage.

He not only acted without fear, but he had that fortitude of soul that bears the consequences of the course pursued without complaint. He was charged with being proud. The charge was true—he was proud. His knees were as inflexible as the "unwedgeable and gnarled oak," but he was not vain. Vanity rests on the opinion of others—pride, on our own. The source of vanity is from without—of pride, from within. Vanity is a vane that turns, a willow that bends, with every breeze—pride is the oak that defies the storm. One is cloud—the other rock. One is weakness—the other strength.

This imperious man entered public life in the dawn of the reformation—at a time when the country needed men of pride, of principle, and of courage. The institution of slavery had poisoned all the springs of power. Before this crime ambition fell upon its knees,—politicians, judges, clergymen, and merchant-

princes bowed low and humbly, with their hats in their hands. The real friend of man was denounced as the enemy of his country—the real enemy of the human race was called a statesman and a patriot. Slavery was the bond and pledge of peace, of union, and national greatness. The temple of American liberty was finished—the auction-block was the corner-stone.

It is hard to conceive of the utter demoralization, of the political blindness and immorality, of the patriotic dishonesty, of the cruelty and degradation of a people who supplemented the incomparable Declaration of Independence with the Fugitive Slave Law.

Think of the honored statesmen of that ignoble time who wallowed in this mire and who, decorated with dripping filth, received the plaudits of their fellow-men. The noble, the really patriotic, were the victims of mobs, and the shameless were clad in the robes of office.

But let us speak no word of blame—let us feel that each one acted according to his light—according to his darkness.

At last the conflict came. The hosts of light and darkness prepared to meet upon the fields of war. The question was presented: Shall the Republic be slave or free? The Republican Party had triumphed at the polls. The greatest man in our history was president-elect. The

victors were appalled—they shrank from the great responsibility of success. In the presence of rebellion they hesitated—they offered to return the fruits of victory. Hoping to avert war they were willing that slavery should become immortal. An amendment to the Constitution was proposed, to the effect that no subsequent amendment should ever be made that in any way should interfere with the right of man to steal his fellow-men.

This, the most marvelous proposition ever submitted to a congress of civilized men, received in the House an overwhelming majority, and the necessary two-thirds in the Senate. The Republican Party, in the moment of its triumph, deserted every principle for which it had so gallantly contended, and with the trembling hands of fear laid its convictions on the altar of compromise.

The Old Guard, numbering but sixty-five in the House, stood as firm as the three hundred at Thermopylæ. Thaddeus Stevens[1]—as maliciously right as any other man was ever wrong—refused to kneel. Owen Lovejoy,[2] remembering his brother's noble blood, refused to sur-

[1] Thaddeus Stevens, an American statesman; born, 1793; died, 1868.

[2] Owen Loveloy, an American clergyman and statesman; born, 1811; died, 1864. His brother was Elijah Parish Lovejoy, an American clergyman, journalist, and opponent of slavery; born, 1802; killed by a pro-slavery mob, 1837.

render, and on the edge of disunion, in the shadow of civil war, with the air filled with sounds of dreadful preparation, while the Republican Party was retracing its steps, Roscoe Conkling voted No. This puts a wreath of glory on his tomb. From that vote to the last moment of his life he was a champion of equal rights, stanch and stalwart.

From that moment he stood in the front rank. He never wavered and he never swerved. By his devotion to principle—his courage, the splendor of his diction,—by his varied and profound knowledge, his conscientious devotion to the great cause, and by his intellectual scope and grasp, he won and held the admiration of his fellow-men.

Disasters in the field, reverses at the polls, did not and could not shake his courage or his faith. He knew the ghastly meaning of defeat. He knew that the great ship that slavery sought to strand and wreck was freighted with the world's sublimest hope.

He battled for a nation's life—for the rights of slaves—the dignity of labor, and the liberty of all. He guarded with a father's care the rights of the hunted, the hated, and the despised. He attacked the savage statutes of the reconstructed States with a torrent of invective, scorn, and execration. He was not satisfied until the freedman was an American citizen—

clothed with every civil right—until the Constitution was his shield—until the ballot was his sword.

And long after we are dead, the colored man in this and other lands will speak his name in reverence and love. Others wavered, but he stood firm; some were false, but he was proudly true—fearlessly faithful unto death.

He gladly, proudly grasped the hands of colored men who stood with him as makers of our laws, and treated them as equals and as friends. The cry of "social equality" coined and uttered by the cruel and the base, was to him the expression of a great and splendid truth. He knew that no man can be the equal of the one he robs—that the intelligent and unjust are not the superiors of the ignorant and honest—and he also felt, and proudly felt, that if he were not too great to reach the hand of help and recognition to the slave, no other Senator could rightfully refuse.

We rise by raising others—and he who stoops above the fallen, stands erect.

Nothing can be grander than to sow the seeds of noble thoughts and virtuous deeds—to liberate the bodies and the souls of men—to earn the grateful homage of a race—and then, in life's last shadowy hour, to know that the historian of liberty will be compelled to write your name.

There are no words intense enough,—with

heart enough—to express my admiration for the great and gallant souls who have in every age and every land upheld the right, and who have lived and died for freedom's sake.

In our lives have been the grandest years that man has lived, that time has measured by the flight of worlds.

The history of that great Party that let the oppressed go free—that lifted our nation from the depths of savagery to freedom's cloudless heights, and tore with holy hands from every law the words that sanctified the cruelty of man, is the most glorious in the annals of our race. Never before was there such a moral exaltation—never a party with a purpose so pure and high. It was the embodied conscience of a nation, the enthusiasm of a people guided by wisdom, the impersonation of justice; and the sublime victory achieved loaded even the conquered with all the rights that freedom can bestow.

Roscoe Conkling was an absolutely honest man. Honesty is the oak around which all other virtues cling. Without that they fall, and groveling die in weeds and dust. He believed that a nation should discharge its obligations. He knew that a promise could not be made often enough, or emphatic enough, to take the place of payment. He felt that the promise of the Government was the promise of every

citizen—that a national obligation was a personal debt, and that no possible combination of words and pictures could take the place of coin. He uttered the splendid truth that "the higher obligations among men are not set down in writing signed and sealed, but reside in honor." He knew that repudiation was the sacrifice of honor—the death of the national soul. He knew that without character, without integrity, there is no wealth, and that below poverty, below bankruptcy, is the rayless abyss of repudiation. He upheld the sacredness of contracts, of plighted national faith, and helped to save and keep the honor of his native land. This adds another laurel to his brow.

He was the ideal representative, faithful and incorruptible. He believed that his constituents and his country were entitled to the fruit of his experience, to his best and highest thought. No man ever held the standard of responsibility higher than he. He voted according to his judgment, his conscience. He made no bargains—he neither bought nor sold.

To correct evils, abolish abuses, and inaugurate reforms, he believed was not only the duty, but the privilege, of a legislator. He neither sold nor mortgaged himself. He was in Congress during the years of vast expenditure, of war and waste—when the credit of the nation was loaned to individuals—when claims were

thick as leaves in June, when the amendment of a statute, the change of a single word, meant millions, and when empires were given to corporations. He stood at the summit of his power, peer of the greatest, a leader tried and trusted. He had the tastes of a prince, the fortune of a peasant, and yet he never swerved. No corporation was great enough nor rich enough to purchase him. His vote could not be bought "for all the sun sees, or the close earth wombs, or the profound seas hide." His hand was never touched by any bribe, and on his soul there never was a sordid stain. Poverty was his priceless crown.

Above his marvelous intellectual gifts—above all place he ever reached,—above the ermine he refused,—rises his integrity like some great mountain peak—and there it stands, firm as the earth beneath, pure as the stars above.

He was a great lawyer. He understood the frame-work, the anatomy, the foundations of law; was familiar with the great streams and currents and tides of authority.

He knew the history of legislation—the principles that have been settled upon the fields of war. He knew the maxims,—those crystallizations of common sense, those hand-grenades of argument. He was not a case-lawyer, a decision index, nor an echo; he was original, thoughtful, and profound. He had breadth and

scope, resource, learning, logic, and above all, a sense of justice. He was painstaking and conscientious, anxious to know the facts, preparing for every attack, ready for every defence. He rested only when the end was reached. During the contest, he neither sent nor received a flag of truce. He was true to his clients, making their case his. Feeling responsibility, he listened patiently to details, and to his industry there were only the limits of time and strength. He was a student of the Constitution. He knew the boundaries of State and Federal jurisdiction, and no man was more familiar with those great decisions that are the peaks and promontories, the headlands and the beacons, of the law.

He was an orator,—logical, earnest, intense, and picturesque. He laid the foundation with care, with accuracy and skill, and rose by "cold gradation and well balanced form" from the corner-stone of statement to the domed conclusion. He filled the stage. He satisfied the eye—the audience was his. He had that indefinable thing called presence—tall, commanding, erect, ample in speech, graceful in compliment, Titanic in denunciation, rich in illustration, prodigal of comparison and metaphor—and his sentences, measured and rhythmical, fell like music on the enraptured throng.

He abhorred the Pharisee, and loathed all

conscientious fraud. He had a profound aversion for those who insist on putting base motives back of the good deeds of others. He wore no mask. He knew his friends—his enemies knew him.

He had no patience with pretense—with patriotic reasons for unmanly acts. He did his work and bravely spoke his thought.

Sensitive to the last degree, he keenly felt the blows and stabs of the envious and obscure —of the smallest, of the weakest—but the greatest could not drive him from conviction's field. He would not stoop to ask or give an explanation. He left his words and deeds to justify themselves.

He held in light esteem a friend who heard with half-believing ears the slander of a foe. He walked a highway of his own, and kept the company of his self-respect. He would not turn aside to avoid a foe—to greet or gain a friend.

In his nature there was no compromise. To him there were but two paths—the right and wrong. He was maligned, misrepresented, and misunderstood—but he would not answer. He knew that character speaks louder far than any words. He was as silent then as he is now—and his silence, better than any form of speech, refuted every charge.

He was an American—proud of his country,

that was and ever will be proud of him. He did not find perfection only in other lands. He did not grow small and shrunken, withered and apologetic, in the presence of those upon whom greatness had been thrust by chance. He could not be overawed by dukes or lords, nor flattered into vertebrateless subserviency by the patronizing smiles of kings. In the midst of conventionalities he had the feeling of suffocation. He believed in the royalty of man, in the sovereignty of the citizen, and in the matchless greatness of this republic.

He was of the classic mold—a figure from the antique world. He had the pose of the great statues—the pride and bearing of the intellectual Greek, of the conquering Roman, and he stood in the wide free air as though within his veins there flowed the blood of a hundred kings.

And as he lived he died. Proudly he entered the darkness—or the dawn—that we call death. Unshrinkingly he passed beyond our horizon, beyond the twilight's purple hills, beyond the utmost reach of human harm or help—to that vast realm of silence or of joy where the innumerable dwell, and he has left with us his wealth of thought and deed—the memory of a brave, imperious, honest man, who bowed alone to death.

EBON CLARK INGERSOLL'S FUNERAL

[A very affecting scene was witnessed at the funeral of Ebon Clark Ingersoll in Washington, June 2, 1879. His brother Robert had prepared an address to be read on the occasion, but when the large company of friends had gathered, and the time came, the feelings of the man overcame him. He began to read his eloquent characterization of the dead man, but his eyes at once filled with tears. He tried to hide them behind his eye-glasses, but he could not do it, and finally he bowed his head upon the man's coffin in uncontrollable grief. It was only after some delay, and the greatest efforts at self-mastery, that Mr. Ingersoll was able to finish reading his address, which was as follows:]

My Friends: I am going to do that which the dead often promised he would do for me.

The loved and loving brother, husband, father, friend died where manhood's morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling toward the west. He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point, but being weary for the moment he laid down by the wayside, and, using a burden for a pillow, fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and enraptured with the world, he passed to silence and pathetic dust.

Yet, after all, it may be best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to wash against the unseen rock, and in an instant hear the billows roar over a sunken ship. For whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love, and every moment jeweled with a joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy, as sad, and deep, and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

This brave and tender man in every storm of life was oak and rock, but in the sunshine he was love and flower. He was the friend of all heroic souls that climbed the heights and left all superstitions here below, while on his forehead fell the golden dawning of a grander day. He loved the beautiful and was with color, form, and music touched to tears. He sided with the weak, and with a willing hand gave alms; with loyal heart and with the purest hand he faithfully discharged all public trusts. He was a worshiper of liberty and a friend of the oppressed. A thousand times I have heard him quote the words: "For justice all place a temple, and all seasons, summer." He believed that happiness was the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only wor-

shiper, humanity the only religion, and love the only priest. He added to the sum of human joy, and were everyone for whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave he would sleep to-night beneath a wilderness of flowers.

Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of a wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.

He who sleeps here when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his latest breath, "I am better now." Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas and tears and fears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead. And now, to you who have been chosen from among the many men he loved to do the last sad office for the dead, we give his sacred trust. Speech can not contain our love. There was—there is—no gentler, stronger, manlier man.