



The inscription by Marilla Ricker is so important to the contents of this book that we have decided to add this pre-page to be able to provide the link to the Table of Contents – the box on the left above – and to link back to the CDMENU – the box on the right above – so there will be no need mar the inscription with these necessary utilities.

We have always found the writings of Ms. Ricker a pleasure to read, we hope you will enjoy these little books as much as we have.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom

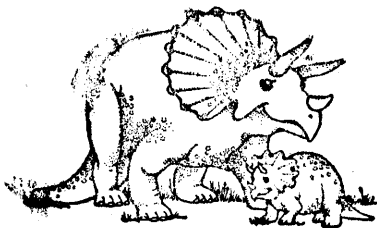
The Four Gospels

by
Marilla M. Ricker

In my opinion
A staple is no more
to be excused
from taxation
than a smoke
stack.

Yours very truly
Marilla W. Packer.
Over.

N.H.
Feb 18th. 1915.



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originally meant this Nation to be.
Emmett F. Fields



MARILLA M. RICKER

The Four Gospels

By

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MCMXI

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FOREWORD

HERE is one faith that is beautiful: the faith of Youth, with its bright hopes, its glowing enthusiasm; the faith in man, in what he has done and in what he can do.

It is this faith that gives us new men and women, new thoughts, new ideals, and a new view of life.

It is the man who starts out in the world believing that the wrong can be righted, that falsehood can be strangled and that all men will help do it. Youth believes that the world is eager for truth, and that every one wants the star of liberty to shine into his mind. Youth brings courage to the heart and joy to the world.

¶ The man who can carry the faith of youth through all the hard and dark ways of human life, still believing in the right, still speaking against the false and wrong, still urging truth against superstition and working to emancipate man-

F O R E W O R D

kind from *Ecclesiastical* slavery, is a man to be applauded.

To such a man—Lemuel K. Washburn—I dedicate this little book.


—*Marilla Ricker.*

Robert G. Ingersoll



ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

Robert G. Ingersoll

OBERT G. INGERSOLL opened his eyes on the eleventh day of August, Eighteen Hundred Thirty-three. He opened other people's eyes until July Twenty-first, Eighteen Hundred Ninety-nine, when he closed his own in death. He was born where most men die—in obscurity. When his mother rocked him to sleep, little did she think that in her arms lay the giant that was to be! Probably she had no idea that he was to be the mightiest man of the Nineteenth Century. Ingersoll's father was a clergyman. He was more famous as a father than as a preacher, which speaks well for him. Not one of his sermons can be found today, but the words spoken by his gifted son have been heard and read by millions of men and women.

All persons born in this country previous to Eighteen Hundred Sixty-five know that white people held black people as

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slaves. There were some white people in this land during the days of slavery who were white inside as well as out. One such person was the mother of Robert G. Ingersoll. This noble woman presented to Congress the first petition ever sent to that body asking for the abolishment of chattel slavery. It was from his mother that Ingersoll inherited his passionate love of freedom. The secret of genius can not, however, be found in parents. Rather does its white blossom come from the universal roots of history. All mankind bears man. All ages, all influences, all arts, all letters endow the luminous brain. But there is in genius one spark of fire unlit by them all. Great men, brilliant men, men with broad minds, keen wits, profound understanding and deep feelings, lived when Ingersoll lived, breathed the same air of liberty which he breathed, beheld the same political scenes that enriched his vision; but no other man

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among the millions of Americans saw what his eye could see, and no other voice painted in such thrilling language the beauty, the glory, the grandeur of emancipated humanity ✱ England does not account for Shakespeare; Scotland does not explain Burns; and America can not explain Ingersoll.

I shall not attempt any complete estimation of this wondrous man. He had no forerunner. The universe made a similar impression upon Shelley, but what was white and cold in the poet's soul was in Ingersoll warm with the red blood of conviction, and in the mighty crucible of his love for man became a passionate pleading for liberty, for right, for justice. The Puritans knew but one freedom—the freedom to worship God as they dictated. They never sowed one seed of liberty. They established a worse despotism than that from which they fled. American principles did not sprout

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in Puritan soil. All who disagreed with their religious notions were heretics, which, in their day, meant criminals. The worst crimes were to think God less cruel than He was painted in the Old Testament, and to believe man better than he was described in the New England Primer.

THE Ingersoll of Puritan days was a woman. Anne Hutchinson defied the narrowness, the intolerance and savagery of Puritanism, and was banished from the Massachusetts Colony. Thirty years after the Mayflower's voyage ended in Plymouth Bay, a night of theological darkness settled over the land which lasted until the dawn of the Revolution heralded the coming day of liberty. From Sixteen Hundred Fifty to Seventeen Hundred Fifty, the reign of the clergy was complete, and intellectual torpor was the result. Not one great book was

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written during that period; not one beneficent discovery came from the Puritan brain; and not one tender sentiment came from the Puritan heart. Everything was stern, hard, cold and cruel. The heartless superstition of Puritanism might keep their supposed God on His throne in Heaven, but was powerless to establish His government on Earth. New ideas were born; new thoughts were taking possession of men and women; new opinions were being published abroad. The curse of religious tyranny was overthrown in the State. The Declaration of Independence ended the reign of Jehovah in our land. A new intellectual, as well as a new political, world was opened to mankind. The flag of freedom protected the minds as well as the homes of men.



THOMAS PAINE gave to the world the two greatest works of the Eighteenth Century: "Common Sense" and

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the "Age of Reason." One is destined to kill every king on earth, and the other every priest. Without Paine, Ingersoll would have been impossible. There was a stain on our national Constitution, when adopted, which was condemned by every lover of liberty, and the act of perpetuating slavery in the land had to be atoned for in blood as brave as ever was shed for the right. Civilization could not tolerate fetter or chain. The slave must be freed, or our magnificent Declaration was political hypocrisy. It is a herculean task to overthrow greed entrenched behind religion and law. When three million voices cried for justice from their white brothers, the pulpit and the bench answered, "What have I to do with thee?" The cold, cruel indifference of the North to the cold, cruel injustice of the South lighted the mightiest moral flame that ever blazed on this earth. The deterrent cry that if slavery was

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wrong the Bible was false, did not prevent men and women from joining the Abolition Movement. Although the church held aloof from the reform, it was helpless to check it. It grew in spite of falsehood, in spite of religious or political consequences, until it conquered the majority vote of the Northern States. The crusade against negro slavery in this country had its prophets, its leaders, its heroes, its martyrs. What glorious men were those inspired and cheered by that glorious man, William Lloyd Garrison ! To repeat their names is to set the blood boiling again in the veins : Wendell Phillips, Gerrit Smith, Theodore Parker, Owen Lovejoy, John G. Whittier, Horace Greeley, John Brown and Abraham Lincoln. It was a long march from that dark day when a rope was put about the neck of Garrison in the streets of Boston to that triumphant hour when the Emancipation Proclamation gave more than three mil-

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lion slaves their freedom. ¶ Had the Christian pulpits not accepted every text of the Bible as divine truth, there would have been no chattel slavery in the United States, no scaffold at Harper's Ferry, no assassin at Ford's Theater, and no Robert G. Ingersoll—the man who came to champion the liberty of body, mind and soul!



INGERSOLL was the product of every struggle for freedom, of every attempt for justice, of every lash upon the back of a slave, of every crime committed by the State, of every wrong inflicted by the Church ✱ In Ingersoll the world reached its grandest height, and from his wonderful lips came the great truth of civilization: that man is the holiest thing that man knows anything about, and those things alone are sacred which add to man's comfort and happiness. The bold challenge to the old theology and

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the old religion which Robert G. Ingersoll flung at the feet of the Christian Church was accepted. This brave man fought for nearly forty years for liberty, for truth, for right, and he met and overthrew every knight who entered the arena against him. At the beginning of his career he was a lawyer and politician. It did not take long for his associates to recognize his superior ability. He was born with the crown of genius on his brow, with the scepter of leadership in his hand. Men instinctively acknowledged his greatness ♣ He had the last word, because he could not be answered.

At the bar he was a powerful advocate, but on the platform he was the master of his audience. Before he was thirty he stood upon his feet, looking the universe in the face for himself, and boldly said to the world, "What priests and parsons have told you of God's wrath, of Hell and future punishments, I tell you is a lie!"

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He never took back his words. A bad religion never had a mightier enemy, a true religion never had a greater friend. ¶ His tastes, his training, his profession, all pointed to a bright political career, but he threw them all to the winds and stood by his guns, training them on sham and hypocrisy. No man ever lived who was more candid with himself than he. He hated falsehood; he loathed and despised hypocrisy with every fiber of his nature, and he detested sham and pretense. He kept his mind open to the sun, and he stood in the light ♣ He respected the children of his brain, and he spoke his thoughts without fear. It was Ingersoll's sincerity that blocked his way to the highest political honors. He was told that if he wished political preferment he must keep his mouth shut on religious subjects. He opened it ♣ No office could put a padlock on his lips. He saw men turn the back of fear upon him,

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but he did not waver. He received but beggarly appreciation for his efforts to free men and women from ecclesiastical slavery, but he continued his magnificent crusade against superstition and priestly tyranny for more than a quarter of a century. He was the ideal of every man and woman who loved liberty. He was feared by the Church, but loved by the world ❀ ❀


It is difficult to sketch this many-sided man. He was full of pity and sympathy for the poor and unfortunate. He was great enough to applaud the good, and good enough to forgive the erring. He could charm a child with his speech, or sway thousands by his magic words ❀ He was the supreme philosopher of commonsense. He stood with the earth under his feet, with the stars over his head, and the world of beauty and grandeur around him, and he could not be persuaded that what he saw

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was a lie, and that miracles were the truth. He could kill a dogma with a shaft of wit, and make an orthodox deacon laugh at his own faith and superstition. He knew how to answer a fool, but he never forgot to be courteous to an opponent. He would take the case of a poor man into court without pay; he would give a young reporter an interview when he could sell every word he spoke for a dollar; he would present the proceeds of a lecture to some worthy object as though he was throwing a nickel to an organ-grinder; he would lead a reform with a dozen workers if he believed them in the right, just as if he had a million followers, and where there was persecution he was on the side of the persecuted. ✻ Ingersoll was the truest American that America ever bore. He was the orator of her rivers and mountains, of her hills and dales, of her forests and flowers, of her struggles and victories,

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of her free institutions, of her Stars and Stripes—the orator of the home, of wife and child, of love and liberty. The head, heart and hand of Ingersoll were perfectly united and worked together ♣ As he thought, he acted ; when he had anything to say, he said it aloud ♣ He was not ashamed of his thoughts. He did not hide or go around the corner, or beat about the bush. He spoke honestly what he saw, what he thought, what he knew.



INGERSOLL was a great, tender-hearted man, full of kindness, full of generous impulses, full of good feeling. He saw that Nature was savage, cruel, heartless, and he told the truth about it. He could see no Providence feeding the hungry, no Father in Heaven protecting the innocent, no God battling against wickedness, and he said so. He saw in the sea the big fish eating the little ones ; saw in the jungle the strong beasts killing

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the weak ones ; saw in the air the talons of the hawk in the soft heart of the dove ; and he described what he saw. In the world of man he saw fortunate vice better clad than unfortunate virtue ; successful rascality better paid than unsuccessful honesty ; saw injustice triumph and wrong sustained by the vote of the majority, and he did not hear the voice of God setting aside the verdict—and he said so. He tried to do what Providence neglected to do : tried to bring more justice, more love, more kindness into the world of man.

Ingersoll was as sincere as a camera ✱ He would differ from all authority, from all creeds, from all precedents, rather than be untrue to his own convictions. He knew that all philosophy was not in Greek, nor all truth in Latin. He knew that so-called divine words were no wiser than the age in which they existed, and that as man learned more he left his

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fears behind. He thought freely and honestly, and he gave his thoughts to mankind—and did n't he do it magnificently? He was called an Infidel. He was an Infidel, and that is one reason why we honor him. The world has at last discovered that the one who fears an Infidel is the dishonest man—he is afraid of being found out.

Ingersoll knew that most history was written to conceal the truth. He knew that the Church was a fraud wherein it pretended to represent God, and that priests were impostors when they claimed to have divine authority for their acts, and that they hated him for telling the truth about them. No man ever loved the true, the good and the beautiful in man, woman and child more than he did. This was the holiest trinity to him ☘ Humanity was the great, living, conserving thing to his heart. The lowliest man touched him more than did the


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highest God. ¶ He had no sympathy for a Deity hanging Himself on a tree for the sins of men, but he was moved to tears at the sufferings of his fellow-beings. A poor woman standing at the washtub with blistered feet working six days a week to support her children, the legacy of a drunken husband, was more an object of pity in his eyes than a Crucified Savior!

Ingersoll, above all else, was moved by the patient martyrdom of man. An hour of agony on the Cross was nothing to the daily sufferings of the human race. It was out of his great pity for man that was born the humor that gave the consolation of laughter for the grief of never-ending toil. It is impossible to picture this world-sided man. He was universal in his love of humanity. For Shakespeare and Humboldt he had the admiration of genius; for the crippled newsboy on the street he had that royal respect which

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perfect strength pays to physical deformity. Like a mother he gave his greatest love to the feeble child. With what a wealth of good feeling was he dowered, and with what prodigality he scattered it!



EVERY one who met Ingersoll felt better for the meeting, felt that he had been in the presence of a true man. No one ever listened to his marvelous voice who could doubt his sincerity. There was not a speck of hypocritical dust in his soul. He was a giant in mind and in body, but his heart was bigger than either. While he was great as a lawyer, as an orator, as a critic, and greater as a philosopher, yet it was in manliness that he was greatest. In his relation with man he was supreme. He was a splendid fighter, and he fought for victory, but he loved the peace of the fireside, the atmosphere of home, the faces of his neighbors, the familiar streets,

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the smile of his wife, the clasp of his children's hands, and that sweet, subtle essence of being which fills the heart as the perfume fills the flower. Had Ingersoll just lived that quiet, peaceful life that is learned of the steadfast mountain, the sleeping meadow, the singing brook, the happy bird, the silent forest, he would have left the mark of his individuality upon the world. There was that in him which lifted him above his fellows. He was born great, and would have been distinguished in any walk of life; but with his intense love of liberty, his large sympathies, his tender emotions, he could have been no other man than he was. His humor, his power to make smiles and laughter, would have immortalized him; but so would his other incomparable gifts. The boundless generosity of his nature bound men and women to him—not the princely giving of dollars, but the priceless giving of himself, the bounty

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of his mind, the prodigality of his genius. Ingersoll knew nothing of the sordidness of calculation. There was no meanness in him; through all his veins ran honest blood. He was free from vanity. He never picked up the flowers of flattery laid at his feet. He did his duty, and whether his act produced applause or condemnation did not ruffle his superb sincerity. Abused, lied about, slandered, vilified almost beyond precedent, he pitied his defamers and despised their work. He knew that character conquered, and that the power of lies came to an end. To the last he kept faith with his heart and mind. He believed in humanity, in all the good things that the world was working for. He never laid down his arms, never surrendered. When death came he met it with a smile. In my opinion, no greater, grander, nobler man has ever passed through this world of ours than Robert G. Ingersoll.

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ROBERT G. INGERSOLL was easily the most popular orator that ever addressed an audience in this country. He was also the most eloquent orator that this country has produced. He was the idol of every man and woman who loved liberty, who loved the home, who loved what was right and true and just. It was not alone his rich and splendid personality that made him so admired. It was not those wondrous gifts of mind which gave him power to carve from the marble of language his deathless statues and paint with the colors of words his immortal pictures that endeared him to so many hearts. All these brought him admiration, brought him almost worship, but there was something else that compelled that affection in the hearts of those who knew him. It was Ingersoll, himself. It was the man, the whole man, what he was and what he stood for, that men and women loved as they rarely love their fellow-

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beings. It was not any one thing about Ingersoll that made him irresistible; it was everything. He was not only heroic in body, but in what he said and in what he did. If he saw human suffering, his hand went to his pocket, not his handkerchief to his eyes. He did not say, "God bless you," to the poor wretch; he tried to bless him himself. The rain that washed the face of grief wet his as well. He would lessen every man's sorrow and double every man's joy.

It was this vast sympathy with humanity that drew the world after him. The freedom he enjoyed he would give to others; the happiness he had found in life he would help his fellow-men to find; what he had in his home he wanted in every man's home; the atmosphere of liberty, the sunshine of joy and the glory of human love. The home of Ingersoll reflected the man. Seeing Robert G. Ingersoll with his family, knowing him

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in the highest and purest relations of earth, you knew what he would stand for on the platform; you knew what principles he would advocate, what party he would support—you knew that he would be true to himself.

Forty years ago in this country, many of the political omelets were made from bad eggs. The nation was saved by the Civil War politically, but not morally. The flag was in the sky, but it had been dragged upon the ground, and the dirt had not been washed from its folds. The pen of Lincoln had emancipated the slaves, but the black man had not changed his skin nor the white man his prejudice ❀ ❀

The victory of the North had not freed men from greed, from hatred of one another, from injustice, from cruelty. Slaves could no longer be bought and sold in the public mart, children could no longer be torn from their mother's

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arms by the hand of the Law. These horrors could not be repeated after Eighteen Hundred Sixty-five. No man felt more deeply for the emancipated slaves than did Ingersoll.

In Eighteen Hundred Sixty-seven, in the course of an address to the colored people at Galesburg, Illinois, he said, "I feel like asking your forgiveness for the wrongs that my race has inflicted upon yours." When he had finished fighting for freedom he commenced to speak for it. He brought back his sword in honor, but the war in which he had enlisted taught him this lesson: Where the Stars and Stripes protected a slaveholder and not a slave, that flag was a stain upon the sky. In his attitude towards his fellows is found the key to his character. He would not kneel to those above him, but he would stoop to those beneath him. He despised a tyrant, but he pitied a slave. He was great enough to forget

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his own greatness and good enough to see the good in others.

IN politics Ingersoll was the same as in every other walk of life: frank, honest and true.

He wanted every Republican to be decent, and every Democrat to be converted to decency.

He held the virtues higher than the offices, and while he believed that men in the political arena should fight for their country and the right, he also believed that they should have the fruits of victory.

He did not believe that a Republican should work to get Democrats into power ❀ ❀

He had principles, and he held them too high to sacrifice for votes.

He had convictions, and he uttered them without fear or apology.

He never mistook the country's enemies

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for its friends. ¶ He worked with a political party, but he was not a party slave.

He wore no collar, no chain; and the one thing he never surrendered was his independence. Higher than every political prize that men could win he put manhood, and higher than every political allegiance he put liberty.

His counsel to his fellows was this: "Think for yourself, don't let a scoundrel put a ballot in your hand."

Between the two parties he chose the better ❀ ❀

He worked for the party that worked for freedom, for right, for man.

He spoke for liberty and humanity; for what would save one and help the other. Ingersoll never aspired to political honors. He never advocated his own cause, nor worked in his own behalf.

But with what prodigality he worked for others!

In every political campaign for years his

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voice was heard. ¶ Back in Eighteen Hundred Seventy-six, a Republican convention met to nominate a candidate for President of the United States. Similar conventions had been held in the land. Eloquence had placed the names of great men and grand men before these conventions for the highest office within the gift of our people. But in Cincinnati in Eighteen Hundred Seventy-six, a speech was made on the Fifteenth of June, by Robert G. Ingersoll, that electrified a continent. Every word of it was published in the papers from ocean to ocean, and its glorified sentences have won political immortality.

When Robert G. Ingersoll nominated James G. Blaine for the Presidency of the United States, he stood the proudest political figure in the land.

The convention went wild with enthusiasm over his achievement. It seemed as if the gathered multitude saw before

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them the embodied soul of the nation and heard the enchanted voice of the spirit of 'Seventy-six. That speech was a bugle-call to arms to save all that had been won on our soil for freedom and right ❀ ❀


Greece has her Demosthenes, Rome has her Cicero, England has her Pitt, and America has her Ingersoll.

Many men use politics for themselves. Ingersoll used politics for others. He showed that a man could be a politician without being dishonest ❀ He carried manhood into politics, carried himself, his mighty brain, his large heart, his noble purpose. It was the fire of his soul that made the burning words which fell from his lips.

When Henry Ward Beecher introduced Robert G. Ingersoll to a Brooklyn audience during the Garfield campaign as the most brilliant speaker of the English tongue of all men on this globe, he also

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said of him, "I respect him as the man that for a full score and more of years has worked for the right in the great broad field of humanity and for the cause of human rights." He worked for humanity because there was nothing higher for which to work, and always Government meant to him only a means to lift man to a larger freedom, to a grander life. He said to himself: "No party has a mortgage on me; I am the sole proprietor of myself. As long as I can get my part of the common air, I shall tell my honest thoughts. I go with the Republican party because it is going my way, but if it ever turns to the right or to the left, I intend to go straight ahead."



INGERSOLL loved America because it was the home of free men, because more men enjoyed liberty within its borders than anywhere else on the globe, and whenever he opened his lips in behalf

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of humanity his first appeal was to be a free man. No one who has breathed the air of independence in this land ever had a greater love for that trinity of color—the Red, White and Blue—than Robert G. Ingersoll. To him our flag was the emblem of honesty and fair dealing. He was always the champion of the Stars and Stripes. He knew what our flag stood for, and he stood by it. I have heard him say many times: “Our Government is the best ever founded by the human race. The Republican party is the best party I have ever known, and our flag the holiest that ever kissed the air.”

He felt that if all our monuments should crumble to dust; that if all our history should perish from the minds of men; that if all the triumphs of civilization should be lost to the world—men and women, with the flag of freedom waving over them, could build new monuments

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loftier than the old, could make history richer and sweeter than what had perished, and could win with hand and brain a more glorious civilization than that which had fallen.

Ingersoll knew what had made this nation greater than all the nations of the earth. He knew that in all Europe and Asia there was not one government that was founded upon human rights at the time of the American Revolution. He knew that the one thing hated by king and priest was the one thing more sacred than all else called holy—human liberty—and he knew that it was this right to liberty, upon which every other right depended, that alone could make a nation worth living for, or worth dying for. Go back to the time when George the Third was trying to sit on the British throne; when Louis the Fifteenth was sowing in profligacy the wild seeds of the French Revolution, and when Charles the Third

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was showing how big a fool could be a King of Spain, and behold the feet of man chained to the throne and his brain lashed to the altar.

What knowledge there was in the world had come into it between a spy and an assassin, between a priest and a king. What escaped the eye of the one and the hand of the other was hidden like a precious jewel from the sight of robbers. Virtue had to meet in secret, while vice walked the streets openly.

In those days red hats and purple robes claimed the homage and stole the labor of mankind. Every word and act against them was treason. The world was mad with suffering. Persecution had driven men and women to hate those who ruled and wronged them.

In the heavens of this darkness there rose a star. That star was liberty. The hope of freedom put new life into humanity, new blood into the veins of the world.

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On the shores of this great Western Continent was planted a nation, a nation that put liberty above tyranny, the people above the aristocracy, the school above the church, the Flag above the Cross. When independence was won and the United States was proclaimed a national fact, for the first time in the history of the race men were free to establish a government.

The founders of our nation must forever rank as the greatest and grandest men that have blessed their kind.

Among those who have sought to preserve the heritage of liberty bequeathed by our forefathers no name shines brighter than that of Robert G. Ingersoll. His political principles were embodied in those splendid words in the Declaration of Independence: "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Among the nation's politicians he was unique. He raised loftier political stand-

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ards. He called for something higher to work for, something nobler for which to live ✽ He wanted to see the dream of Paine and Jefferson realized, and he knew it could not be if the tyranny of superstition was allowed to grow up in the land. He lifted a warning voice against hypocrisy, sham and superstition—the foes of freedom—and he appealed to men to beware of putting any duty above human rights. ¶ In the triumph of priest and parson he saw the fall of man.

Perhaps the politics of Ingersoll was not fully understood. He did not set a trap for a political office and bait it with false words and promises. He worked for a better government, not to enable cheap politicians to reap the benefits, but to give better homes to the poor, more joy and happiness to the toilers, and to surround the homes where dwell wives and mothers and children with a sweeter atmosphere of love and light.

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MANY have said that Ingersoll was too great for political office. Is it not better to say that many others were too small? The larger the men we put into office, the larger the office will be. ¶ If a man ever listened to Ingersoll's speeches and was not forever afterwards a better man and a better politician, it was his own fault. He said, "The Universe ought to be a pure democracy—an infinite republic, without a tyrant and without a chain." That was his idea of what the earth also should be. ♣ He knew that the Flag and the Cross did not have the same father; that they were not born of the same mother; that the parents of one were the friends of humanity, and the parents of the other its enemies. Ours was the first nation to put liberty above tyranny, the people above the aristocrats, man above priest and the king.

Ingersoll in politics stood to his fellow-

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men for what America stands for to the world: the outstretched hand to the oppressed. He wanted no intellectual rats and mice in the nation's home gnawing away its foundation; but he did want those who loved and sighed for freedom to come to this free land and enjoy its blessings and support its institutions ♣

The man who comes to this country should leave everything behind and give his heart to the success of free minds, free speech and free schools. His one expressed desire in all of his magnificent addresses was this: for every man to do all he could for this splendid country, and if he could not do it in his own way, then do it in some other way—but do it.

¶ Ingersoll was a political revelation to the nation and a political inspiration: a man burning with convictions that were contrary to traditions, a man heroic enough to sacrifice his personal advancement to the general betterment of his

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race, a man filled with the flame of justice, asking men to seek the truth and the right and to deal honestly by those who differed from them. He was the champion of political virtue, the enemy of political vice. His passion for liberty, his love of home, his faith in humanity, he not only voiced upon the lecture platform, but he carried them into politics. Everywhere he proclaimed his lofty principles ❀ ❀

He despised keyhole diplomacy and believed in nations telling the truth as well as men. He was no jingo, no juggler, but a man who was in politics for the nation's good and not for individual aggrandizement. If the highest office in the land had been offered him upon condition that he would suppress the truth, he would have told the truth and let the office go.

Ingersoll believed in his country. He had faith in the men who founded it,

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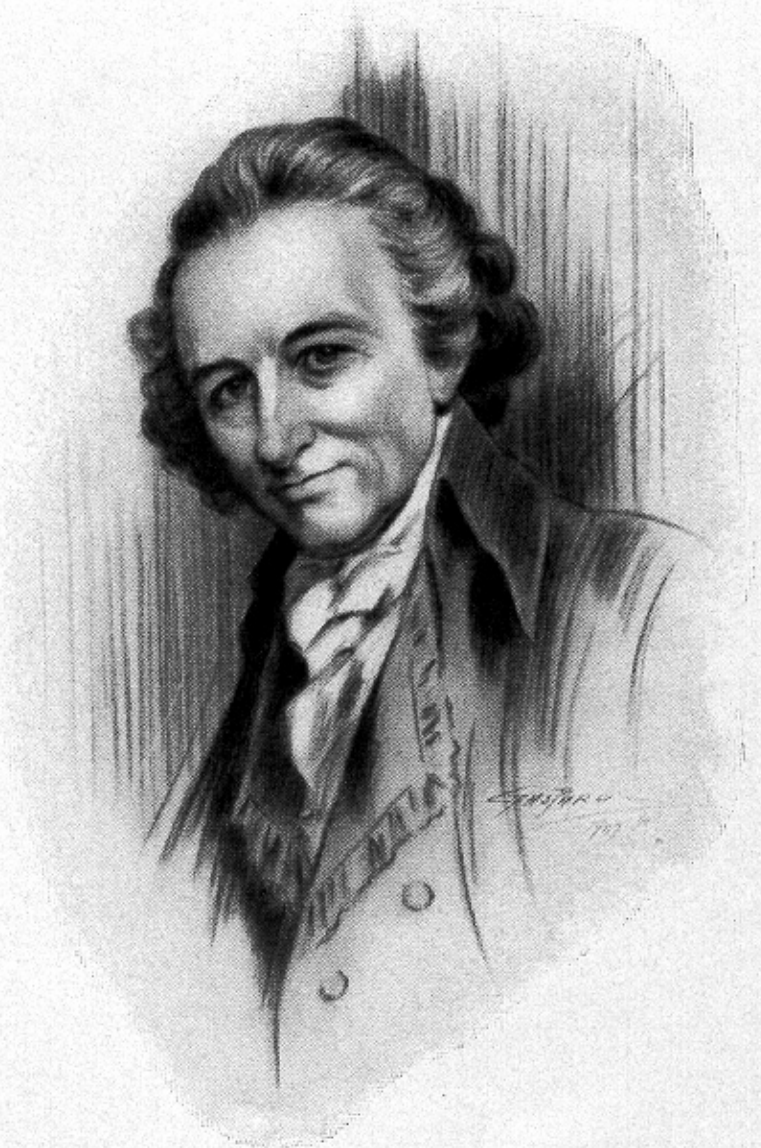
and faith in the principles upon which it was founded. He did not say that this nation would be great when it numbered two hundred million people, when it had built the Panama Canal, when it had discovered the North Pole ; but that it would be great and glorious when integrity was in the nation's heart and when it was built of pure homes with well-educated fathers and mothers within them.

The greatness of man makes a nation great ❀ ❀

This was Ingersoll's philosophy.

I rejoice that I saw and heard and knew this wonderful man. His voice had all the delights of joy, his laughter was music, and it came from his lips with the ring of truth.

More than thirty years ago, a great politician after hearing Ingersoll's speech at Cincinnati said, " This world will never see another Ingersoll "—and with that sentiment I coincide.



THOMAS PAINE

Thomas Paine

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Thomas Paine

N the "Life of Gouvernour Morris," by Theodore Roosevelt, on page two hundred eighty-nine is the statement that Thomas Paine was a "filthy little atheist." This was written in Eighteen Hundred Ninety-six, and in the last edition of the book, printed in Nineteen Hundred Six, the soft, orthodox impeachment still remains, although Mr. Roosevelt has been repeatedly reminded, since the work was first issued, of his indelicacy.

When we can not answer a man's arguments, all is not lost—we can still call him vile names. The fishwives supply us plenty of precedent, and the traditions of Billingsgate still survive.

Roosevelt is a Dutch Reformed—Paine was something else. Paine criticized the faith of John Knox and John Calvin; so Roosevelt, who believes in the religion of John Knox and John Calvin, calls Paine

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“little,” also “filthy”; and other savory epithets, which I dare not reproduce, are applied to those who reverence the memory of men who lived and labored to make other men free.

Paine was not “little,” mentally or physically. In height he was five feet ten, and the man who brings against him the damning indictment of being little is five feet five. Only in girth does Roosevelt surpass Paine.

As for being “filthy,” Paine was ascetic in his manner of life, and had the Englishman’s passion for his “tub” to such a degree that he was ridiculed for his cold-water habit by his soldier comrades. The third charge, that of being an “atheist,” not being a matter of physique or bodily habit, is more easily controverted. Seven times in the “Age of Reason” Paine says, “I believe in one God.” The closing paragraph of the book says, “The Creation we behold is the ever-

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existing word of God.” ¶ And yet Mr. Roosevelt still insists that Thomas Paine did not believe in God, and moreover, adds the gratuity that the man was little, also filthy.

In this book the author backs himself up by references to a certain “Isaac Roosevelt.” Neither Bancroft, Greene, the Encyclopedia Britannica, Appleton’s, nor the Century Dictionary mentions Isaac Roosevelt ♣ He is evidently a mythical Mrs. Harris or Ol’ Bill Jones, conjured forth in a psychic moment as a happy thought by the versatile author. Of course, the writer might have referred to Thomas Jefferson or Benjamin Franklin, both of whom paid high tribute to the genius of Paine, but instead he rings in Isaac, who has no parts nor dimensions, being neither little nor filthy, whom no one knows or even heard of, who wrote nothing and said nothing, being but a wraith of the figment of Theodore’s pig-

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ment. To such extremities does a religion of hate and prejudice often drive even very excellent men.

—

LET us look in the dictionary for the meaning of the word Atheist. An Atheist denies the existence of a god ✽ A Deist believes in a god, but denies the fact or possibility of a special revelation. Thomas Paine was a Deist, and no one can read his writings and his life by the Reverend Moncure D. Conway, without thinking that the man who wrote the "Age of Reason," and said, "The world is my country, and to do good, is my religion," was a great and good man. "Tom" Paine was a straw man made by frightened orthodoxy to save its religion. This uncanny effigy was set up in churches to terrify the timid and weak-minded. But it has had its day. This scarecrow has been picked to pieces by the fingers of invisible air. The last rag

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is gone; the last straw is dust, and the cross-sticks on which this scarecrow hung would not be purchased by a Roman Catholic junk-dealer in religious relics. And so today, let us exclaim: "Tom Paine is dead. Long live Thomas Paine."

¶ The only thing that ever came back from the grave that we know of was a lie. The lies which the professed followers of the gentle Christ told of Paine were killed and buried hundreds of times, but they break the bonds of death now and then and appear in their ghastly robes in the pulpits just as though they were the white garments of truth. But a lie about an infidel no longer receives credit as an argument in favor of Christianity. Had Thomas Paine been as cruel as John Calvin, as wicked and vile as some of the popes, as merciless as Jonathan Edwards, instead of being one of the greatest and noblest of mankind, the doctrine of vicarious atonement would

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be just as immoral, the dogma of endless punishment just as barbarous, and a Hell for unbelievers just as hideous a thought. It is unnecessary for an honest man to ever again misrepresent Thomas Paine. Moncure D. Conway's "Life of Thomas Paine" has made it possible for us to know what manner of man he was.

The time has been when the person who defended the author of the "Age of Reason" offered himself as a target for religious abuse; but the time has come when to refuse to defend Thomas Paine is to confess that one is a coward, a knave or grossly ignorant ❀ A just man is applauded, a generous man is loved, but a man who can give himself, all he has, and all he can do, for the good of his race, deserves immortality in human hearts ❀ ❀

I have looked over the names of those men who left their native land to cast their lot with that band of pilgrims who

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sought these shores that they might have freedom to worship their God and persecute their fellow-man, and also, the list of those who cast their lot with the descendants of that band of pilgrims, and I say now and here that the most valuable emigrant that ever came to America was Thomas Paine ✱ He did more for our country than every priest and every parson that has touched our soil. He left his home to help make a home for the oppressed of all the world. He came at the right time, he spoke the right word, he had the right spirit.

I have no faith in divinely guided stars, in angels who direct human affairs, or in what is called "Providence." Providence to me is good luck, a happy accident, as there is as much bad luck as good in this wayward world of ours; any theory of Providence makes God partial and whimsical. But if fortuitous circumstances ever furnished a founda-

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tion for faith in divine interpretation, surely those attending the triumphant career of Thomas Paine must be regarded as notable examples.

NO one knows what power plants in the human mind the seeds of greatness. We like to think that great sons had great mothers, and that loving hearts endowed their offspring with their own rare natures. But there have been children of the world who surpassed fathers and mothers, who contradicted heredity and environment, and who in their bold undertakings turned away from all instruction and defied all authority.

In Seventeen Hundred Seventy-four, Paine was living in England; he was a man of humble parentage, a man poor and unknown who had acted no brilliant part on the stage of life, a man whose experience had not fitted him to grasp great political principles or to solve important

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political problems, but who, within one year, contributed to the world the greatest work on human liberty and human government that had come from the human brain. It is not too much to say that Paine's "Common Sense" made a Nation—a nation that is today the greatest on earth. From being one of the most obscure men on the globe in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-four, Thomas Paine became one of the most influential in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five. The world delights in martial heroes, in men on horseback, in swords and armor and deadly weapons, and we yet see the stream of destiny following the tide of war; but on the canvas of history I can see a man with a pen in his hand who was a grander hero than ever led a charge on the field of battle.

Ink has made more fate than has blood, and the boldness of Thomas Paine in denouncing tyranny and wrong makes a

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picture of bravery which outshines in heroic splendor all the deeds of rifle and sword. The man who one hundred years ago dared to speak the truth faced not only poverty and disgrace, but in many instances death as well. To defy the king was more dangerous than to defy God, and when Paine characterized George the Third as that "Royal British Brute" he made a halter for his neck, had the Colonies not won independence.

I can not open the book of this man's life with cold, indifferent hands, nor read his burning words without my blood answering to his. To me Thomas Paine has been not only a man of destiny, but a man who made destiny. Nothing could induce him to cut one inch from the stature of his manhood. A conviction was as sacred to him as an idol to its worshiper. He protected his thought with all the chivalry of a knight of old, who fought for the hand of the woman he

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loved; as a mother watches over her crippled child, so Paine was devoted to what he believed to be right.

Thomas Paine did not ask a man about his nationality, his color, or his religion; to him a black face was not a mark of slavery, nor an honest belief a badge of degradation. He knew no rank higher than manhood. Titles were deceptions. Every king was an impostor, every noble a person obtaining honor under false pretenses ❀ He was as democratic as Nature, as impartial as rain or sunshine. He wanted a government where those who held office should be no higher than those they served. He wanted every man who was elected to position high or low, to represent the people, to stand for the people, and to work for the people. He wanted to strike the bauble from the head of every monarch on earth, and say, "If manhood be not written across your brow, you deserve no respect from

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honest men." Every throne has robbed the world, every altar has enslaved it, and Thomas Paine knew that any government which fostered superstition or allowed tyranny would trample upon human rights and lead reason to the gallows. He looked out upon the world with pity for the poor and lowly, with sympathy for the toilers, but with hatred for the thrones of power. I know of no one who has placed duty to mankind higher than did he. In whatever he did he obliterated self. He sought for no advantage over others, and if a man was endowed by Nature with superior ability, he saw in such power only a greater opportunity to bless his race. He never entered the wild race for money; never prostituted the power of his mighty brain; never sold his influence.

Thomas Paine was never a traitor to himself. What did this man hate? Falsehood, wrong, tyranny. What did he

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love? Justice, truth, right and liberty. The dominating inspiration of Paine's mind was love of freedom. He cried out wherever he went, "Liberty, Liberty and yet again Liberty!" In the land where he was born there was no such thing taught as the equality of mankind. All the springs of freedom in Great Britain were dry. The birds could sing of liberty, but man was dumb.



THOMAS PAINE dreamed the most glorious dream of human freedom that ever enchanted the mind of man; fairer and sweeter than lay under the broken marbles of Greece; brighter and better than was buried with the dead eagles of Rome. We know not what gave birth to this dream in his soul. The atmosphere of his early life has faded from the sky. The key to his youth is lost. He had seen and heard little of the world. He had lived mostly in the hidden realm of

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thought. How the hope of freedom for all mankind gained entrance to his mind no one can tell; what rivers fed it, what suns nourished it, what stars looked down upon it by night, can never be learned. He was a genius of solitude. His mind nursed sustenance from the heart of the universe. The wrongs he read of made him long for justice; the falsehoods he heard turned his heart to truth; the oppression about him kindled liberty within him. His great dream for mankind came from his love of man ✽ He looked upon the king of England as his personal enemy, and hence as the enemy of all humanity. It was the taking of all the wrongs and sufferings of his fellow-beings to himself that made him touch to life those "truths that wake to perish never."

Paine lived in a land where justice was in the grave, where right was led to the scaffold, where liberty had never been

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born; in a land where honesty went barefoot, and where vice held all the trumps. And yet in this dismal environment, Paine saw a vision of human equality, a country where a king was not wanted, and a pope was not needed; a country where the people were their own rulers, and where manhood was the brightest crown. He saw in America the land of his dream. In October, Seventeen Hundred Seventy-four, he sailed for these shores and, "by his vision splendid was on his way attended." ✱ Thomas Paine did not come to America to look upon some wonderful picture painted by a famous artist, or to see some marvelous figure wrought from a marble block by a sculptor's genius, or to gaze upon some spot sacred to religious faith; but he came to see if in the American Colonies an altar of freedom could be raised, and if there were a possibility of establishing a government which would protect

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human rights. He came here to find what he could not find in England, what he could not find in Europe, what he could not find in the Old World—a land which would give to man the liberty to be a man and which would respect manhood more than titles and coronets. He came here to find a new world, to found a new government, to help make a country where all men should be equal, to help found a nation which would be the monarch of the earth, as the eagle is of the air.

ON reaching our shores, Thomas Paine found the people in rebellion against the King. The yeast of discontent was working and the land was preparing to resist oppression. The clay was ready for the hand of the potter. One of the first efforts of Paine was an essay condemning negro slavery and advocating the emancipation of the slave. Before Lexington Green was stained by patriot

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blood, the first American Anti-slavery Society was formed in Philadelphia. Had Paine's counsel been heeded, there would have been no slaves in the United States, and civil war would not have dug a grave in our soil or broken a heart in our homes. The independence of the American Colonies was not sought by the men who emptied British tea into the waters of Boston harbor, nor was that the purpose of the minutemen who faced the redcoats in the Concord fight, nor did the hope of independence win the victory of Bunker Hill. Only a few men in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five believed that separation from England was probable, and no one publicly advocated it.

It was at this time that Thomas Paine set to work to show the American people that the hour had come for them to rid the land of monarchy. The bold argument of Paine for national independence could not be answered, and within a few months

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it had converted a continent. On the Fourth of July following its publication, the Colonies proclaimed their "Declaration of Independence," "Common Sense" flashed across the political sky of the New World with a brilliancy that won admiration and wonder from all. No true estimate can be made of the mighty influence which the ideas in this pamphlet have had, and are destined to have, upon the human race.

Paine stands between two epochs: the epoch of Kings and the epoch of Man. To the King he said, "The night is coming." To Man he said, "The day is dawning; tyranny must leave the earth; freedom and equality will possess it." Paine did not say to Men, fall upon your knees and implore God's help, but, stand upon your feet and help yourselves. Muskets did better execution during the Revolutionary War than did prayers ✽ Paine did not say, "Thus saith the

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Lord," for he had something better to say than was ever said by the Lord. He cried to his fellow-men out of his mighty passion for liberty to rise and drive British oppression back over the seas. ¶ One has only to read the writings of Paine to learn that the man who wields a big pen does humanity a nobler service than a man who wields a big stick. ♣ Reverence has chained the mind to antiquity, and the lips of eulogy have bestowed the highest praise upon the Ancients; but Plato and Socrates, Seneca and Epictetus, Paul and Jesus combined did not do for human life on earth so much as did Thomas Paine. I know that my words sound extravagant to the popular ear, but the philosophy which made the Athens of Pericles and Aspasia is as dead as its sculptured gods; the morals which built up the Rome of the Cæsars are embalmed in a few rose-jars of literature; and the gospel which conquered

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Egypt and Syria is powerless before the truths of modern science; while in the words of Paine sleep giants that will yet vanquish every foe of man.

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ANATION is no stronger than its citizens. Thomas Paine's work was to build man strong and great, that the nation might be strong and great. The rights of man are to be defended, not the word of God. When men have been corrupt, governments have decayed. The salvation of the race is not in Gods or Saviors, or Bibles or Churches, but in the perpetuation of freedom and equality among men and women.

The tree of liberty had blossomed a thousand times, and the perfume of its flowers filled the air with the glad promise of its ripened fruit; but not until the Stars and Stripes waved over America's soil, was political freedom a fact. Thomas Paine did more than any other man to

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put the stars on our flag and to give that flag to the breeze. And what he did was done without expectation of pay. When he had finished "Common Sense," he did not ask the Colonies to buy it. His strongest convictions were in that work, his dearest hopes had been written into its words, and these convictions and those hopes were too precious to be bartered for money.

Paine had no love of freedom to sell. This man who started out to give his life to freedom presented to the Colonies all his rights in his pamphlets and not less than fifty thousand dollars were realized from the sales. Let us draw the picture of this man in January, Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five: a self-exiled Englishman living in Philadelphia, with only a few acquaintances, receiving a salary of two hundred fifty dollars a year for editing a magazine. He had a head full of good ideas and a heart full of good

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feeling. Under his arm he carried the manuscript of his first book. He had read portions of his work to the few friends, who urged him to publish his thoughts. This man who had spent months in the preparation of his work took it to a printer without thought of personal gain. He only wished that the people would read his book and carry its principles to the heights of victory.

Thomas Paine in writing and giving "Common Sense" to the Colonies made the noblest and best contribution to the cause of freedom in America. During the seven years' war which the Revolutionists waged against Great Britain, Paine contributed from time to time thirteen numbers of his "Crisis." The first, which was printed in December, Seventeen Hundred Seventy-six, commenced with this memorable sentence, "These are the times that try men's souls," and the last, which appeared on April Nineteenth, Seventeen

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Hundred Eighty-three, opened with these words, "The times that try men's souls are over."

Paine's words put strength into men's arms and courage into their hearts, but not a dollar into his own pocket. All he wrote in America was given for her freedom. He gave his services as the night gives its dew, as the flower gives its perfume, as the sun gives its light ✽



IN Seventeen Hundred Eighty-seven, Paine sailed for England, intending to be absent about one year. It was fifteen years before he again saw the land of his dreams. He was intensely interested in the struggle for liberty which was going on in France and studied its every phase. Soon the struggle became a revolution, and the eyes of the civilized world were watching for the outcome.

In Seventeen Hundred Ninety, Edmund Burke, the foremost orator of England,

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published his reflections on the "Revolution in France." It was a foul blow struck at every attempt of man to overthrow despotism. Although Burke had uttered noble words of sympathy for Americans in their war for freedom, and although he had been the warm friend of Paine, as soon as his pamphlet reached the public, Paine answered it. He never allowed friendship to turn him from the path of right, or to wreath his lips with a lie.

In a short time the first volume of the "Rights of Man" appeared. Paine dedicated this work to George Washington, and gave the proceeds from its sales to the "Society for Constitutional Information." The second volume was issued a year later. ✱ The work created the greatest enthusiasm, both in England and in France. It made Paine an outlaw from his native land, and gained him a seat in the French Convention.

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Paine was a great power in France, but his humane principles were not appreciated by men who could talk suavely, but act like beasts. He was honored by the best and hated by the worst of men. The Revolution, which opened the Bastille that had held within its gloomy walls so many of the brightest minds and truest hearts of France, was hurried from a desire for liberty to a demand for blood. ¶ When Louis the Sixteenth fled from Paris, the cry for his execution went up from the frenzied mob. It was then that Paine rose to the sublimest heights of humanity. While he would trample the crown of Louis under foot, he would not vote for his death, and said to the infuriated assembly, "Kill the King, but not the Man." When Paine asked that the life of Louis be spared, he saw his own face in the mirror of death, but he did not take back his words. The king went to the scaffold, and Paine went to prison.

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¶ While daily expecting to be carried to the guillotine, Paine wrote his "Age of Reason." He dedicated this work to his fellow-citizens of the United States in these words: "I put the following work under your protection. It contains my opinion upon religion. You will do me the justice to remember that I have always strenuously supported the right of every man to his opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this right makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it. The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other and I trust I never shall."

In this book Paine told the straight truth about the Christian Bible. He was the voice of honesty in the wilderness of hypocrisy. Thomas Paine for forty years battled for truth, for right, for liberty,

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for reason. He had the only religion fit for a civilized person to profess or practise. He did not say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," but he said, "To do good is my religion," and, "The true theology of man is happiness of mind."

Without Thomas Paine the battle of Bunker Hill would have been fought in vain, and the sun of liberty would have gone down in the darkness of Valley Forge. Without Thomas Paine the light of political independence would not have followed the night of oppression, and America would still be addressing petitions across the sea to England's diminutive monarch. Without Thomas Paine there would not have been liberty enough in this land to allow the publication of *The Philistine Magazine*.

John Calvin



JOHN CALVIN

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The Bank of Wisdom publishes all works of human interest, we scorn no ideas of serious thought. Ideas and beliefs some may think “dangerous” and would hide, we seek to reproduce and distribute for the consideration and intellectual development of every human mind. When peace and understanding is established throughout the world it might be said that humanity has achieved an acceptable degree of civilization, but until that longed for time we must never cease to search for greater truth and a higher morality for humanity.

The wealth of thought hidden in obscure books of bygone ages makes fascinating reading, and as much of this great original thought was suppressed by the sheer power of the established systems of the time, these ideas may well be the ones needed to bring peace and human progress to our world. One thing is certain, the belief systems we have are not the ones we need.

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John Calvin

ALVIN made Geneva famous and infamous. He was in the middle of the Sixteenth Century a theological colossus. In the beginning of the Twentieth Century he is a theological pigmy. His fame has been a descending one. From the heights he has sunk to the depths. Instead of directing the great Protestant movement of his time into a permanent glory, his followers have witnessed the failure of his religious scheme and the end of his religious reign. Calvinism is not treated as a live issue by the intelligence of today ✱ It is a corpse and is in the hands of the undertaker.

Calvin was born on July Tenth, Fifteen Hundred Nine, of Roman Catholic, though decent, parents. He came into the world unannounced. No mythology is woven about his cradle. Nature was not disturbed at his birth, and we can not learn that any especial interest was

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manifested in his babyhood outside the home into which he made his advent. His father was an officer in the ecclesiastical court and diocese in Noyan, where he had resided during his lifetime. His mother, we are told, was endowed with beauty and piety—a rare combination. It is evident that her son John inherited more of the latter from her than of the former. His father early destined him for the priesthood, and accordingly he was sent to a college at Paris when he was about fourteen. Young Calvin was studious by nature and easily led his class. He was a sickly youth, and his weak constitution, together with an exceedingly severe disposition, won for him the reputation of being hard and unsympathetic — qualities which grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. When Calvin was eighteen, his father decided that his son should be a lawyer rather than a priest, and he

was to be fitted for that profession ❀
For nearly four years he pursued his legal studies, but at the expiration of this time the death of his father determined him to return to theology. Previous to this, however, he had become somewhat acquainted with Protestant views, which were then attracting the attention of Europe, and Calvin's eager mind, already opposed to church doctrines and discipline, felt the inspiration, and upon thorough examination of the doctrines promulgated by Luther he decided to join the religious movement inaugurated by that great reformer. It caused him no theological pangs to swap the Pope for the Bible. His authority henceforth was a book instead of a man, but a book with God in it—a veritable divine revelation ❀ ❀

Protestant liberty of conscience went no further than to read the Bible and to believe what it said ❀ But woe to the

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person who read it not to believe. Doubt was no less of the devil to the Protestant than to the Catholic.

THE first great work of Calvin was his "Institutes of the Christian Religion." This was published in Fifteen Hundred Thirty-five. He was a marked man from the date of its publication. He had been in exile three years when his book came from the press.

In Fifteen Hundred Thirty-six, Calvin stopped at Geneva from a stolen visit to his old home, intending to remain there only for a single night. The hour of his destiny struck when he entered the city. Geneva had just emerged from the religious tyranny of the Pope and from the political tyranny of the Duke of Savoy, when Calvin appeared upon the scene ✱ Protestantism had gained favor among the people, and the day was drawing nigh when the reign of the

priest would be broken in Switzerland forever. The rule of Calvin began in Fifteen Hundred Forty-one. He made himself the civil and ecclesiastical head of affairs. He was the government. He derived his authority from himself. Any one who opposed him opposed God. He presumed to speak for the whole Trinity, and the punishment he administered was the punishment of God. Calvin established a theocracy in Geneva, but he was the head of the firm. God was only a silent partner. He tried to be as bad as the Lord God of the Israelites, and he succeeded in spots. It has been claimed for Calvin that he was no worse than his age. That the age was atrocious may be admitted, but such an apology for this theocrat confers no glory upon him ❀ While I will not dispute the fact that the Sixteenth Christian Century was a cruel and wicked period of the world's history, I wish to assert that the best

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men of that time were not allowed to the front or to teach or to urge their opinions ✱ Many great and good men were obliged to live in obscurity in order to live at all, and many a profound scholar was forced to keep silent or pay the price of death for speaking. The Christian Church for fourteen hundred years had done little more than kill the brightest and noblest of the children of men. There were a few streaks of light in the darkness of Christendom which promised the coming of a fairer day, but only at this distance can be realized how dark was that darkness. One light and then another was quenched by priestly power, but as one went out another burst forth, until the sky burned with the glow of victory and hope filled the heart.

That Calvin was a merciless ruler, the chronicles of Geneva prove beyond a question. His rule was tyranny of an

J O H N C A L V I N

uncompromising kind. There was no love in his heart. He showed no compassion for the weak and unfortunate. Under his administration a child was beheaded for striking its mother, testimony was secured by torture of the most cruel nature, and heresy was punished by giving heretics to the flames.

Calvin was feared and hated. He brooked no opposition. Castellio was banished from Geneva because he dared to differ from Calvin on minor points of theology, and Bolsec was declared a felon for speaking disrespectfully of predestination. Calvin's " Kingdom of God " in Geneva was a hell on earth. But Calvin was no worse than the God he adored, no worse than the Bible of this God. He took the ground and maintained it that the Deity was the only legislator for mankind and that His law was to be found in His " Holy Word." It was this divine law that was carried out in Geneva. The

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God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Calvin was put upon the throne of human affairs, and the world has paid for it in tears and blood, in suffering and misery untold and unknown.

THE crowning atrocity of Calvin was the burning of Servetus. That cruel murder should have stopped the tide of Calvinism at the martyr's stake. A man who would order a punishment like that, for a difference in religious opinions, held religious opinions unfit for men and women to adopt.

Michael Servetus was a Spanish physician, a noted scholar, and an able writer on theological subjects. He committed the crime of not being "orthodox." ✱ He exposed the foolishness of the doctrines of the Trinity, and otherwise sanely criticized Christianity. For expressing his liberal religious views, or, in other words, his freethought views, he was thrown

into prison at Vienna at the instance of the archbishop, but he effected his escape. Intending to go to Naples, he passed through Geneva in disguise, but his identity was discovered, and he was apprehended by the magistrates on a charge of blasphemy and heresy. His writings were carefully examined to find ground for accusations. These were easily found. His arrest, however, was not to the satisfaction of some, as he was neither a resident nor a subject. To relieve themselves of responsibility for their action, they consulted their divines, and every one declared for his punishment, Calvin being especially emphatic as to the necessity of putting him to death. Servetus was forty times a heretic, according to his accusers and the standards of Calvin, but not a word that he had written would he recant. He defended himself bravely before his judges, but he was sentenced to be burned at the stake.

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No religion can tolerate another, and no priest can forgive another; and different priests killing men and women in the name of God was, during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, almost a pastime. Human beings were given to the flames without thought or care of the horrible sufferings of the unfortunate victims. There is no mercy in fire, and none in the fire-fiends who can light the fagots around the body of the martyr. Where the Bible has been accepted as the law of God, murder of innocent persons has been defended by priest and magistrate ✽ In Geneva, during the ascendancy of Calvin, hundreds were burned for witchcraft and sorcery. Every person who refused to bow the knee to John Calvin was declared to be the enemy of God, and all enemies of God must be put to death. But God has never killed a human being for heresy or blasphemy. Priests and parsons have killed thousands

and laid their crimes to God ✂ Calvin punished thinkers, authors, men who loved the true and the right—men who refused to accept his commands or to wear his yoke. On the night of October Twenty-seventh, Fifteen Hundred Fifty-three, Calvin had one less lover of the truth to fear, for the greatest scholar of his age was dead. The bright mind of Servetus had been put out by religious hate. Think of a religion that demanded the death of an honest, a noble and an upright man! Calvin could have saved Servetus, but his religion would not allow him to do it. The burning of Servetus was a part of Calvinism, and Calvin religiously believed that when the ashes of his enemy had been gathered together for burial he was forever dismissed with a shovelful of sand.

But men sometimes rise up, if ghosts do not. If murder ever condemned a murderer, then does the death of Michael

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Servetus condemn John Calvin. It would make a long chapter of history to chronicle the accounts of bad men killing good ones ❀ ❀

A religion dies, it never surrenders, and it dies sometimes by its own hand. It kills itself by killing others. It is not because Calvinism contained so much truth that it has reached, although terribly emasculated, our age, but rather because the generations between the Sixteenth and Twentieth Centuries were fed on falsehoods. The pictured Calvinism of today is as unlike the original as the government of the United States is unlike the government of Nero. Put Calvin's true portrait on the walls of the Presbyterian church today, and they would put on the color of shame, if all honor be not dead within them.

IT seems rather strange that it never occurs to a man of Calvin's disposition that he could do more real good to the world by killing himself than by killing his victim.

We can account for the tiger of the jungle, the wolf of the plains, for the crocodile of the Ganges, for even the murderer of Whitechapel, but how account for the cruelty, the fiendishness of Calvin? His apologists say that he lived in an age of wickedness, in a time when unbelief was not tolerated; but a man of kindness, of broad views and intellectual sympathies would have risen above his time and been remembered for his good deeds, not for his bad ones.

There is no doubt that the age in which Calvin flourished was bad, and there is no question that it was made so by its faith ✻ It was dominated by a cruel religion. It was Calvin's duty to be better than his age, better than his religion.

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If God would punish with death a man who dared to express independent convictions on matters of faith, Calvin should have saved this man. Let God be cruel, but men should be kind to men.

Servetus might have been as cold and as cruel as was Calvin, had he possessed his ideas of religion, and this is the particular point to be emphasized. There was a wide difference in the faith of these two men, and the difference in their faith made the difference in the men. Calvin hated any one who refused to acknowledge his power, who dared to question his theology or to defy his authority. He was a theological tyrant. He had gone God-mad. Doubt of God's law as promulgated by himself was the highest crime, and to be punished with the most terrible deaths ✽ No one must think beyond the boundaries of his thought. The mind must not pass the circumference of his conclusions. This man

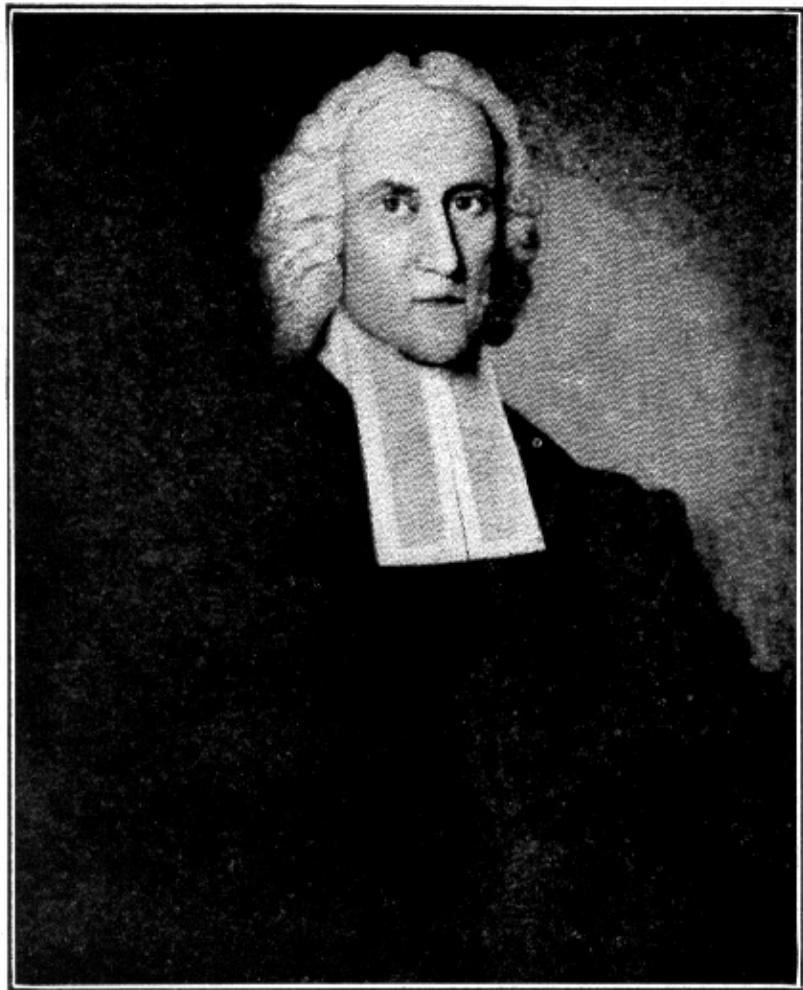
assumed the right to condemn those who differed from him and he used his power to cripple liberty, to stifle investigation, and to hinder the search after truth. He was a bad man, because he had an atrocious religion, because he worshiped a ferocious God. The most that can be said of Calvin is that he inflicted four hundred years of brutal theology upon mankind. He left a legacy of selfishness, of cruelty, of brutality, to the world.

A few years ago money was contributed by some liberal-minded people for a statue of Servetus to be erected in Geneva. The statue was not wanted there by those in authority. An inscription on one side of the pedestal which supports the statue tells us its history. It reads as follows: "A location having been refused by the Administrative Council of Geneva to the statue of Michael Servetus, offered by International subscription, the committee

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has turned it over to the municipality of Annemasse. It was inaugurated October Twenty-fifth, Nineteen Hundred Eight."

¶ Annemasse is a little place about three miles out from Geneva, but it has one object to embellish it and make it attractive—the monument to Michael Servetus.



JONATHAN EDWARDS

Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edwards

IN Sixteen Hundred Twenty, the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Cape Cod. With them landed the Pilgrim Mothers and the Pilgrim Children—one hundred two persons in all. They brought with them, mentally and morally, what they possessed in the Old World. They found here what they could not bring—a land without tyranny, and freedom to worship their God.

By Sixteen Hundred Forty, thousands of Puritans had come to Massachusetts, and they all brought Calvinism with them. This faith was the religion of the so-called Reformation. It may be said to have been the first, if not the worst, trouble brought to America. These people came as loyal subjects of the King of Great Britain. They were willing subjects of the Crown, and no thought of rebellion inspired their movement. They came to find what was denied them at home—

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liberty to enjoy their religion. ¶ The Puritans did not differ from the Church established by Henry the Eighth in points of doctrine so much as in manner of worship and in the conduct of life. They were very strict in their notions of religious duty, and very severe in their punishment of religious offenses. Even today Puritanism is not wholly outgrown in this land, and its dark shadow still casts a gloom over one day of the week.



IN Sixteen Hundred Thirty-one, there arrived in New England a disturbing element in the person of Roger Williams—a brilliant preacher, an advocate of absolute liberty of conscience, and a champion of the separation of Church and State. Williams was an early mark for religious hatred and persecution. He was easily the biggest man in Massachusetts, and the man who sowed the first seeds of real liberty on this conti-

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ment. After five years the General Court sentenced him to banishment. He made his escape to Rhode Island, where he founded the town of Providence; but he had left his ideas behind him, which in time bore good fruit.

About the middle of the Seventeenth Century, the arrival of some Quakers helped to let loose the virus in Puritanism. These Quakers were subjected to the most cruel treatment, and stringent laws were enacted to keep them out of the Colony. But they continued to come and suffer the penalty of their faith. Quakerism has been called a religion without superstition. At any rate, the "Friends" were without moral blemish, and lived upright, though colorless lives. ¶ Calvinism could not blend with Quakerism, and it did its worst to stamp out this new sect. But, notwithstanding men and women were hanged for their faith, the Quakers multiplied and preached their

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gospel of gray clothes and sober lives ♣ For centuries witchcraft had flourished in Europe, and thousands of women had been murdered for this imaginary crime. Towards the close of the Seventeenth Century, this horrible delusion broke out in the Colonies, and many women were tortured and twenty were hanged before the people came to their senses.

The noted Puritan preacher, Cotton Mather, was largely responsible for this outbreak, and the Bible text, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was quoted to justify the execution of the women and the girls who were killed in Salem.

In the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, Calvinism was showing signs of decay ♣ It was losing its hold on men. Arminianism was springing up everywhere, and indifference towards all religion was manifested.

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INTO this bubbling cauldron Jonathan Edwards was born, in Seventeen Hundred Three. His father was a Calvinist minister, and his mother was a Calvinist minister's daughter. He was the confluence of two streams of Calvinism. What' he did not get from his father, he got from his mother. Edwards was the victim of religious parentage. It might be said that he was to the pulpit born ❀ ❀

He was endowed with more than ordinary intelligence, which was enlisted, unfortunately, in useless studies. Had his remarkable gifts been otherwise directed, they might have conferred upon mankind great and lasting good. But he was a part of an age that exalted the study of theology above every useful occupation, and he gravitated naturally to the ministry.

At seventeen years of age, he was graduated at New Haven, and at twenty-five

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was installed at Northampton as the colleague of his grandfather, the Reverend Solomon Stoddard. Great changes had taken place in New England between the coming of the Pilgrims and the time of Edwards: changes for the better; changes that were beginning to free the mind from the bondage of Puritanism. But the clergyman was still the great man of the place, ranking above the magistrate. He stood for the aristocracy of knowledge. Blue blood had to be clergyman's blood. Every New Englander was influenced more or less by New England; and in the early days, theology and religion made up about seven-tenths of the life and thought of this region. Every town and village suffered from a surfeit of superstition. The people lived almost upon pious gossip. They talked religion, breathed it, and had it for breakfast, dinner, supper and between meals ❀ ❀

JONATHAN EDWARDS

JONATHAN EDWARDS was born before the people of New England had learned to smile. Living was a serious business, and religion made it more so. Calvinism would sober any one if it were taken seriously, and it is certain that our forefathers took it that way.

It was indeed a dark age in which Edwards lived, but the light was coming; the air was growing warmer, and better ideas of God and man were budding and blossoming in the hearts of men and women.

Edwards saw that the authority of Calvinism was questioned, and he set himself the task of resisting the rising tide of doubt. It was in the year Seventeen Hundred Thirty-one that he really began his career of madness. He preached in the "public lecture" in Boston a sermon to prove, as it would seem, the total depravity of God. This discourse was the first of a series of the most abominable

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sermons ever written by man. Nothing could be better calculated to make man hate God than one of Edwards' Christian sermons ❀ ❀

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IT is difficult to reconcile the life of Jonathan Edwards with his religion. It is hard to believe that he was a kind husband and father, and good neighbor, when he was the author of the most blood-curdling discourses in all pious literature, or that he lived a good life with tender thoughts for others when at the same time he could paint such horrible pictures of human suffering hereafter, and could send men, women and children to hell-fire in such cold-blooded logic. His humanity seemed to ossify when he commenced to preach. A saint out of the pulpit, and a fiend in it, is a fit characterization of this great Puritan preacher. He must have been theologically insane. Certainly such a religion as

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he had was calculated to drive any decent person mad. It may be easy to make Jonathan Edwards attractive as a man, but all the beauty and glory of language can not make his theology so.

The words of Edwards were looked upon as true because he was a minister and spoke from a pulpit, and because as a minister he was supposed to have God behind him. Today, if a man were to deliver that sermon of his on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," he would be laughed at in the church, or arrested for lunacy outside of it.

Jonathan Edwards in his preaching filled the air with damnation, and literally made goblins of divine wrath to frighten and torture the souls of men. The worst part of Jonathan Edwards was his God, and that was the larger part. On this subject he was crazy. He was drunk with Calvinism. He believed in the worst God, preached the worst sermons, and had the

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worst religion of any human being who ever lived on this continent.

EDWARDS had mountainous conceit. He knew it all, here and hereafter, and talked as though faith was knowledge. He imagined that he had fathomed the universe when he had only put his foot in a mudhole. His philosophy was largely metaphysical nonsense. He wrote most about what did not exist. He could fill volumes on the sovereignty of God; he could talk for weeks about Hell, and picture what would be done in that abode of lost souls for millions of years; but he was blind to the white deeds of humanity and to that natural sense of justice in man which condemned wrongdoing even in a God.

Edwards as a young man was blinded by his faith, and this blindness increased with his years. He sought no light but from religious revelation ✽ In studying

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God he lost sight of man, and in seeking the divine glory, he failed to recognize the truth. He started wrong, and went wrong all his life. He had no sympathy with humanity. When God damned man he sympathized with God instead of with man. He began with the pious assumption of Calvinism, that man deserved damnation, and so he had no pity for those whom his God condemned.

Jonathan Edwards had the most disgusting theology ever conceived by the human mind. This man, who was the father of eleven children, said that "a little child is full of enmity against God"; that children were "born of sin and born to sin"; that man was "a firebrand of Hell," "a viper spitting against God." His religion was a crime against children. It was divine cruelty.


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JONATHAN EDWARDS' name is a blot on New England history. It stands for nothing kind, merciful or humane. This man said in one of his sermons: "The God that holds you over the pit of Hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; He is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in His sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in His eyes as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours."

Had I been a listener to this man's sermon, I would have stood up in his church and told him if his God abhorred me, that honors were even, for I abhorred his God with all the passion of my being; that I regarded Him as the most terrible monster in the universe ❀ No decent

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person could respect such a God, and it is safe to say that people went to church in the days of Edwards with fear and trembling. We might say that black as the devil has been painted, he was snow-white compared with Jonathan Edwards' God.



EDWARDS is the only clergyman who has pictured Christianity in all of its infinite cruelty and horror. More than all other men he succeeded in demonstrating that Calvinism was the most pernicious religious faith that ever poisoned the mind and heart of man.

A wild beast tearing a child limb from limb would be a saint beside a fiend who could say, as did Jonathan Edwards: "Can the believing husband in Heaven be happy with his unbelieving wife in Hell? Can the believing father in Heaven be happy with his unbelieving children in Hell? Can the loving wife in Heaven

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be happy with her unbelieving husband in Hell?" He replies: "I tell you, yea! Such will be their sense of justice that it will increase rather than diminish their bliss."

To have preached that one sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is to deserve the execration of all mankind forever.

Such preaching today would empty a church in five minutes. Nothing could be added to the God of Jonathan Edwards to make Him more hideous. If he had been commissioned to paint the Christian Deity as an object of abomination, he could not have succeeded better. No color is lacking in his picture of divine fiendishness. Had this idol of Calvinism been found on the shores of a savage land, it would have been considered a mercy to its worshipers to have destroyed the detestable thing and buried its fragments beyond the possibility of recovery.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

JONATHAN EDWARDS is to be judged by his theology, and that theology is the worst product of a cruel faith in a cruel age.

How could man worship such a God? This monster of the mind should never have been enthroned in print ♣ He should have perished in manuscript, or been stillborn in the brain. Jonathan Edwards must ever be regarded as the mad minister of his age, driven insane by his religion.

The sovereignty of God, not the happiness of man—the glory of the Creator, not the comfort and joy of the creature—was what his religion stood for. God was everything, man was nothing, in his religious scheme. He carried his logic to the point of lunacy. He out-Calvined Calvin in his belief in predestination, and enlarged, as it were, the plan of damnation. He defended God's right to damn anybody He pleased, no matter

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whether he was good or bad. He objected to any weakness in the Deity, and mercy for a human being would be evidence of divine imperfection. It was pure gratuity for God to save man, he said, as God was under no obligation to do anything for him. He carried out his faith so far as to damn man where he thought God might forget or neglect to do so ♣ Hell was ninety-nine one-hundredths of justice in his religion.



ONE thing Edwards believed in with all his heart and soul. That was Hell. He believed in it through and through, in all its fire and flame, in all its pangs and pain, in all its horrors for the unregenerate. He divided the hereafter into the smallest Heaven and the biggest Hell of any of the Calvinistic ministers. He said, "The larger part of the men who have lived have gone to Hell"; and he seems to have said it

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with perfect satisfaction with the divine scheme which so ordered it, if not with joy that it was ordered so.

Edwards' influence has been against all the humanities, against all the sympathy with human weakness, and all the pity for human failure. He was in his most characteristic religious mood when picturing God as an elephant walking on ants ✽ He did not adopt the highest religion of his age, but accepted the lowest. He made his God cruel, unmerciful, unjust, the meanest God of all Christian theology.

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If every American does his or her best for America and for Humanity we shall become, and remain, the Grandest of Nations – admired by all and feared by none, our strength being our Wisdom and kindness.

Knowledge knows no race, sex, boundary or nationality; what mankind knows has been gathered from every field plowed by the thoughts of man. There is no reason to envy a learned person or a scholarly institution, learning is available to all who seek it in earnest, and it is to be had cheaply enough for all.

To study and plow deeper the rut one is in does not lead to an elevation of intelligence, quite the contrary! To read widely, savor the thoughts, and blind beliefs, of others will make it impossible to return again to that narrowness that did dominate the view of the uninformed.

To prove a thing wrong that had been believed will elevate the mind more than a new fact learned.

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What is Prayer?

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What Is Prayer?

NE definition of prayer is that it is an appeal from the known to the unknown; a supplication for help from the solid earth to the mysterious void; a cry of piteous pain for relief to the ear that never hears.

Another definition is that prayer in theory is based on the supposition of a God's personality; prayer in practise assumes that God is omnipotent. It supposes that He can be in all places at all times. People are praying at all hours of the day and night and in all quarters of the globe. To hear them all, God must be at such places at such times. To do this he must cease to be a personal being. He must cease to be God. He will then have no intelligence, no volition; for these depend upon a personal organization. Prayer therefore logically annihilates the being to whom it is addressed. Fred Douglass told me that he prayed

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for fifteen years for liberty, but no prayer was answered until he prayed with his legs; that is, he ran away from bondage. ¶ We all remember at one time there was a great drought in New York, and many members of Plymouth Church asked Henry Ward Beecher to pray for rain. He replied, "The wind is not in the right direction." All nations, from the lowest barbarians to the most progressive and civilized, are praying to their gods. Prayer must have originated from a belief in a personal god. I once heard an old Baptist minister say that God sat on a great white throne, something like a king or emperor, and that people should beg for whatever blessings they wanted. It was Ingersoll who transposed the well-known saying, "An honest man is the noblest work of God," into "An honest god is the noblest work of man." We need honest gods. We have had none as yet. I read in a newspaper

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not long ago where it was stated that a beautiful young lady of nineteen who had been blind since she was ten, had her eyes opened by prayer. A great many persons have had their eyes opened by prayer—open to the foolishness of the thing—but there are many yet who need to be cured in this way. ✽ If faith and prayer can do what religious people claim can be done by these pious agencies, why is there so much suffering, so much misery, so much blindness and human ill on this earth?



IAM reminded when I read about any of the feats of prayer of the old sailor who was addicted to swearing. A parson one day overheard some of his emphatic remarks and took him to task and tried to impress upon his mind the wickedness of such language. The sailor said he could accomplish as much by swearing as the parson could by praying, and challenged

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him to a trial of their respective powers, saying that if the parson would pray a brick off the chimney on a neighboring house, he would swear it on again. The challenge was not accepted. All Christian clergymen teach that God answers the prayers of men—not all prayers, but real good prayers. These clergymen pin their faith in prayer on the Bible injunction, “Ask and ye shall receive.” If prayers are not answered, God is a liar if the Christian Bible is His word. I would like to see a prayer answered. I mean a prayer from man alone to God alone. If everything can not be had by asking God for it, I want to know just what prayers will be answered.

I presume no one will claim that a person can get money by praying for it. I do not remember of ever hearing a prayer for dollars and cents. But can a person get health by prayer? If so, why are there so many pious sick people in the world?

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There can be no intelligent asking for things until there is an intelligent understanding of what can be had by asking. This knowledge is needed, and if the Christian Church can give it to the world, it would confer a great favor upon suffering humanity. I trust some of the religious journals will publish, for the benefit of those who want to pray, a list of things that can be had by prayer. If the publishers of these papers object to this scheme on the ground that their space is too valuable to devote to such a charity, I will pay for a reliable list of articles that can be had by praying for them, at regular advertising rates, even if the list should occupy the entire sheet; and I will pay the whole bill when I see one prayer answered.

Some Eastern potentate not long ago visited New York City. Sunday morning he was driven at his request to the zoological garden and prayed there to

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a crocodile. There was much criticism, and the papers all over the country expressed great contempt concerning a man who was a high official who could so debase himself as to pray to a crocodile. I would prefer to pray to and worship a crocodile than to worship and pray to a God that would send an earthquake to destroy the homes and murder the men, women and children on this earth ❀ ❀

Mark Twain said he knew of no foreign product that entered this country untaxed except answers to prayer. I immediately wrote Mark and asked him if he ever knew that a prayer was answered, and if so, did it come in taxable shape. Mark replied that he never knew of an answer to prayer. Mark's last words were, "Give me my glasses." Later, some hypocritical, prayerful, evangelical liar will add, "I want to read my Bible!"

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THE following is a prayer for the Pacific Coast sufferers from the earthquake, suggested by Bishop Greer of New York :

“ O Father of mercy, and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need, look down from Heaven, we humbly beseech Thee; behold, visit and relieve Thy servants to whom such great and grievous loss and suffering have come through the earthquake and fire. In Thy *wisdom* Thou hast seen fit to visit them with trouble and to bring distress upon them ❀ ❀

Remember them, O Lord in mercy, and endow their souls with patience under this affliction. Though they be perplexed and troubled on every side, save them from despair and suffer not their faith and trust in Thee to fail. In this hour of darkness, when Thou hast made the earth to tremble and the mountains thereof to shake, be Thou, O God,

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their refuge and their strength, and their present help in trouble. And forasmuch as Thou alone canst bring light out of darkness and good out of evil, let the light of Thy loving countenance shine upon them through the cloud; let the Angel of Thy presence be with them in their sorrow to comfort and support them, giving strength to the weak, courage to the faint, and consolation to the dying. We ask it in the name of Him who in all our afflictions is afflicted with us, Thy Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen."

Could anything be more idiotic than that conglomeration of words—otherwise that prayer? If so, then I have read many dictionaries in vain.

We have had various reformations; the one on prayer is yet to come. All thinking people know that prayer is a farce. There should never be a breath of it. Isn't it absurd to pray for what we know we

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must get for ourselves? I have noticed that people who believe that prayer is idiotic are as likely to pay one hundred cents on the dollar as the Christian who prays and spells it with an *e*.

Children should be taught that no amount of so-called religion will compensate for rheumatism; that Christianity has nothing to do with morality; that vicarious atonement is a fraud and a lie; that to be born well and strong is the highest birth; that the Bible is no more inspired than *The Philistine*; that sin is a transgression of the laws of life; and that the blood of all the bulls and goats and lambs of ancient times, and the blood of Jesus or any other man never had nor can have the least effect in making a life what it would have been had it obeyed the laws of life.

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PRAYING is no more effective in getting what we want than the sailor's whistling would be in getting a ship across the ocean. Not those who whistle, but those who set the sails and handle the rudder reach the port they wish. Knowledge of physiology is more essential to good health than prayer. Dowie, who called himself Elijah the Second, was a product of prayer. It is a matter of history that he prayed all day at the bedside of his daughter when she was burned at the University of Chicago. He refused all medical attendance and relied upon prayer. But it availed nothing. She died.

There was much similarity between Elijah the First and the Second. Ancient history tells us that Elijah the First was fed by the ravens, and we all know that Elijah the Second was fed by the gulls.

I know of nothing that can be obtained

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by prayer. Who does? Why do people pray! A parson prays because he is paid for doing so; but why does any one else pray? No one today would dare to say that prayer is a physical power. No one prays to be carried to New York or London. No one prays to have a house built or painted. No one prays to have a dress made or a hat trimmed. If we want to go to New York we buy a ticket by rail or boat. If we wish a house built we go to a builder. If we want a garment made we go to some one who knows how to make it. Any person who would pray God to build him a house or a coat would be called insane or a fool. If human beings could get what they wish by praying for it, would so many be poor, wretched, sick and miserable? Nature rides over human hearts as over stones, and crushes the tender flesh of babes as it crushes the mountains. We endow this force with feeling, with sympathy, with pity and

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with love. To do this is like planting flowers in snow. Nature has the power to destroy, but not the power to spare. Its terrible arm strikes like a blind giant. Nature is sadly imperfect from a human standpoint. The earth is not fit for the habitation of beings with a capacity for suffering ❀ Men and women are the unhappy victims of this most cruel and heartless force. It is useless to pray to this force ❀ It can not feel, it can not pity, it can not turn aside. It is merciless because it is powerless to be merciful.

WE may as well admit the truth—
Prayer is an empty gun. It brings down no game. Prayer is a dry bucket pulled out of a dry well ❀ When the Iroquois Theater in Chicago was burned, hundreds of men, women and children called upon God to come between them and the horrible fate before their eyes; but He did not come. He did not hold

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back the wild panic nor stay the fierce flames. ¶ When the excursion steamer, General Slocum, with fourteen hundred forty-six people on board, caught fire and the boat was enveloped in flames, prayers filled the air. God was asked to help the helpless. It was death by burning to remain on the boat. It was death by drowning to leap from the deck. Not one person was rescued by the hand of God. Not one prayer to Heaven was answered. Out of the fourteen hundred forty-six people on board, ten hundred thirty-one were burned or drowned. God was not on the boat. And yet people talk about a divine being who answers prayer; talk about a Father in Heaven who will heed the cries of His earthly children.

When the steamer Norge struck on that deadly reef on the Scotland Coast, and six hundred people perished in the pitiless sea, no arm of God was there to save. God was not there, and He answered no

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prayer. A fact is stronger than an argument, and those who died in the Iroquois Theater, and on the General Slocum, and the Norge, and who had the prayers burned or drowned on their lips are silent witnesses against the faith that any God can answer prayer.