This book is in good condition and all pages are present, but there is no Table of Contents. We have produced this list of subtitles to serve as a Table of Contents, click on the line and go to the page listed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

III

IV

V

X

XI

XII

PHOTOGRAVURE & COLOR CO. N.Y.

1897.

AN INTIMATE VIEW

OF

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

BY

I. NEWTON BAKER, A.M.

More than any man of his day he wrote and spoke and labored for an unshackled healthy brain, an untrammelled truthful tongue.

Reproduced in electronic form
1997
Bank of Wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
1920

Bank of Wisdom

P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201

DEDICATION.

To the memory of the great and good Ingersoll; to his peerless wife and daughters whom he exalted above divinities; to his faithful relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Farrell, and to all his devoted family—this wholly inadequate portraiture.

In the original book this is a

BLANK PAGE,

this page is included to keep the page numbering consistent.

Bank of Wisdom

The man who has won the love of one good woman in this world, I do not care if he dies a beggar, his life has been a success.

Robert G. Ingersoll

The HOLIEST temple beneath the stars is a home that Love has built. And the holiest altar in all the wide world is the fireside around which gather father and mother and the sweet babies.

Robert G. Ingersoll

Bank of Wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201

There is no superstition in Wisdom,
And no wisdom in superstition.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

This well-entitled "Intimate View," although really a grateful Tribute, was originally prepared by Mr. Baker shortly after Mr. Ingersoll's death, as a memorial for the private possession of the Ingersoll family. By their permission, and on the urgency of friends, it is now given to the public in a revised and somewhat enlarged form. It speaks eloquently for itself, and is submitted in the confident belief that it will be warmly welcomed and highly appreciated in a wide circle of readers. It will certainly be regarded as a thoughtful and true if necessarily partial exposition of the views of Mr. Ingersoll, and a finely drawn portrait of the personality of the Great Agnostic of the century.

C. P. FARRELL.

New York, Nov. 1, 1919.

In the original book this is a

BLANK PAGE,

this page is included to keep the page numbering consistent.

The Bank of Wisdom grants permission!

The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll are so needed by the American people today that the Bank of Wisdom does hereby grant permission for the files on this CD of Ingersoll's greatest Works to be copied and given away, but NOT SOLD.

Robert Ingersoll, this loving man, who was the essence of American Patriotism, and the champion of home and family, needs more than any other person in history to be resurrected and allowed to continue his great work of elevating and emancipating the mind of mankind from the strangling tentacles of intrenched superstition. The man is gone, but his grand words and beautiful thoughts remain, and will live forever.

It is our pleasure and our duty to reproduce Ingersoll's great and kind words, and give them back to the American people. And we hope you will feel it your duty to copy and give these files to every person who might read them. What wealth we lose by granting this right to copy will be more than made up by the better world these words will create.

Permission to copy for profit must be obtained in writing from the Bank of Wisdom.

Bank of Wisdom, 1997. Emmett F. Fields

Bank of Wisdom
P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201

There is no superstition in Wisdom,
And no wisdom in superstition.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

AN INTIMATE VIEW.

I.

Since the passing of this great and good, this loving and lovable man, many eloquent tributes to his memory have been written and spoken. These tributes have come from all parts of the world and from all classes and conditions of men. They have reflected through the press, the platform, the pulpit and private correspondence the general and genuine esteem and admiration in which Mr. Ingersoll was held. Many who opposed, or seemed to oppose, his religious views, and resented, or seemed to resent, his manner of expressing them, have in their finer moods, unheated by the fires of controversy, admitted and admired the strength and sincerity of his convictions, the wonderful way in which he maintained them, and the purity and exaltation of his character and purpose. Even theological bitterness was silenced in the pres-

ence of death, or turned, as in some instances, into generous eulogium. Magnanimous foes whom he had defeated in the forum of debate, conceded the greatness and goodness of the man and acknowledged the magnitude and value of the work he did in the world.

NO ADEQUATE PORTRAITURE.

It would seem, therefore, that little can be added, that nothing more can be said worth the saying, that the field has been harvested. It is only in the hope of garnering grains ungathered by other gleaners that the present sketch has been attempted. It does not aspire to the rank of extended biography. Its simple purpose is to show Mr. Ingersoll as he appeared to one who had unusual opportunities of knowing him,—to one whose high privilege it was to be in almost daily contact with him for many years. The writer is only too conscious that even with this advantage what skill he may have must fall far short of any adequate portraiture. He covets a fineness of perception, a keenness and breadth of intellectual vision, a balance of judgment, a strength of statement and a grace of style he has not, fitly to undertake the study. Only a genius can portray a genius. Only a

master of expression can express a master, and the writer has been but an unpretending pupil sitting at a great master's feet.

Any faithful sketch of such a man from such a source must therefore be a eulogy. Admiration cannot be restrained, feeling cannot be repressed, nor can the flow of truthful phrase be checked when a loving pupil wields the brush or guides the pen. No matter from what point of view he sees the subject, the same commanding figure is before him. All the rays of white light focussed on Mr. Ingersoll reveal him as a man of the highest, strongest, finest mental and moral fibre,—such a man, indeed, as Nature bears but once among countless millions of her human children.

My acquaintance with Mr. Ingersoll began soon after the death of his brother Ebon, and while the immortal words spoken at the funeral were still thrilling through the world. Literature has no parallel to this tribute by a brother living to a brother dead. These brothers were lovers, and never failed each day on reaching their office to give a warm embrace. The sign they first hung out as law partners became a sacred thing to Robert, and in all his changes of location, from Peoria to Washington, to New

York,—wherever he chanced to be,—he kept that modest little sign in constant view from the desk in his private office.

I entered this office in 1879 as Mr. Ingersoll's secretary, and remained with him continuously until in 1892, a period of nearly fourteen years. During all this time it was my privilege to be with him in business hours, in days of leisure, of travel and of social intercourse, to be honored by his friendship, entrusted with his confidence, and, with my wife, enrolled almost a member of that beautiful family of which he was creator and inspirer, sun and shield.

II.

AS A LAWYER.

As a young lawyer in Illinois Mr. Ingersoll quickly rose to eminence. In a few short years he attained to the highest office in his profession, the Attorney-Generalship of the State,—a State that has given to the Nation many of her legal and intellectual giants. He won wide fame in his trial of the celebrated Munn case and of other legal contests in Illinois. Coming to the Nation's capital his ability as a lawyer was at once recognized and he entered upon a large and lucrative practice. This practice was for the most part and by preference in the Executive Departments, although he was frequently in the United States Supreme and District Courts.

THE STAR ROUTE CASES.

In the much misunderstood Star Route Cases Mr. Ingersoll was leading counsel for the defense, and by unanimous consent was chosen chairman of the defendant's attorneys in all

their conferences. His masterly conduct of those cases through a prolonged and intricate trial covering two and more years, is a matter of history and record. His associates were filled with admiration and amazement at the legal ability he displayed. His knowledge of the law, his almost infallible judgment, his prodigious memory of the facts extending to the minutest details and rendering him for the most part independent of the record, his impregnable logic, his lucid statments of the law and the testimony and his forensic power—all marked him as easily chief among the eminent counsel in that contest.

JURISTS' ESTIMATES.

The late Judge Jeremiah Wilson, one of the brightest lights of the Washington bar, said to the writer: "What most impressed me in Col. Ingersoll's course throughout the trial and compelled my profound admiration, was not his legal learning, wide and accurate as I knew that to be, but his inimitable tact, his unerring judgment of the course to be pursued day by day, the witnesses to be examined, the weight to be given to their testimony, the points to be included and emphasized as vital and the parts to be

excluded as irrelevant, incompetent and immaterial,—in short, his marvellous management of the entire case. He absolutely made no mistakes, as the outcome proved. We seldom overruled him, and when we did found later that he was right and we were wrong."

The Honorable Walter Davidge, dean of the Washington bar, who had been selected by his associates to follow Mr. Ingersoll's closing address to the jury, said: "May it please your Honor, it was understood among counsel that both Colonel Ingersoll and myself should have the privilege of addressing the jury if in the judgment of either it should be thought necessary. I have felt such a deep interest in this case that I have almost hoped he might leave unoccupied some portion of the field of argument. I have listened to every word that has fallen from his lips. He has filled the whole area of the case with such matchless ability and eloquence, that I have no ground upon which I could stand in making any further argument. I can add nothing whatever to what he has said. I need not add that every syllable he has uttered receives my grateful endorsement."

The Capital, a leading journal in Washington, commenting on Colonel Ingersoll's closing

address to the Jury in the first Star Route trial, said:

"The most characteristic feature of the trial was the marvelously powerful speech of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll before the Jury and the Judge. People who knew this gifted gentleman only superficially, had supposed that he was merely superficial as a lawyer. While acknowledging his remarkable ability as an orator, and his vast accomplishments as a speaker, they doubted the depth of his power. They heard him, and the doubt ceased. It can be said of Ingersoll, as was written of Castelar, that his eloquent utterances are as the finely-fashioned ornamental designs on a Damascus blade,—the blade cuts as keenly, and the embellishments beautify without retarding its power."

AN EPISODE.

On one occasion the venerable Judge Wylie refused a motion made by Mr. Ingersoll on the ground that he had already decided and denied it. "But your Honor twice ruled the other way." "Impossible!" said the Court. "I think the record will show," and the Colonel handed the book to the Judge, with page and lines indicated. The Court reddening replied: "Well, the fact that I ruled in defendants' favor ought to be

satisfactory to them, and that I twice so ruled should not weaken the ruling nor lessen their satisfaction."

The triumphs he scored over opposing counsel in their many legal tilts, the heated and sometimes bitter attacks and retorts,—never invited by Mr. Ingersoll, but out of which he emerged victorious,—his uniform fairness and candor, the accuracy of his statements when challenged, showing his thorough command of every detail, and finally his matchless summing up, made their irresistible impression on court and jury alike, and in the teeth of popular opinion and clamor fomented and fed by false press reports, and against all the power, prestige and pursuit of two National Administrations, won the case.

HIS RESPECT FOR THE LAW.

Though by choice a lawyer and in practice an eminently sucessful one, he did not seem, in later life, at least, to have retained his early ardor for the profession. For the law itself he never lost respect and reverence. To him it was the bulwark of Justice, the safeguard of Liberty, and he gloried in its history and achievements. But for the perversions of the law he

felt only contempt and indignation. He hated all dishonest and degenerate methods in its practice. The law, he held, should be invoked only in the interest of truth and justice, but was too often made the tool of injustice, oppression and wrong. He scorned to resort to the sophistries and subterfuges employed by many in the profession. He did not care to win a case merely for the fee involved or for the glory of winning it. He wanted the Right to triumph and could rejoice only when Victory perched on the heights of Truth.

Again, he chafed under the fetters and limitations of the modern practice. He believed that justice was often entangled in the net of technicalities. He could not endure the mechanical reliances on books, the cast-iron moulds, the cut and dried forms, canned and labelled processes, papers and preparations ready-made for every case and all occasions. Most of these so-called helps he considered hindrances that crippled the law and made it limp and halt where it ought to leap and run. "The law's delay," he said, "is more often the lawyer's delay and should not be tolerated." Modern methods he believed consumed time, stifled originality, repressed individual initiative and

tended to make of the law a mere puppet, an echo of old opinions, rulings and decisions, a slave to precedent. He hated the shackles of precedent. He hated all shackles. He wanted to be free to decide for himself in the law no less than in religion and in all other realms of thought and action. He was original, creative, independent. He examined rulings of courts but did not necessarily follow them. He has said to me, "One Judge contradicts another and between them I make my own decisions. If the law is not my way in this contention, it ought to be," and on this line he fought and won many a legal battle.

DRUDGERY OF THE LAW.

Quite naturally it followed that he could not submit to the drudgery of the law, the loss of valuable time poring over State and Federal Reports, and while his library was a rich storehouse of all legal lore he yet often displayed impatience when obliged to resort to it. His clerks relieved him of that drudgery. Nevertheless, in spite of his natural antipathies, and fully conscious of his quick mental perceptions—his genius for all acquisition—he acknowledged

his debt to that early study and application which had so thoroughly drilled and equipped him for his profession. In his young manhood he had read and studied with industry and enthusiasm, even to the breaking down of his physical health. He knew the law in all its phases,—its history, principles and interpretations—as few men knew it. And he knew how to apply it. He was a maker of opinion and its interpreter in nearly every continent and province of human thought.

HIS QUICK PERCEPTION.

His marvellously quick and clear perception of any problem or proposition, no matter how intricate or involved, seemed little less than miraculous. A prospective client once came to him with a budget of typewritten matter and asked if he would go through it. "Certainly; let me see it." "Very well, Colonel, I'll leave it and call in a day or two for your answer." "Nonsense; wait a minute." Then turning over the pages one by one he handed back the screed, saying, "You have a good cause, and if you wish I will undertake it for you." "But you don't know it yet, Colonel?" "Oh yes I do." "Why, it includes a good many knotty questions and

has lots of figuring in it." "To be sure; I have gone over them; haven't I just read it all? To convince you, I will restate it," and then point by point Mr. Ingersoll rehearsed the subject-matter, not omitting the figured calculations. "Amazing, Colonel; I believe you could see through a brick wall! It has taken me and my assistants days to prepare that statement, and you have mastered it in a few minutes!" He tried the case and got the verdict.

INGERSOLL AND CONKLING.

Another incident will illustrate this X-ray faculty of Mr. Ingersoll's mind. In a telegraph suit before Judge Wallace at Syracuse, New York, the late Roscoe Conkling and the Colonel were associate counsel. On the train from New York, Mr. Conkling said: "I'm ashamed to confess it, Colonel, but I really haven't had time properly to examine the papers in this case and I don't feel prepared to argue it; you must do it, or we will have to move a postponement." "No, no, that won't do, it will damage our suit; let me see the papers." Mr. Conkling produced them. The Colonel examined them. Before reaching Syracuse he handed them back, say-

ing: "Conkling, I will argue this case, although, as you know, my throat is bad to-day and I'll have to whisper my argument in the Court's ear." "I'm extremely sorry, Colonel, to put this burden on you, but I see no other way. Do you think you understand the case with this brief inspection?" "Perfectly; as well as if I had studied it for weeks," and for the next few miles he laid it all out before his astonished auditor. "Is that the way you prepare your briefs, Colonel?" "Why not? If I can't catch on to a case by reading it, as soon as the Court does by hearing it, I'd make a nice Judge or lawyer, wouldn't I?" "You're a strange man, Colonel, I can't fathom you!" The case was argued in a whisper, and won.

This remark of the Senator was meant as a compliment—the highest he could pay to the ability and genius of a brother lawyer. I cannot forget his look and manner of unfeigned admiration, as he expressed himself. Not long after—alas, too soon!—when the New York Legislature requested Colonel Ingersoll to deliver before them a memorial address on Senator Conkling, the Colonel delivered the noblest tribute to his departed friend and associate ever heard in a legislative hall.

When urged sometimes by nervous clients to defer his summing up of their case a reasonable time after all the evidence was in and the arguments heard, he would say: "I want no adjournment, I am ready to go right on; I have heard it all as fully as the Court and jury, and that's enough." A readier, more alert mind than Robert G. Ingersoll's never practiced in a court of law.

BEFORE A JURY.

In the trial of a case before a jury Mr. Ingersoll was probably at his best in the examination of a witness. He was so patient, though persistent, in getting at the facts, so considerate and so fair, that he often compelled the truth from hesitating and unwilling lips. He did not brow beat or hector a witness. He did not resort to cheap arts to entrap him. He did not abuse his privilege as a lawyer and treat a witness on the stand as if he were a criminal in the dock. No one under his searching cross-examination had ever to appeal to the Court for protection. Before a jury he was persuasive and convincing, not only by the power of his eloquence, but by the force of his cogent reasoning, and the skillful marshalling of the evidence to

sustain his case. He appealed to the reason and conscience of his jury, not to their prejudices or passions. He was truly entitled to the reputation he bore as one of the greatest jury lawyers of his time.

BEFORE COURT AND COUNSEL.

Before Court and counsel he was always the courteous gentleman, never impugning motives or flinging epithet or invective. He was always sure of his subject and object. He had perfect poise, was always erect, self-contained and self-controlled. He was never in a hurry, never flurried, never flustered. He was always at himself, never taken by surprise or off his guard. In all the many legal encounters he fought I never knew him to be worsted in ready and apt attack and defense. The fitting retort was always at the door of his lips, waiting to leap into utterance. One instance will serve for many:

"ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA."

In a Toledo, Ohio, terminal suit, counsel for the other side interrupted Mr. Ingersoll in the midst of his argument by asking: "Colonel, did you ever read the story of Ananias and Sapphira?" "Yes," came the reply, quick as a

flash, "and while you were speaking this afternoon I looked to see you drop dead every minute!" The hit was so palpable, so perfect, that even the dignified Court of a Federal District joined in the general convulsion and tilted so violently in his chair that he came perilously near toppling over.

In short, those in a position to know and qualified to judge,—those at all acquainted with Mr. Ingersoll's legal attainments and career,—accorded to him the highest honors. In nearly every court in which he practised he was regarded as the leading figure. In any important case in which he appeared, only the greatest champions ventured in the lists against him; no lesser knight of the law could hope to cope successfully with him. He was in truth, with all his other claims to greatness, one of the really great lawyers of his day.

III.

IN HIS OFFICE.

He was in his office always the genial, patient, "dear old Colonel." His clerical force and the students under him were trusted and treated as friends. He put on no airs, assumed no authority, affected no superiority. No arbitrary rules or restrictions hampered his employees. He never scolded, rebuked, or ordered, —simply kindly requested. He was silent if displeased, but never said a harsh, or mean, or cutting word. The air around him was free; all the discipline was self-imposed, all the duties self-appointed and performed with the one animating purpose,—"to please the Colonel." Office work in his employ was a pleasure, not a task,—a glad service faithfully rendered and just as faithfully and fully recognized. There never was a kinder, juster, or more generous employer. He used to say: "Do you want to know one real test of a man? How does he treat his employer; how does his employer treat him?"

Interruptions when he was busy in his office, did not seem to disturb or distract him. In the midst of dictation of correspondence or argu-

ment he would welcome a caller and after a chat or "interview" resume his dictation at the point of leaving it. Sometimes an hour, a day, or even days, would intervene; he did not lose the thread but went on weaving as though the loom had not for an instant stopped. He shut out no visitor, although his clerks of their own motion excluded many a freak or crank, notwithstanding his repeated request to deny no decent person audience.

The Colonel was fond of bright newspaper men. He liked to answer questions. Interviewers flocked to him. They were always welcomed and never disappointed if they asked sensible and proper questions. "Fire away!" was his cheery invitation, and to their queries a flood of wit, wisdom, humor, philosophy, logic and sense would pour out as from a strong fountain. The files of many metropolitan journals were enriched by these spontaneous effusions.

HIS DAILY MAIL.

His daily mail was heavy. All sorts of people wrote to him on all conceivable subjects. This correspondence was sifted; only a tithe reached his eye,—those letters absolutely requiring his attention. Requests to lecture and ap-

peals for pecuniary help were of course multitudinous. Many were granted, though of necessity more were denied. Aside from his large business and professional correspondence, letters on religious questions poured in upon him. Advice, argument and appeal, more or less sincere, and sad to say, abuse, slander and defamation of the most scurrilous kind, were not uncommon, while now and then anonymous threats of his life were received. Whenever possible, and wherever sincerity and intelligence were manifest and abuse and malice absent, these letters received reply. They were copied, and the letter-books containing these replies would make a rich mine of material for extended biography.

SENSE OF LOCALITY.

He had little order in the care of papers; his desk was for the most part in confusion. And yet he had a method of his own, with all the apparent disorder. When his desk reached the limit of congestion, letters and papers were carefully collected, classified and filed for him and the coast thus cleared. "I put that paper just where I wanted it, why did you remove it?" was his usual comment on this desk-clearing pro-

cess. His sense of locality was so keen that many times I have seen him produce a needed document from a large bundle, or a letter from beneath a scattered pile, without a moment's hesitation. He could have found that celebrated needle if he had had anything to do with putting it in the hay. His volume of Shakespeare usually served as a paper-weight on his office desk. It was always in sight and often taken up even in busy hours. He needed for it no index or concordance. Page, column and line were instantly turned to. He has said to me, "I know where to find that passage in Hamlet; it is on page 432, on the right hand side, left hand column, and at the bottom of the column."

Equally remarkable was his far-reaching accuracy of vision. His eagle eye could take in more at a single glance than most men's after close inspection. Very little going on around him escaped his notice. Once, in a trial out West, he was to open the case. Counsel for the other side sat to the front and left of him, several feet removed, going over his notes prior to oral presentation. The Colonel's quick eye caught the paper, and as he assured me, without intention or purpose—before he could help it—he had taken in several points of his adver-

sary's argument. He was bothered, he said, in making his opening, by the necessity of avoiding the suspicion that he had in any way gained possession of his opponent's brief. He made no unfair use of the accident. In fact, he said, the knowledge hampered more than helped him.

A STAINLESS RECORD.

Nothing was, nothing could be, further from Mr. Ingersoll than deceit, indirection or double-dealing. He was the very soul of truth, of honor, and of candor. He was, indeed, a modern Bayard, "a knight without fear and without reproach." His escutcheon was unstained, and never in any court was his veracity impeached, or his professional honor successfully assailed. He was high-souled, high-minded, high-acting and incapable of a grovelling thought, or a mean or low initiative. His professional antagonists, everywhere encountered, admitted that he always fought in the open, and were often surprised at the large admissions and generous concessions he made. His clients sometimes quaked as they feared he was giving away their case. He was not. The outcome proved that his method was the highest art, the wisest wisdom.

AN ORACLE.

His intuitions were like a woman's—often infallible. In many an instance they were as unerring as his judgment was sound,—amounting almost to prophecy fulfilled. On that fatal morning in July when the assassin's bullet laid low the lamented Garfield, Mr. Ingersoll was one of the first at the stricken President's side. He said to me: "I know he will not live. I feel it. He may rally, and linger a few days, but he cannot recover." Despite all that human skill could do, all means that science could employ, or all that Christendom on its knees could implore, the end came.

It was this gift or endowment, added to his clear judgment and knowledge of human nature, that made him the seer and prophet he really was. This rare combination in him was recognized by many who sought his advice and counsel. Statesmen, politicians, men of affairs in public and private life resorted to him as to an oracle, and his "guesses," as he called them, frequently came true. He never claimed to have soothsaying or clairvoyant powers,—for he was absolutely without a superstition—but he was

none the less one whose predictions were often justified by the events.

PRINCELY GENEROSITY.

He extended to young lawyers and students of the law a most encouraging hand. He liked young men. He helped them by counsel, by opening doors of opportunity, and with pecuniary aid. Many a new-fledged attorney and many an aged, stranded one "on his uppers," as he would say, went from his presence with a gladder heart and fuller pocket. A hundred dollar bill was a frequent gift from his open hand, to say not a word of the thousands scattered in larger and smaller sums. He gave his advice freely to hundreds,—especially to the widow, the poor and defenceless, and tried many a case to a happy conclusion, not only without a fee, but himself paying all costs and disbursements.

As a matter of fact, he was seldom richly remunerated in the celebrated cases undertaken by him. The Star Route trials cost him more than he received in actual compensation. He cared too little for money to insist even on his rights. His office books were filled with accounts never collected, with charges never paid,

and yet this did not check the flow of his extravagant generosity. He loved to give. He was princely in giving. In one case where a thirty-thousand dollar fee came to him he instantly gave half of it to a young assistant to whom two or three thousand dollars would have been an ample and satisfactory return for the service rendered. In another case, on receiving a fee of fifteen thousand dollars, he immediately wrote a check for one third of the amount to the friend who had simply urged his selection as the best lawyer for the case. The unexpected gift enabled this friend to lift a mortgage that had long encumbered her home.

IV.

AS ORATOR AND WRITER.

Here his fame is fixed beyond all cavil, all criticism, all calumny. His Christian censors admitted it. His fair-minded contemporaries in every intellectual field conceded it. It was world-wide. Appeals came to him from nearly every civilized country for a visit and a series of addresses and lectures. An offer from Australia guaranteed him one thousand dollars a night for as many nights as he chose to speak, and all expenses of himself and family paid. He was unable, though not unwilling, to accept the offer. As a platform orator he was great. He had few if any peers in that realm. The judgment of his rivals accords him this pre-eminence.

Henry Ward Beecher, who certainly may be quoted as competent authority, once said in introducing him to a Brooklyn audience, "He is the most brilliant speaker of the English tongue of all men on this globe." The lamented Garfield, who himself was a distinguished orator, once wrote to Mr. Ingersoll, who spoke for him in his campaign for the Presidency: "I have

followed with intense interest your brilliant campaign in my behalf. You have appeared to me like a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. Your path has been one broad band of blazing light. I give you my profoundest admiration and gratitude." In the famous Davis Will Case in Montana both Judge and prosecuting attorney cautioned the jury to be on their guard lest they be carried away by Colonel Ingersoll's eloquence, "which," the attorney remarked, "is famed over two continents and in the islands of the seas, rivalling that of Demosthenes and transcending the oratory of Greece and Rome." And this warning was not an infrequent one to juries before whom Mr. Ingersoll appeared as advocate.

LARGE LECTURE RECEIPTS.

His audiences on his frequent lecture tours were nearly everywhere large and enthusiastic. "Standing Room Only" was the sign often displayed at the entrance of the hall or theatre where he was to speak. His lecture receipts were extraordinary. In a trip West at one time they amounted to more than fifty thousand dollars, net, in one month. Boston, New York, Chicago and San Francisco always gave him a

warm and sympathetic welcome. Two or three thousand dollars for a single lecture was not an unusual sum received from Boston, while one great assemblage in the Auditorium at Chicago yielded exactly seven thousand and one dollars, —the highest sum, we may well believe, ever realized for a single lecture in the history of the platform.

The most thoughtful, intelligent and highly cultivated people of a community thronged to hear him. Even hearers who hestitated to accept all he said could not help admiring the way he said it, and if not convinced, never left the auditorium but in a thoughtful mood. Instances were common where men and women travelled long distances to listen to his eloquent words, and one ardent admirer—a young lawyer from Boston—followed him thousands of miles that he might not lose an opportunity of hearing him.

GREAT SPEECHES.

Most Americans are familiar with his speech nominating Mr. Blaine for the Presidency, in which he invested that brilliant statesman with the title "Plumed Knight," a sobriquet that remained with him to the end of his career. His

great speech at the "Grant Banquet," his thrilling epic "A Vision of War," or "The Past Rises Before me Like a Dream," delivered at a soldiers' reunion in Indianapolis; his wonderful "Decoration Day Oration," in New York, his tribute to his brother Ebon, his matchless memorial to his friend and associate, Roscoe Conkling, and the laureate crown he laid on the tomb of his friend and leader, the martyred Lincoln, together with many other eulogies of the noble dead that sprang from his generous and passionately patriotic heart, are to-day the treasured possessions of his countrymen. His lips dropped polished pearls that will adorn and enrich the language of his day and of all time.

A MEMORABLE SCENE.

The tribute paid by Mr. Ingersoll to his beloved brother Ebon was everywhere acknowledged to be the most profoundly tender and beautiful in English literature. It has become classic. The scene of its utterance, in its whole setting, was solemnly dramatic. Around the bier, gathered as mourners, were many of the first men of the Nation. They had come, not only in sympathy with the grief-stricken brother,

but to mingle their tears with his in homage of their late friend and associate. The Hon. Ebon C. Ingersoll was well known in social and official circles in Washington. He was a Member of Congress, a staunch Republican and true patriot, and well and faithfully served his Illinois constituency. He was a wise legislator, a man of unbending integrity, a true and loyal friend. As a lawyer he was able and well equipped, and while a forceful speaker, was not as "dearly parted" as his brilliant brother, although he was a wise and safe counsellor. In religious belief he was a firm Agnostic, an ardent supporter of Robert in all campaigns against superstition and fanaticism, and he gloried in his fame as the greatest orator of the day. As Mr. Ingersoll has said: "It was from his lips I heard the first words of encouragement and praise." Ebon C. was a worthy companion of Robert G., and an honor to the family whose name he bore.

The following vivid description of the scene attending the delivery of the Tribute, and of the funeral obsequies, is taken from the *National Republican* of Washington, published the day after the funeral:

"The funeral of the Hon. E. C. Ingersoll

took place yesterday afternoon at four o'clock, from his late residence, 1403 K Street. The spacious parlors were filled to overflowing, and hundreds were unable to obtain admittance. Among those who were present to pay their homage to the distinguished and beloved dead were Secretary of the Treasury Sherman, Assistant-Secretary of the Treasury Hawley, Senators Blaine, Voorhees, Paddock, David Davis, John A. Logan, the Hon. William M. Morrison, Hon. William M. Springer, Hon. Thomas A. Boyd, Governor Pound, Hon. J. R. Thomas, Hon. Thomas J. Henderson, Hon. Jeremiah Wilson, Adlai E. Stevenson, Col, Ward H. Lamon, Col. James Fishback, General Farnsworth, General Robert C. Schenck, General Jeffries, General Williams and the Hon. H. C. Burchard, Judge Shellbarger, General Birney, Governor Lowe, Acting Commissioner of Internal Revenue H. C. Rogers, General Williamson of the Land Office and a great many other prominent members of the bar and also a large number of Illinoisans were present. It was the largest gathering of distinguished persons assembled at a funeral since that of Chief-Justice Chase.

"The only ceremony at the house, other than the viewing of the remains, was a most affect-

ing, pathetic and touching address by Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, brother of the deceased. When he began to read his eloquent characterization of the dead man his eyes at once filled with tears. He tried to hide them, but he could not do it, and finally he bowed his head upon the dead man's coffin in uncontrollable grief. It was only after some delay, and the greatest efforts at self-mastery, that Colonel Ingersoll was able to finish reading his address. When he had ceased speaking, the members of the bereaved family approached the casket and looked upon the form which it contained, for the last time. The scene was heartrending. The devotion of all connected with the household excited the sympathy of all, and there was not a dry eye to be seen. The pall-bearers—Senator William B. Allison, Senator James G. Blaine, Senator David Davis, Senator Daniel Voohees, Representative James A. Garfield, Senator A. S. Paddock, Representative Thomas Q. Boyd, of Illinois, the Hon. Ward H. Lamon, ex-Congressman Jere Wilson, and Representative Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois—then bore the remains to the hearse, and the lengthy cortege proceeded to the Oak Hill Cemetery, where the remains were interred, in the

presence of the family and friends without further ceremony."

THE TRIBUTE.

"Dear Friends: I am going to do that which the dead oft promised he would do for me.

"The loved and loving brother, husband, father, friend, died where manhood's morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling toward the west.

"He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point; but being weary for a moment, he lay down by the wayside, and using his burden for a pillow, fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world, he passed to silence and pathetic dust.

"Yet, after all, it may be best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock, and in an instant hear the billows roar above a sunken ship. For whether in mid sea or 'mong the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck at last must mark the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every

moment jewelled with a joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

"This brave and tender man in every storm of life was oak and rock; but in the sunshine he was vine and flower. He was the friend of all heroic souls. He climbed the heights, and left all superstitions far below, while on his forehead fell the golden dawning of the grander day.

"He loved the beautiful, and was with color, form, and music touched to tears. He sided with the weak, the poor and wronged, and lovingly gave alms. With loyal heart and with the purest hands he faithfully discharged all public trusts.

"He was a worshipper of liberty, a friend of the oppressed. A thousand times I have heard him quote these words: '*For Justice all place a temple, and all season, summer.*' He believed that happiness is the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only worship, humanity the only religion, and love the only priest. He added to the sum of human joy; and were every one to whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave, he would sleep to-night beneath a wilderness of flowers.

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death Hope sees a star and listening Love can hear the rustle of a wing.

"He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his latest breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas, of fears and tears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead.

"The record of a generous life runs like a vine around the memory of our dead, and every sweet, unselfish act is now a perfumed flower.

"And now, to you, who have been chosen from among the many men he loved, to do the last sad office for the dead, we give his sacred dust.

"Speech cannot contain our love. There was, there is, no gentler, stronger, manlier man."

A VISION OF WAR.

What patriot can read without emotion the following thrilling epic of the civil war, delivered at a soldiers' reunion in Indianapolis:

"The past rises before me like a dream. Again we are in the great struggle for national life. We hear the sounds of preparation—the music of boisterous drums—the silver voices of heroic bugles. We see thousands of assemblages, and hear the appeals of orators. We see the pale cheeks of women, and the flushed faces of men; and in those assemblages we see all the dead whose dust we have covered with flowers. We lose sight of them no more. We are with them when they enlist in the great army of freedom. We see them part with those they love. Some are walking for the last time in quiet, woody places, with the maidens they adore. We hear the whisperings and the sweet vows of eternal love as they lingeringly part forever. Others are bending over cradles, kissing babes that are asleep. Some are receiving the blessings of old men. Some are parting with mothers who hold and press them to their hearts again and again, and say nothing. Kisses and tears, tears and kisses—divine mingling

of agony and love! And some are talking with wives, and endeavoring with brave words, spoken in the old tones, to drive from their hearts the awful fear. We see them part. We see the wife standing in the door with the babe in her arms—standing in the sunlight, sobbing. At the turn of the road a hand waves—she answers by holding high in her loving arms the child. He is gone, and forever.

"We see them all as they march proudly away under the flaunting flags, keeping time to the grand, wild music of war—marching down the streets of the great cities—through the towns and across prairies—down to the fields of glory, to do and to die for the eternal right.

"We go with them, one and all. We are by their side on all the gory fields—in all the hospitals of pain—on all the weary marches. We stand guard with them in the wild storm and under the quiet stars. We are with them in ravines running with blood—in the furrows of old fields. We are with them between contending hosts, unable to move, wild with thirst, the life ebbing slowly away among the withered leaves. We see them pierced by balls and torn with shells, in the trenches, by forts, and in the

whirlwind of the charge, where men become iron, with nerves of steel.

"We are with them in the prisons of hatred and famine; but human speech can never tell what they endured.

"We are at home when the news comes that they are dead. We see the maiden in the shadow of her first sorrow. We see the silvered head of the old man bowed with the last grief.

"The past rises before us, and we see four millions of human beings governed by the lash—we see them bound hand and foot—we hear the strokes of cruel whips—we see the hounds tracking women through tangled swamps. We see babes sold from the breasts of mothers. Cruelty unspeakable! Outrage infinite!

"Four million bodies in chains—four million souls in fetters. All the sacred relations of wife, mother, father and child trampled beneath the brutal feet of might. And all this was done under our own beautiful banner of the free.

"The past rises before us. We hear the roar and shriek of the bursting shell. The broken fetters fall. These heroes died. We look. Instead of slaves we see men and women and children. The wand of progress touches the auction-block, the slave-pen, the whipping-post, and we

see homes and firesides and school-houses and books, and where all was want and crime and cruelty and fear, we see the faces of the free.

"These heroes are dead. They died for liberty—they died for us. They are at rest. They sleep in the land they made free, under the flag they rendered stainless, under the solemn pines, the sad hemlocks, the tearful willows and the embracing vines. They sleep beneath the shadows of the clouds, careless alike of sunshine or of storm, each in the windowless palace of Rest. Earth may run red with other wars—they are at peace. In the midst of battle, in the roar of conflict, they found the serenity of death. I have one sentiment for soldiers living and dead: Cheers for the living; tears for the dead.

V.

HIS METHOD IN COMPOSITION.

Mr. Ingersoll's method in the composition of his written and spoken words was singularly spontaneous and unmechanical. He was not a phrase-tinker or word-carpenter. His pictures flashed from his brain as finished products. They were fixed on the canvas without correcting touches of form or color, completed as created. What his artist-soul saw and felt he instantly communicated as visible and audible images to others' eyes and ears. No matter what the theme, his tongue responded to his thought in instant and perfect epigram, illustration, simile, or metaphor.

Excepting social letters, and memoranda found on scattered scraps of paper, he wrote little with his own hand. Nearly everything he gave for publication was dictated. His legal briefs and papers, his magazine and review articles, editorials, press interviews, monographs, speeches, lectures,—everything he wished to say—were delivered in faultless form through the portals of his facile lips. Wherever he happened to be,—in his office, at his

home, on the boat, in the train, in the cab rattling through noisy streets, sitting, standing, reclining—he spoke the splendid words that the stenographer's art caught and reproduced for him. His famous Replies to Judge Black in *The North American Review* were dictated at the billiard table in his home, with cue in hand. A sentence and a paragraph, then a run with the balls,—another paragraph, another run,—and so on to the end. His Replies to Mr. Gladstone, Dr. Field, Cardinal Manning, and other champions in the religious arena, were composed under like distractions, as most would deem them. To Mr. Ingersoll, however, who had as few men ever had it, the faculty of thinking on his feet, these distractions seemed only to stimulate and concentrate his thought.

AS A CONVERSATIONALIST.

In conversation, whether in private or social circles, he was beyond expression delightful, versatile, great. The favored guests at his fireside often found themselves dumb in his presence—struck into listening silence—so that only the one magnetic voice was heard. He was at his best in his own home circle. Here he showed his shining self as nowhere else. Here his

abandon was complete. Here he threw off all trammels of convention, all reserve, all consciousness of power, and spoke and acted as he felt,—with the exuberance of youth, forgetful of his mature years and ripe experience. Around his hospitable board his chosen friends feasted on food for mind and body, heart and soul. Those table-talks day after day, joined in by his family and guests whom he stimulated by question and rally and the force of his genial, gentle leadership,—who could forget them?

And those informal Sunday evening receptions held week after week in his Washington home! Here distinguished men and women,—scientists, scholars, philosophers, thinkers, judges, lawyers, merchants, bankers, capitalists, clerks, artists and artisans, religious and non-religious professors, and even theologians—saints and sinners—gathered in his parlors and drawing-room and joined in the discussions which he led on all topics of human interest. It is fair to say that no social or intellectual functions of the day in Washington were better attended, more attractive and distinguished, or so truly cosmopolitan, as those enjoyed in the home of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll. On one occasion no less than five Presidential aspirants

mingled in the throng. It was a frequent wish of his auditors on these occasions that he had had an audience of thousands to hear him. He spoke as no man living spoke.

GREAT IN STORY-TELLING.

There never was a better teller of a story than Mr. Ingersoll. Like Lincoln, he always had his quiver full, and never one missed its mark. He was in constant demand as an after-dinner speaker, and the chief attraction at many a social feast and club banquet. He knew just where and when to stop in the narration of any fact or fancy. His faultless allegories, similes, metaphors and epigrams were faultlessly used. As we have seen, he was also a king in repartee. In swift reply he always returned much better than was sent. Those rash opponents who ventured to attack him when they thought him off his guard repented of their temerity, for they found him fully armed to meet them. The retort courteous or keen, gentle or severe, grave or gay—always fitting—was ready at command for every time and place, every season and occasion. Two incidents only out of many need be here recalled.

On a train going through California a pom-

pous clergyman proclaimed aloud his faith to all the travellers in the car. He passed along the aisle, and when he reached the seat in which the Colonel sat, cried out with strident voice, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God; thank God, I'm not a fool!" Before he could strut out, the Colonel sent the swift reply, "That depends on what the people think who know you!" At another time a pious maiden, thinking to entrap him, brought a nosegay and handing it to him suddenly said: "Colonel, who made these beautiful flowers?" "The same, my dear young lady, that made the poison of the ivy and the asp!"

HIS WEALTH OF INFORMATION.

When, or where, or how this full man acquired the treasures of knowledge at his command, has been the puzzle of his friends. As I knew him and observed him he did not seem to be a great reader, or student of books, and yet he was acquainted with most worth-while books. He was not a classical scholar, so-called, yet he knew the classics. He was not a historian, yet he knew history. He was not a scientist or philosopher, according to the schools, and held no college diploma, yet he knew much of nearly all

the sciences and philosophies. Colleges and universities under the patronage and control of religious denominations, he used to say were generally institutions where "pebbles were polished and diamonds dimmed." He often quoted Bruno, who called Oxford "the widow of learning."

Nor was he a theologian, yet he knew theologies, and could and did successfully contend with the greatest in that field. He claimed that they never answered his arguments. He had such a power of ready assimilation, that everything he saw or read or heard was instantly appropriated and became his own. He seemed to forget nothing that he ever knew. He was always acquiring from the countless sources of knowledge. He read with the greatest eagerness and rapidity. I have known him to glance over the pages of even metaphysical treatises, and without apparent hesitation possess himself of their contents.

HIS VERSATILITY OF TALENT.

Keeping abreast of the times as he did, he knew the latest theories, discoveries, and inventions,—all that was going on in the world of science and art, of men and measures. Nothing

seemed to escape his notice, or to be beyond his grasp. His range of information was truly encyclopedic. It was said of him, as of another eminent publicist—I think it was of Col. Theodore Roosevelt:—"He had the greatest and most accurate knowledge on the largest number of subjects, of any man I ever knew." He had a mathematical knowledge that made him an adept in figures and much more than an amateur in astronomy. He knew the names of all the constellations with their principal stars, and loved by night to sweep the heavens with his powerful telescope, and observe the phases of the moon and movements of the planets and their satellites. This love of astronomy and aptness with figures, he said, "ran in the family," was an inherited gift from his mother. He was also a well-known student of sociology and a past-master in domestic and political economy, a wise and far-seeing publicist and an enlightened statesman—an ardent Republican, but not an office-seeker, or politician, out for the spoils.

If his rôle as a lawyer required a knowledge of diseases and their symptoms and treatment, by the study of medical treatises bearing on his case he became, for the nonce, a pathologist; of surgery a surgeon; of finance a financier,—and

so with many of the applied and useful arts. The many railway, telegraph and patent suits he tried made of him a railroad organizer, director, and president, an electrician and industrial expert. He once tried a case in which the plaintiff had been injured in a railroad accident, and so astonished the Court and experts that a surgeon in attendance, surprised at his technical knowledge of anatomy, asked him when and where he had experimented, and from what institution he had graduated. His wonderful capacity for acquiring knowledge needed on any subject accounts for this versatility.

A DEVOURER OF BOOKS.

While, as I have said, he did not in his later years seem to be a great reader of books, yet in early life he had laid the foundations well. As a boy and in his young manhood he was an inquirer and observer. Even as a child he was a lover of books, and later on it became with him a fascination and passion. He read everything of value he could lay his hands on,—knew every book in his father's library. He read thoughtfully, voraciously, constantly. Night after night, and all the night through, he has told me, he has read until mentally and physically ex-

hausted. Nor did he wish merely to go through a book. He wanted to understand it. He read with a purpose. He was eager to search, to find, to know. His thirst for knowledge was insatiate. He has said: "Banish me from Eden when you will, but first let me eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge." He was hungry for facts, for truths, for reasons. He absorbed and assimilated, combined, separated and classified, criticised and compared until he could reach a decision. He never left a subject until he thought he understood it.

A WONDERFUL MEMORY.

His memory, as we have noted it in his career as a lawyer, was truly a marvelous gift. Whatever once left its impress on the tablets of his sensitive brain seemed fixed there for all the future, to be retained until recalled. Shakespeare and Burns were so familiar to him that he had them by heart, as we say, and he could and did quote whole scenes and acts almost without an error, as one would read it from the printed page. I have heard him say if most of the plays of the one and poems of the other should be lost of record, he could substantially restore them. And it was the same with countless selections he

had acquired from the world's greatest thinkers and writers.

He almost deified Shakespeare, and among other tributes to that wonderful genius, said: "Shakespeare was an intellectual ocean, whose waves touched all the shores of thought; within which were all the tides and waves of destiny and will; over which swept all the storms of fate, ambition and revenge; upon which fell the gloom and darkness of despair and death and all the sunlight of content and love, and within which was the inverted sky lit with the eternal stars—an intellectual ocean—toward which all rivers ran, and from which now the isles and continents of thought receive their dew and rain."

It was a favorite saying of his, "Shakespeare is my Bible and Burns my Hymn-book."

Upon his library table he kept two magnificent folio volumes—one of Shakespeare, the other of Burns;—but unlike the traditional "parlor ornament"—the fetich in so many Christian homes,—they were there not for display, but for use, and were constantly resorted to for reading and reference.

A FERTILE IMAGINATION.

Added to his other gifts and qualifications, natural and acquired, and crowning them all, was his splendid imagination. This faculty in him was richly developed. He seemed by its power to mount to the loftiest heights and to see into the soul and substance of things—to penetrate far beyond and below all surfaces. He has said that he shrank from passing a cemetery,—not through fear, for there never was a more fearless soul,—but because beneath the mounds and monuments he could see the faces of the dead and clothe the mouldering forms with throbbing life. This power filled in for him all vacant spaces, supplied all missing links. Given a bone, a scale, a root, a leaf, and the man of science will construct for you the bird, the fish, the flower and tree that were. So the constructive Colonel needed but the hints and fragments of a fact to enable him to group together all related facts and complete the structure as it was and should be. But he went a great way farther. With "imagination's wondrous wand," as he styled it, and with his poetic soul, he made his tree a mighty forest, his flower a garden of Eden without its serpent, his fish a

sporting multitude peopling happy seas, and his woods and groves a fairy land vocal with the notes of warbling birds and teeming with all forms of joyous life. He was a poet—a real creator—a prophet of the truth and love and joy to be.

HIS EARLY RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

They greatly err who think and say that Mr. Ingersoll as a child was not, could not have been, properly trained in religious truths and duties. He was the son of loving and praying parents. His father was a Presbyterian and Congregational minister, beloved and honored by all who knew him. His sweet and noble mother died when Robert was a babe of only two years. Her loving task fell to the father. By precept and example he strove with all his might, fervently invoking divine assistance, tenderly and truly to train his child in the way he should go, relying on the promise that when old he would not depart from it. Robert was brought up on the Bible and the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and taught a strict observance of the Sabbath day. He was admonished to search the Scriptures. He did search them, but found them wanting, and frankly said so. They did

not solve his childish doubts, answer his many questions, or satisfy the awakening yearnings of his large and affectionate heart. "Something wrong, somewhere," was his frequent comment, even as a boy, as he read the Bible. His father was troubled in spirit. He could not comprehend such skepticism in one so young,—the child of his own heart and hopes, of his own faith and prayers. How could he, in his wildest dreams, ever have foreseen that this bright and beautiful boy would one day ripen into the most famous Agnostic of the century? Yet, with all his fears and misgivings, this good father was wise and just and broad enough to say: "My boy, be true to yourself; tell your honest thought; never be a hypocrite!" He never was.

HIS FATHER'S TUTOR.

As he advanced in years and "grew in wisdom and stature" he became his father's tutor in religious research. He was to him a veritable commentary, concordance and index of Bible texts and passages. He discussed intelligently with him the creeds, histories and theologies, the doctrines and dogmas of Jewish, Heathen and Christian religions. His father was proud of him although he could not answer

him, and wept over his heterodoxy, while he could not help admiring his wonderful defense of it. While yet a boy Robert knew the Bible from cover to cover, having read it through more than once, and by his gift of memory retained it. He had also gone through the Commentaries of Scott, Henry and Clarke. He knew every book in his father's library and could quote at will from most of them. "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress" interested and its dramatic style pleased him, while "Fox's Book of Martyrs" fascinated but terrified him; it burned into his soul and filled his days with fear and nights with horrid dreams. "Milton's Paradise Lost" with its "heavenly militia," as he termed it, fed but failed to entrap his imagination, and he said that Mr. Jenkyn needed to atone for his book "On The Atonement." "Alleine's Alarm" did not frighten him; "Baxter's Call" met no response from his intellect or heart, and his "Saints' Rest" was not the kind of rest he thought he could enjoy, "where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths have no end," while Jonathan Edwards' frightful sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," excited only his indignation, pity and disgust.

The simple truth is that Mr. Ingersoll was an unbeliever from his childhood. He has said to me, as to others, that he never remembered the time when his mind did not reject and his heart resent what he believed to be the cruelties and falsehoods of many of the Bible doctrines and narratives, and when he did not hate with all his soul the injustice and savagery of the man-made God of the Scriptures.

A WORTHY FATHER OF A NOBLE SON.

He often joined in the conversations and controversies of the clergymen who made his father's home a favorite place of assembly. As a youth he was remarkable for his debating powers and his ability to define and defend his views on religion and other subjects under discussion. His father not only respected his convictions, but sought his opinions on disputed points of doctrine and belief, and while he might not be able to accept his conclusions, always accorded his son the right of private judgment and freedom of expression. He was the worthy father of a noble son. Long before his death, this loving and tender man who, as Mr. Ingersoll has told me, often walked the floor at nights weeping and agonizing over the condition of

lost worlds of souls; at last, learning "out of the mouth of his own babe and suckling," gave up his belief in eternal torment and died abhorring it.

IN MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

As may well be inferred from what has been said, Mr. Ingersoll was a many-sided man. Though not a musician he was a most discriminating judge and passionate lover of music. His ear and heart were "finely tuned to all the harmonies." He attended all the great operas, heard all the famous songsters, and knew familiarly many of the masters of the baton. His own home was a temple of music and its music-room the shrine of his dwelling. Here was his family altar. His wife and daughters were the divinities. His two children had been thoroughly educated in music and song, so that under the tenderly sweet voice of the one and the exquisitely deft touch of the other, the happy father sat as one entranced, his sorrows soothed, his cares dismissed, his strength renewed and his soul satisfied. Surely never was sweeter music heard in any home than in the home of Robert G. Ingersoll.

Having such "music in his soul" he naturally gathered about him congenial spirits. He was widely recognized as the friend and patron of singers and musicians, of artists and actors, poets and painters, and workers in every field of fine expression. Many of the brightest lights in these professions were his intimates, who sought his counsel and accepted his criticisms and suggestions on their work. He loved the drama, was the intimate of Booth and Barrett and their legal counsellor, the admired and admiring friend of Joseph Jefferson, and of nearly all the popular actors of the day. He was a contributor to the leading dramatic, musical and art journals, a frequent visitor at artists' studios, in constant demand and the chief attraction as a speaker in entertainments for the benefit of the Actors' Fund, and by voice and pen showed his sympathy with every movement for the elevation and improvement of the actors' profession.

In his musical taste he was passionately fond of Wagner, and revelled in his "music of two worlds," as he styled it. He called him "the Shakespeare of music." Beethoven's "Sweet and dim symphonies" appealed deliciously to his sympathetic ear, and indeed the great creations

of most of the masters of song stirred him to the depths. They thrilled, ravished, transported him. The perfect affected him to tears. He loved in certain moods the riot of melody, the wild and chaotic chorus, the "wolf-tone" effects of full orchestration, as well as in placid moods he enjoyed the quieter melody of the solo and duet. Anton Seidl as an artist in harmony captivated him completely and won his personal regard. His memorial tribute to that great wielder of the baton is one of the finest in musical literature.

The violin was his special favorite among instruments. All night long in his home he has sat entranced under the spell of Remenyi's bow. He loved the sudden contrasts, the ascending notes of triumph to the heights of the crescendo, and then the fall to the diminuendo —notes that softly floated down like snowflakes and like them melted in the noiseless air. The organ, unless a master touched the keys, seldom satisfied him,—it too often suggested ecclesiastic service and ceremony. For a like reason the tolling bell and metallic chime failed to please him. Beauty, sweetness, joy, and the married harmony of form and motion, sound and color, appealed to his aesthetic and artistic

self in countless ways, and found wide open portals at every avenue of his art-attuned senses. He was not only a lover of art, but himself an artist, weaving, painting, sculpturing with words, and acting his splendid part in the drama of life,—a drama that ended, he said, in a tragedy for all.

CONCERNING HIS LECTURING.

Mr. Ingersoll, as we have seen, was first of all, a lawyer. This profession was his early choice, and its pursuit through life his chief reliance. In it he rose to eminence and won enviable recognition. But he was more than a lawyer. He was so many-sided, so "dearly parted, so much in having, or without or in," that one pursuit alone could not fill his measure or provide a scope wide and broad and full enough for all his virile powers. His brain was large, but his heart was larger, so that while he had views and opinions on most subjects, he had something higher, deeper, stronger,—he had deep-seated convictions on the side of Truth, Justice, Freedom, Honor, Courage, Candor of the soul, and all the human virtues.

He was an ardent patriot. He loved his country and its free institutions with a passion-

ate fervor. He hated slavery and oppression in every form; so we early find him in the Army of Freedom and the Union where he earned his title of Colonel by raising a regiment of Illinois cavalry. But the horrors of war were too appalling to his gentle and tender spirit. He could not bear the sight of suffering even of dumb animals, and he soon resigned the sword of war to fight with tongue and pen the battles of the weak, the ignorant and enslaved. And so eloquent and convincing was this tongue, that when a prisoner in General Forrest's camp, his influence was so marked upon the Confederate troops that the General soon paroled him, saying that if he did not, Ingersoll would convert all his men into Yankees! He was everywhere and always a mighty champion of Liberty, Justice and Truth, of the rights and privileges of mankind.

"WOE IS ME IF I PREACH NOT THE GOSPEL!"

Endowed as he was, and knew himself to be, he deemed it a crime against his nature to be silent when he felt he ought to speak. He used to say, with an arch smile at his use of a Scripture quotation: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" "The average man," he said, "is

afraid to utter his real thought." "He is the prey of Tyranny and Superstition." "The Throne and Altar were twins—two vultures from the same egg." "The race is under the dominion of Fear,—fear of men, of ghosts, of hells. I do not fear. I will speak what I think." "Somebody ought to tell the truth about the Bible. The preachers dare not, because they would be driven from their pulpits. Professors in colleges dare not, because they would lose their salaries. Politicians dare not. They would be defeated. Editors dare not. They would lose subscribers. Merchants dare not, because they might lose customers. Men of fashion dare not, fearing that they would lose caste. Even clerks dare not, because they might be discharged. And so, I thought I would do it myself."

Thus as a young lawyer, still studying and practising his profession, he gave his thought to wide and yet wider themes, to large and yet larger audiences, and entered upon his triumphant lecturing career.

So many thousands have seen and heard him, in so many places and on so many subjects, that it seems hardly worth while here to speak of his manner and method on the platform—

only to say that as an orator he was the embodiment of natural ease and grace, poise and power. He used few gestures,—was not a desk-pounder, an air-sawyer, or a stage-strutter. He was not declamatory,—did not rant, or rage, or "tear a passion to tatters, to very rags," as the manner of some is, but following Hamlet's advice to the players, he "used all gently, acquiring and begetting a temperance that should give all smoothness." His aim was to "hold the mirror up to nature," and he did it wonderfully. In his flights of eloquence he carried his audiences with him, lifting them to the highest pinnacles of enthusiasm, or stirring them to the deepest recesses of their being. With his pathos he melted them to tears and ere the drops were dry, by his sparkling wit and humor, transformed the pearls of pity into smiles of joy, or peals of laughter. He was indeed a master-musician who played upon every human heart-string.

It was a fine study to note him in the anteroom both before and after the giving of a lecture. Before, he was eager, expectant, almost exultant at the prospect of again delivering his message. His mood was cheerful and happy, his countenance radiant with the anticipated pleasure. He seemed at peace with himself and

with all the world. After, when many of his friends gathered to offer their congratulations and express their admiration, he accepted their praise with unfeigned satisfaction and the candor of a happy child pleased with the praise of a parent over some worthy performance.

It was no task for him to speak. He loved to speak. It was to him an exultation. He knew he had something to say and that he knew how to say it. He usually carried his notes to the platform. These notes were often in mere outline prepared from dictation to his secretary, but sometimes quite fully printed in large type. He was not a slave to his manuscript—seldom followed it closely any distance. No one lecture was precisely the same in its repeated deliveries. After one or two presentations of a new lecture he had it by head and tongue and heart and needed no prompting thereafter.

ALL MASTERPIECES.

The lectures that perhaps most fully satisfied him were: "The Liberty of Man, Woman and Child," "The Gods," "The Ghosts," "Orthodoxy," "Some Mistakes of Moses," "Which Way?" "Myth and Miracle," "What Must We do to be Saved?" "The Great Infidels," "Some

Reasons Why," "About the Holy Bible" and "Shakespeare,"—although he rarely expressed a preference, simply accepted the verdict of his friends. The truth is, that every one of his more than sixty famous lectures and his hundreds of great speeches, controversies, interviews, tributes, orations, prose-poems and legal addresses was a masterpiece. The "Liberty" lecture, however, was received with such popular acclaim, and was so frequently demanded, that he was disposed to regard it as probably the most effective of his efforts.

On one occasion after its delivery in Washington, a United States Senator sought him and said: "Colonel, you have converted me. For years I have been estranged from my only daughter because she did not marry to please me, but now I shall go to her to-night, and beg her forgiveness for allowing a selfish pride to keep her from my arms and heart!" Father and daughter were reconciled, and the peace and joy then born in a happy home remained a seal to the efficacy of the Colonel's teachings. Some said to him: "That is a great sermon of yours, Colonel," referring to the "Liberty" lecture. Others said, "What a great

preacher he would have made!" He never considered the remark a compliment.

ATTACKING CHERISHED BELIEFS.

His Christian admirers sometimes said: "Colonel, why don't you moderate your expressions, qualify your speech, and be more careful not to offend the susceptibilities of many of your hearers,—your views would be so much better received even if they were not adopted?" "I'll tell you why. I do not attack persons, but their superstitions. I deal with opinions, not with those who hold them. I do not war against men. I do not war against persons. I war against certain doctrines that I believe to be wrong. But I give to every human being every right that I claim for myself.

"I have not the slightest malice, no hate. A victor never feels malice. I tell my honest thought, my sincere belief, my earnest convictions."

To a preacher who urged him to deal more gently with the beliefs cherished by many in his audiences, he replied: "You do not exactly appreciate my feeling. I do not hate Presbyterians, I hate Presbyterianism. I hate with all my heart the creed of that church, and I most

heartily despise the God described in the Confession of Faith. Some of the best friends I have in the world are afflicted with the mental malady known as Presbyterianism. They are the victims of the consolation growing out of the belief that a vast majority of their fellow-men are doomed to suffer eternal torment, to the end that their Creator may be eternally glorified. I have said many times, and I say again, that I do not despise a man because he has the rheumatism; I despise the rheumatism because it has a man." "They tell me to use gentler expressions, and more cunning words. Do they really wish me to make more converts? If their advice is honest, they are traitors to their trust. If their advice is not honest, then they are unfair to me. Certainly they should wish me to pursue the course that will make the fewer converts, and yet they tell me how my influence could be increased!"

THE MERCENARY BOGY.

His enemies called him mercenary, saying that he lectured only for money, and cited the unselfish example of the priests and preachers who gave the gospel freely, "without money and without price." To such he replied: "Is it pos-

sible that, after preachers have had the field for eighteen hundred years, the way to make money is to attack the clergy? Is this intended as a slander against me, or against the ministers?

"The trouble is that my arguments cannot be answered. All the preachers in the world cannot prove that slavery is better than liberty. They cannot show that all have not an equal right to think. They cannot show that all have not an equal right to express their thoughts. They cannot show that a decent God will punish a decent man for making the best guess he can."

"Not one of the orthodox ministers dares to preach what he thinks, if he knows a majority of his congregation thinks otherwise. He knows that every member of his church stands guard over his brain with a creed, like a club, in his hand. He knows that he is not expected to search after the truth, but that he is employed to defend the creed. Every pulpit is a pillory, in which stands a hired culprit, defending the justice of his own imprisonment."

"I do not depend upon lecturing for my living. I am free, and my audiences are free. They are under no obligation to attend. They want to hear me and cheerfully pay the price.

If I did not charge for admission, Christians would say, as some envious one have said, that only the lowest and vilest in a community flock to hear me." Just the contrary, of course, was true, and these very slanderers—many of them —wrote from every part of the land begging him to lecture for the benefit of this or that church or "cause" and give them the "proceeds."

The pastor of a colored Baptist church in Texas once asked a contribution to help put a new roof on his church, to replace one that had been carried away by the wind. The Colonel wrote that it looked to him as if God did not want a new roof there, or he would not have blown the old one off. Besides, he did not see why any Baptist church should need a roof; —"The wetter the better." Nevertheless, he sent some help out of sympathy for the race that was struggling to rise, and that he had so often and so earnestly befriended; but he said it passed his comprehension,—except on the ground of their well-known superstition,—how an enslaved race could love a book that favored slavery, or a God worshiped by a slaveholder,—how an intelligent colored man or woman could ever be a Christian!

Replying further to those who said, "He can

afford to preach his blasphemy,—it brings him applause as well as pecuniary reward," he used to say that it was the greatest of compliments, —an admission that his views were getting popular and worth paying to hear. As we have seen, he was not an avaricious man, but magnificently otherwise. He was ever more a spendthrift than a miser. There never lived a more prodigally generous soul. There was not a mean or sordid drop of blood in all his veins. Nor did he care for mere personal popularity,—avoided rather than courted it. He did delight in noting year by year the growing acceptance of his teachings. Once, after a visit to New England, he said: "If I had spoken as freely in Salem thirty years ago, as I have spoken in Salem to-night, they would have burned me at the stake." He was fond of saying that since he had been trying to extinguish the flames, the climate of hell had grown preceptibly cooler.

WHAT HIS VIEWS COST HIM.

The world little knows how much it cost Mr. Ingersoll to speak his honest thought, to utter the sincere and profound convictions of his conscience, the voice of his inmost soul. If sacrifice of earthly honors and emoluments, of

place and power,—prizes as dear to most men as their lives,—is evidence of sincerity and devotion to principle, Mr. Ingersoll was sublimely sincere, unselfish, and self-sacrificing, and truthful history will so record him.

His heterodoxy cost him the Governorship of Illinois. A delegation made up of friends and admirers of both political parties, urged his acceptance of the nomination, which meant certain election, but coupled the offer with the condition that he pledge himself not to touch on religious topics during the campaign. He declined the nomination. He would have made an ideal Governor. His large acquaintance with public men and measures, his own experience as a public official—as Attorney-General of the State—his fame as a campaign orator, his recognized ability and integrity, his ardent patriotism and fearless advocacy of the rights of man, and his world-wide human sympathies, —all his great gifts and endowments,—marked him as one worthy of the highest civic honors.

But he did not covet office. He rejected all overtures in that direction. His friends often broached the subject. He refused to consider it. He was offered the post of Minister to Germany in 1877, but declined it. In 1882 a dele-

gation in Washington waited on him seeking his consent to be a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. He declined the honor, saying that on no account would he permit the use of his name. "I do not wish," he said, "to bring the heat and rancor of religious discussion and dissension into politics." No office would have been too great or high for him to reach and fill had he consented to conceal his real thought, to be a time-server and a hypocrite.

NOT A LEADER.

He, in fact, aspired to no personal leadership of any kind. He asked for no "disciples," sought no "followers." He wanted men to think his way, but to carry out their convictions in their own way; he would not lead them. He was not a proselytist or a propagandist. He could have founded a school, a sect, a system. He would not. He disliked and discouraged the use of the term "Ingersollism" that some applied to his views, and disavowed and, so far as he could, prevented the spread of it. He was, and wanted to be known as, an "Individualist."

He did not fully favor organizations on the lines of religious or anti-religious belief; was not always in sympathy with Freethought or

Liberal organizations, as such. Although he agreed in the main with their principles and aims he could not always endorse or commend their methods, and because of such disagreement at one time resigned the presidency of the Liberal League. His trouble with these societies was that like most fraternal associations, with all their merits and uses, they tended to foster exclusiveness, class distinctions and sectarianism. He did not believe in caste, he did not divide society into sheep and goats, good and bad, sinners and saints, but into plain men and women without their emblems or regalia. Many of his friends thought him wrong in this attitude of aloofness, considered him unduly sensitive and ideal, but he was satisfied with his ideal; he only wished as an individual unit in society to act his own part well, to think and speak and act from the best and highest in him, and to help others do the same. While not condemning orders and unions and fraternities, but recognizing their value and the need of combination and co-operation to effect certain ends for the general welfare, he yet felt that in the individual lay the real power to improve and regenerate society. His broader membership was with the race. Each man he held a

brother, if he could find in him a man, and he despised no one, however lowly, for the mere accident of birth or circumstance.

His charity and compassion were unbounded. He could see and condone the faults and frailties of others. "He does as he must," was his theorem explaining all human action. He was broad and universal enough to announce this splendid creed: "The firmament inlaid with stars is the dome of the real cathedral. The interpreters of nature are the true and only priests. In the great creed are all the truths that lips have uttered, and in the real litany will be found all the ecstasies and aspirations of the soul, all dreams of joy, all hopes for nobler, fuller life. The real church, the real edifice, is adorned and glorified with all that Art has done. In the real choir is all the thrilling music of the world, and in the starlit aisles have been, and are, the grandest souls of every land and clime.

"There is no darkness but ignorance."

"Let us flood the world with intellectual light."

VI.

LIBERTY.

Here let me state in his own unequalled words and way a few of his many lofty sentiments. Of Liberty he said: "O Liberty, thou art the god of my idolatry!" It was one of his most fervent apostrophes. He worshiped at its shrine. It was his dream, his ideal, his hope for man. He was one of its greatest apostles. More than any man of his day he wrote and spoke and labored for an unshackled healthy brain, an untrammelled truthful tongue.

His attitude concerning freedom of thought, and its expression, he gives us in these emphatic words, taken from the opening of his "Liberty" lecture:

"There is no slavery but ignorance. Liberty is the child of intelligence."

"Only a few years ago there was a great awakening of the human mind. Men began to inquire by what right a crowned robber made them work for him. The man who asked this question was called a traitor. Others asked by what right does a robed hypocrite rule my thought? Such men were called infidels. The

priest said, and the king said, where is this spirit of investigation to stop? They said then and they say now, that it is dangerous for man to be free. I deny it. Out on the intellectual ocean there is room enough for every sail. In the intellectual air there is space enough for every wing.

"The man who does not do his own thinking is a slave, and is a traitor to himself and to his fellow-men.

"Every man should stand under the blue and stars, under the infinite flag of nature, the peer of every other man.

"Standing in the presence of the Unknown, all have the same right to think, and all are equally interested in the great questions of origin and destiny. All I claim, all I plead for, is liberty of thought and expression. That is all.

"I do not pretend to tell all the truth. I do not claim that I have floated level with the heights of thought, or that I have descended to the very depths of things. I simply claim that what ideas I have, I have a right to express; and that any man who denies that right to me is an intellectual thief and robber. That is all."

"I swear that while I live I will do what little I can to preserve and to augment the liberties of man, woman, and child.

"It is a question of justice, of mercy, of honesty, of intellectual development. If there is a man in the world who is not willing to give to every human being every right he claims for himself, he is just so much nearer a barbarian than I am. It is a question of honesty. The man who is not willing to give to every other the same intellectual rights he claims for himself, is dishonest, selfish, and brutal."

"This is my doctrine: Give every other human being every right you claim for yourself. Keep your mind open to influences of nature. Receive new thoughts with hospitality. Let us advance."

"As far as I am concerned I wish to be out on the high seas. I wish to take my chances with wind, and wave, and star. And I had rather go down in the glory and grandeur of the storm, than rot in any orthodox harbor."

"As a man develops, he places a greater value upon his own rights. Liberty becomes a grander and diviner thing. As he values his own rights he begins to value the rights of others. And when all men give to all others all

the rights they claim for themselves, this world will be civilized."

"We have advanced. We have reaped the benefit of every sublime and heroic self-sacrifice, of every divine and brave act; and we should endeavor to hand the torch to the next generation, having added a little to the intensity and glory of the flame."

"With every drop of my blood I hate and execrate every form of tyranny, every form of slavery. I hate dictation. I love liberty.

"What do I mean by liberty? By physical liberty I mean the right to do anything which does not interfere with the happiness of another. By intellectual liberty I mean the right to think right and the right to think wrong. Thought is the means by which we endeavor to arrive at truth.

"Should I not give the real transcript of my mind? Or should I turn hypocrite and pretend what I do not feel, and hate myself forever after for being a cringing coward?"

"Above all creeds, above all religions, after all, is that divine thing,—Humanity; and now and then in shipwreck on the wide, wild sea, or 'mid the rocks and breakers of some cruel shore, or where the serpents of flame writhe and hiss,

some glorious heart, some chivalric soul does a deed that glitters like a star, and gives the lie to all the dogmas of superstition. All these frightful doctrines have been used to degrade and to enslave mankind.

"Away, forever away, with the creeds and books and forms and laws and religions that take from the soul liberty and reason. Down with the idea that thought is dangerous! Perish the infamous doctrine that man can have property in man. Let us resent with indignation every effort to put a chain upon our minds. If there is no God, certainly we should not bow and cringe and crawl. If there is a God, there should be no slave."

"O Liberty, thou art the god of my idolatry! Thou art the only deity that hateth bended knees. In thy vast and unwalled temple, beneath the roofless dome, star-gemmed and luminous with suns, thy worshipers stand erect! They do not cringe, or crawl, or bend their foreheads to the earth. The dust has never borne the impress of their lips. Upon thy altars mothers do not sacrifice their babes, nor men their rights. Thou askest naught from man except the things that good men hate—the whip, the chain, the dungeon key. Thou hast no popes,

no priests, who stand between their fellow-men and thee. Thou carest not for foolish forms, or selfish prayers. At thy sacred shrine hypocrisy does not bow, virtue does not tremble, superstition's feeble tapers do not burn, but Reason holds aloft her inextinguishable torch whose holy light will one day flood the world."

TRUTH.

He exalted Truth—pure, unadulterated, unmasked. "Sacred are the lips," he said, "from which has issued only truth."

"Truth is the intellectual wealth of the world.

"The noblest of occupations is to search for truth.

"Truth is the foundation, the superstructure, and the glittering dome of progress.

"Truth is the mother of joy. Truth civilizes, ennobles, and purifies. The grandest ambition that can enter the soul is to know the truth.

"Truth gives man the greatest power for good. Truth is sword and shield. It is the sacred light of the soul.

"The man who finds a truth lights a torch."

"Sacred are the lips from which has issued

only truth. Over all wealth, above all station, above the noble, the robed and crowned, rises the sincere man. Happy is the man who neither paints nor patches, veils nor veneers! Blessed is he who wears no mask."

LOVE.

He exalted and enthroned the god of Love,—of sacred human love. In words that elsewhere have no counterpart, he has embalmed for us his thought in this marvellous piece of literary amber:

"Love is the only bow on Life's dark cloud. It is the Morning and the Evening Star. It shines upon the cradle of the babe, and sheds its radiance on the quiet tomb. It is the mother of Art—inspirer of poet, patriot and philosopher. It is the air and light of every heart—builder of every home—kindler of every fire on every hearth. It was the first to dream of immortality. It fills the world with melody, for music is the voice of Love. Love is the magician, the enchanter, that changes worthless things to joy, and makes right royal kings and queens of common clay. It is the perfume of that wondrous flower—the heart—and without that sacred passion, that divine swoon, we are

less than beasts—but with it, earth is heaven, and we are gods."

LIFE.

Has any one but the immortal bard ever produced a parallel to this living portrait of a human life,—of his own life,—from the cradle to the grave?

"Born of love and hope, of ecstacy and pain, of agony and fear, of tears and joy—dowered with the wealth of two united hearts—held in happy arms, with lips upon life's drifted font blue-veined and fair, where perfect peace finds perfect form—rocked by willing feet and wooed to shadowy shores of sleep by siren mother singing soft and low—looking with wonder's wide and startled eyes at common things of life and day—taught by want and wish and contact with the things that touch the dimpled flesh of babes—lured by light and flame, and charmed by color's wondrous robes—learning the use of hands and feet, and by the love of mimicry beguiled to utter speech—releasing prisoned thoughts from crabbed and curious marks on soiled and tattered leaves—puzzling the brain with crooked numbers and their changing, tangled worth—and so through years of alternat-

ing day and night, until the captive grows familiar with the chains and walls and limitations of a life.

"And time runs on in sun and shade, until the one of all the world is wooed and won, and all the lore of love is taught and learned again. Again a home is built with the fair chamber wherein faint dreams, like cool and shadowy vales divide the billowed hours of love. Again the miracle of a birth—the pain and joy, the kiss of welcome and the cradle-song drowning the drowsy prattle of a babe.

"And then the sense of obligation and of wrong—pity for those who toil and weep—tears for the imprisoned and despised—love for the generous dead, and in the heart the rapture of a high resolve.

"And then ambition, with its lust of pelf and place and power, longing to put upon its breast distinction's worthless badge. Then keener thoughts of men, and eyes that see behind the smiling mask of craft—flattered no more by the obsequious cringe of gain and greed—knowing the uselessness of hoarded gold—of honor bought from those who charge the usury of self-respect—of power that only bends a coward's knees and forces from the lips of fear the lies

of praise. Knowing at last the unstudied gesture of esteem, the reverent eyes made rich with honest thought, and holding high above all other things—high as hope's great throbbing star above the darkness of the dead—the love of wife and child and friend.

"Then locks of gray, and growing love of other days and half-remembered things—then holding withered hands of those who first held his, while over dim and loving eyes death softly presses down the lids of rest.

"And so, locking in marriage vows his children's hands and crossing others on the breasts of peace, with daughter's babes upon his knees, the white hair mingling with the gold, he journeys on from day to day to that horizon where the dusk is waiting for the night.—At last, sitting by the holy hearth of home as evenings' embers change from red to gray, he falls asleep within the arms of her he worshiped and adored, feeling upon his pallid lips love's last and holiest kiss."

Nor has this autograph of his own life ever been supplemented with a finer touch than he gives us in these lines: "Life is a shadowy, strange, and winding road on which we travel for a little way—a few short steps—just from

the cradle, with its lullaby of love, to the low and quiet way-side inn, where all at last must sleep, and where the only salutation is—Good-night!" Or that other peerless paragraph, which I here requote, from the tribute to his brother Ebon: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

HOPE.

Of Hope he has beautifully said: "Hope is the only bee that makes honey without flowers."

"Hope is the consolation of the world.

"The wanderers hope for home.—Hope builds the house and plants the flowers and fills the air with song.

"The sick and suffering hope for health.—Hope gives them health and paints the roses in their cheeks.

"The lonely, the forsaken, hope for love.—Hope brings the lover to their arms. They feel the kisses on their eager lips.

"The poor in tenements and huts, in spite of rags and hunger, hope for wealth.—Hope fills their thin and trembling hands with gold.

"The dying hopes that death is but another birth, and Love leans above the pallid face and whispers, 'We shall meet again.'

"Let us hope, that if there be a God, he is wise and good.

"Let us hope that if there be another life, it will bring peace and joy to all the children of men.

"And let us hope that this poor earth on which we live, may be a perfect world—a world without a crime—without a tear."

And following this, to express his own feeling and purpose in his work, he said: "I would not for anything blot out the faintest star that shines in the horizon of human despair, or in the sky of human hope; but I will do what I can to get the infinite shadow of eternal torment out of the heart of man."

Of the hope of a future life he said: "The idea of immortality, that like a sea has ebbed and flowed in the human heart, with its countless waves of hope and fear beating against the shores and rocks of time and fate, was not born of any book, nor of any creed, nor of any re-

ligion. It was born of human affection, and it will continue to ebb and flow beneath the mists and clouds of doubt and darkness as long as love kisses the lips of death. It is the rainbow, Hope, shining upon the tears of grief."

HOME.

Who, with lip or pen or brush, save only Robert Burns, has ever given us as graphic or exalted pictures of the fireside as Robert G. Ingersoll? He glorified, even as he exemplified, the joys and virtues of domestic life. He said, "The home where virtue dwells with love is like a lily with a heart of fire—the fairest flower in all the world." "The holiest temple beneath the stars is a home that love has built. And the holiest altar in all the wide world is the fireside around which gather father and mother and the sweet babes."

"If in this world there is anything splendid, it is a home where all are equals."

"Around the fireside cluster the private and the public virtues of our race."

"The home, after all, is the unit of civilization, of good government."

"Without the family relation there is no life

worth living. Every good government is made up of good families."

"Nothing is more important to America than that the babes of America should be born around the fireside of home."

"If upon this earth we ever have a glimpse of heaven, it is when we pass a home in winter, at night, and through the windows, the curtains drawn aside, we see the family about the pleasant hearth; the old lady knitting; the cat playing with the yarn; the children wishing they had as many dolls or dollars or knives or somethings, as there are sparks going out to join the roaring blast; the father reading and smoking, and the clouds rising like incense from the altar of domestic joy. I never passed such a house without feeling that I had received a benediction."

"Honor, place, fame, glory, riches—they are ashes, smoke, dust, disappointment, unless there is somebody in the world you love, somebody who loves you; unless there is some place that you can call home, some place where you can feel the arms of children around your neck, some place that is made absolutely sacred by the love of others."

AMBITION.

Mr. Ingersoll was ambitious. He considered true ambition to be the father of progress. Every man, he said, should have a worthy ideal, and strive to attain it by all the best and highest in him. But his ambition was not for place or power,—he did not want to rule anybody. He craved no laurels won on fields of conquest or aggression. His ideals were higher. His goal was human happiness—"the greatest good of the greatest number," and he welcomed and extolled everything that contributed to it. He sought the richer prizes of life in the private and civic virtues—in the fields of art and thought, invention and discovery, and in the fruits of skilful industry of hand and brain. Above all, he placed the aristocracy of the fireside, and esteemed the kind and just man, the loving father and husband, the peer of prince and potentate. He loved to quote these lines of Burns on domestic felicity:

> "To make a happy fireside clime
> For weans and wife,
> Is the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life."

And by way of contrast he paints for us this

vivid picture of Napoleon the Great and the humble but happy French peasant:

"A little while ago, I stood by the grave of the old Napoleon—a magnificent tomb of gilt and gold, fit almost for a deity dead—and gazed upon the sarcophagus of rare and nameless marble, where rest at last the ashes of that restless man. I leaned over the balustrade and thought about the career of the greatest soldier of the modern world.

"I saw him walking upon the banks of the Seine, contemplating suicide. I saw him at Toulon—I saw him putting down the mob in the streets of Paris—I saw him at the head of the army of Italy—I saw him crossing the bridge of Lodi with the tri-color in his hand—I saw him in Egypt in the shadows of the Pyramids—I saw him conquer the Alps and mingle the eagles of France with the eagles of the crags. I saw him at Marengo—at Ulm and Austerlitz. I saw him in Russia, where the infantry of the snow and the cavalry of the wild blast scattered his legions like winter's withered leaves. I saw him at Leipsic in defeat and disaster—driven by a million bayonets back upon Paris—clutched like a wild beast—banished to Elba. I saw him escape and retake an empire

by the force of his genius. I saw him upon the frightful field of Waterloo, where Chance and Fate combined to wreck the fortunes of their former king. And I saw him at St. Helena, with his hands crossed behind him, gazing out upon the sad and solemn sea.

"I thought of the orphans and widows he had made—of the tears that had been shed for his glory, and of the only woman who ever loved him, pushed from his heart by the cold hand of ambition. And I said, I would rather have been a French peasant and worn wooden shoes. I would rather have lived in a hut with a vine growing over the door, and the grapes growing purple in the kisses of the Autumn sun. I would rather have been that poor peasant, with my loving wife by my side, knitting as the day died out of the sky—with my children upon my knees and their arms about me—I would rather have been that man and gone down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust, than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder, known as Napoleon the Great."

SCIENCE.

Everywhere and always he glorified the Deity of Science—child of the blessed Trinity, Reason, Observation and Experience. His works abound in eloquent praise of its achievements. Among other passages he gives us this:

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

"Science is the providence of man, the worker of true miracles, of real wonders. Science has 'read a little in Nature's infinite book of secrecy.' Science knows the circuits of the winds, the courses of the stars. Fire is his servant, and lightning his messenger. Science freed the slaves and gave liberty to their masters. Science taught men to enchain, not his fellows, but the forces of nature, forces that have no backs to be scarred, no limbs for chains

to chill and eat, forces that have no hearts to break, forces that never know fatigue, forces that shed no tears. Science is the great physician. His touch has given sight. He has made the lame to leap, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and in the pallid face his hand has set the rose of health. Science has given his beloved sleep and wrapped in happy dreams the throbbing nerves of pain. Science is the destroyer of disease, builder of happy homes, the preserver of life and love. Science is the teacher of every virtue, the enemy of every vice. Science has given the true basis of morals, the origin and office of conscience, revealed the nature of obligation, of duty, of virtue in its highest, noblest forms, and has demonstrated that true happiness is the only possible good. Science has slain the monsters of superstition, and destroyed the authority of inspired books. Science has read the records of the rocks, records that priestcraft cannot change, and on his wondrous scales has weighed the atom and the star.

"Science has founded the only true religion. Science is the only Savior of this world."

VII.

THE "DRESDEN" EDITION.

And so I might go on quoting and quoting. It is difficult to forbear. It is a feast, mental and spiritual, to sit at the banquet spread so bountifully for us in the thirteen beautiful volumes containing the published works of Mr. Ingersoll in their "Dresden" setting,—so-called after the little village in New York State which was the author's birthplace. I am tempted to linger at the feast for more of the delicious bits of poetry, philosophy, feeling, wit, wisdom, humor and loving-kindness that abound on every page and in almost every line. The limits of this sketch forbid the indulgence. What he has said on Education, Art, Science,—on Poetry, Music and Fiction,—on Justice, Liberty, Equality and the Rights of Man,—On Worship, Reverence and True Religion,—on Orthodoxy and Agnosticism,—on Government, Finance, Domestic and Political Economy, and on a thousand other living human topics—for he has vibrated every chord—would take many more books to hold, and every book a glittering mine.

OPTIMISM *vs.* PESSIMISM.

Some called him a pessimist. He was not. He enjoyed more than suffered, hoped more than despaired. It is true that when he considered the agonies and miseries of life, the sickness and disease, the poverty and crime, the ignorance and superstition, the follies and failures, the human wrecks on every shore; when he thought of the savagery of tooth and beak and claw; of the fury of the elements,—of wind and fire of flood, of earthquakes, lightnings and volcanoes, of drought and pestilence and famine and all the evils that afflict the race from without or within, and of the final tragedy awaiting all, he groaned in spirit and felt and said that this was not a good world. He went further and had the courage that some called audacity, and others blasphemy, to say what millions think but fear to say, that if, as a man he had been given the power and commission to make a world, he certainly would have made a better one than this, or gone out of the business! This was said seriously, not vaingloriously. To one who asked him what improvement he would suggest in the order of things, he immediately

replied: "Well, for one thing, I would make health catching instead of disease."

On the other hand, when he considered the beautiful, good and true; the sunshine and the flowers, the blossoming spring and ripening harvest; the warm and fructifying showers, the cool and shady glens, the vine-clad hills and richly verdant vales and all the varying charms of Nature in her gentler moods; when he saw the roses on the cheeks of health, heard the songs of happy birds and hum of busy bees in sweet pursuit, and merry shouts of children at their play; when he saw the many open hands of sympathy and aid, the generous and noble deeds of great heroic souls, the glorious triumphs of genius in fields of art and song, the wonderful achievements of science in invention and discovery and the many marvellous products of industrial skill; and when he thought of happy homes and loving hearts and helpful hands through all the years,—when he looked and thought on these he hoped, he dreamed, he prophesied, a brighter future for his race. He believed the world was growing better, freer, happier, every day, and he was doing what he could to make it so. In prophetic vision he saw "Our country filled with happy homes, with

firesides of content,—the foremost land of all the earth."

Looking into the future with unclouded eye, he said:

"I see a world where thrones have crumbled and where kings are dust. The aristocracy of idleness has perished from the earth.

"I see a world without a slave. Man at last is free. Nature's forces have by Science been enslaved. Lightning and light, wind and wave, frost and flame, and all the secret, subtle powers of earth and air are the tireless toilers for the human race.

"I see a world at peace, adorned with every form of art, with music's myriad voices thrilled, while lips are rich with words of love and truth; —a world in which no exile sighs, no prisoner mourns;—a world on which the gibbet's shadow does not fall;—a world where labor reaps its full reward; where work and worth go hand in hand; where the poor girl trying to win bread with the needle—the needle that has been called 'the asp for the breast of the poor,'—is not driven to the desperate choice of crime or death, of suicide or shame.

"I see a world without the beggar's outstretched palm, the miser's heartless, stony

stare, the piteous wail of want, the livid lips of lies, the cruel eyes of scorn.

"I see a race without disease of flesh or brain,—shapely and fair,—the married harmony of form and function,—and, as I look, life lengthens, joy deepens, love canopies the earth; and over all, in the great dome, shines the eternal star of human hope."

For himself, he said that when he struck the balance, this life had been to him worth living. This was optimism.

HIS INTELLECTUAL INTIMATES.

Mr. Ingersoll dwelt with all the great and noble souls that ever lived. They were his acquaintances, his friends, his intimates. With them he held constant mental intercourse. He studied their words and works, admired and eulogized their lofty deeds, their high ideals. He rescued from the obloquy of spite and hate the illustrious names of noble martyrs to the truth, of whom the world was not worthy,—the names of Bruno and Spinoza, Voltaire and Paine, Hume and Elizur Wright, with those of other great infidels and reformers of their day and time. He gloried in the fame of all the great and good scientists and philosophers,

philanthropists and patriots who, in the realms of thought, and by heroic deeds in fields of action, have enlarged, enriched and ennobled life,—names that were ever in his mind and often on his lips of praise,—names that will not die,—the names of Darwin, Huxley, Spencer and Tyndall; of Humboldt and Haeckel; of Socrates, Plato and Epictetus; of Buddha, Brahma and Confucius, Aristotle and Aurelius; of Lincoln and Washington, Franklin and Jefferson; of Draper and Gibbon; of Buckle and Locke and Lecky; of Wilberforce, Howard, Burke and Bright; of Kossuth, Lafayette and Rochambeau; of Grant and Sherman and Sheridan, Farragut and Ericsson—with other heroes in great strifes for the Right and the Rights of Man.

In the realms of space he took his flights with Newton and Kepler, Copernicus and Galileo, Herschel and Laplace, with Proctor and Mitchell, and other dwellers in the infinite skies, companions of the stars, who "drew from them their secrets and told them down to men." He sailed the unknown seas with Columbus and the Cabots, with Magellan and the other brave mariners of the dawn, and with them landed on the shores of a new and wide and glorious world.

He rejoiced and shared in the inventions and discoveries of Stephenson and Watt, of Guttenberg and Arkwright, of Galvani and Marconi, of Morse and Field, of Edison and Bell, and all the minds whose thought has widened out the world to commerce, fellowship and final peace. And above all, and before all, he placed his Shakespeare among the immortals, with Burns singing by his side the sweetest of Nature's songs. He believed that George Eliot, Harriet Martineau and Mrs. Browning were the greatest of female thinkers and writers of the English world, and that Charles Dickens was the greatest novelist.

He was strongly emotional in temperament. A man of his fine feeling and tender susceptibility could not be otherwise. With such a nature, joined to a clear judgment and keen appreciation of the beautiful and great in art and men, it is small wonder that he was the ardent admirer of his intellectual comrades, and in eloquent eulogy extolled their words and works. He was enraptured with the music of Wagner, Beethoven, Verdi and Schubert; devoted friend of those mimic artists who held the mirror for him on the stage,—his Forrests, Booths and Barretts, and his Rip Van Winkle-Jeffersons.

He exalted, if he could only hope to emulate, the silver tongues of his brother orators, the Ciceros, Demosthenes', Lincolns, Phillips' and Beechers —and who will say he was not the worthy peer of them all?

He held in very high regard those masters of the brush who painted his pictures for him, his Angelos and Raphaels, Rembrandts and Corots, and, in truth, all the other shining stars in his heavens—the writers, singers, sculptors, artists and artisans—a glorious company—performers with him in the wonderful drama who by their genius have added to the beauty, worth and joy of life. His companionship was with them all, and he had hope, he said, for the race that could produce and admire, exalt and emulate such souls.

HIS PRACTICAL PHILANTHROPY.

Mr. Ingersoll never lost sight of his kinship with men. Recognizing the grades and classes of humanity, he was ready at all times to meet the demands of human sympathy and brotherhood. Knowing sadly enough the many impositions practised by the unworthy poor, nevertheless, his heart and hand instinctively opened to the appeal of suffering and want. His quick sym-

pathies and generous impulses guided him, and were for him better guides than cold and calculating judgment. He did not stop to inquire, to investigate,—he gave. He relieved the present necessity, and did not lecture or preach to any recipient of his bounty. He did not reproach the weak, the ignorant, or depraved,—he pitied and forgave. His attitude toward the sinful and sorrowful was ever like that of the Peasant of Palestine: "Neither do I condemn thee."

He gave freely of the treasures of his mind. He counseled, criticised and encouraged many in their literary and artistic aspirations. His home and office were often like editorial sanctums,—piled with authors' manuscripts submitted for his opinion and revision. Scores of introductions, reviews of books, plays and poems were written by him for those who requested it. Recognized as an art connoisseur of fine perception and rare judgment, painters and sculptors submitted their work to his inspection. He welcomed and aided them.

"LET US SMOKE IN THIS WORLD."

Commercial travellers were fond of him and he of them. The "smoker" in the Pullman car,

the hotel lobby and his private room were mildly invaded by them, seeking his acquaintance and regard. Once in the Southern Hotel in Saint Louis a young man told his tale of discouragement. "I am travelling for a tobacco house," he said, "and have been in very poor luck,—haven't made a decent living for my wife and little family; won't you allow my firm to name a brand of cigars for you; I'm sure they'd sell like hot cakes?" "No objection, if you make it a good, honest cigar." "Will you give me your photograph and permit us to get out a handsome lithograph to advertise the brand?" "No objection, if you make it a real portrait and not a daub." "Once more, Colonel, will you give me a 'sentiment' to accompany the brand?" "Very well, how will this do: Let us smoke in this world—not in the next?" The young man went on his way rejoicing. Two years after he came from New York to Washington and in grateful terms thanked the Colonel for his goodness. "The cigar has sold all over the country," he said, "and my commissions have amounted to hundreds and hundreds of dollars; in fact, Colonel, you have put me on my feet and in the way to comfort and success in life."

"GOING TO DENVER."

At another time, Mr. Ingersoll was travelling with a party of capitalists who with him were inspecting cattle ranches in New Mexico. They were in a private car going to Denver. One evening after dinner, while they were enjoying their cigars, the conductor announced, "Gentlemen, a tramp has curled himself up on the rear platform of your car; shall I stop the train and put him off?" "Certainly," replied the leader of the party, a man many times a millionaire, "put him off, and do it without ceremony." "You will do no such thing," quickly interrupted Colonel Ingersoll; "Let him alone, he is doing no harm." "But he's an intruder, stealing a ride, and how do you know he isn't a 'road-agent,' with accomplices further on?" "No matter, let him be; I will go and speak to him." Accompanied by the writer, he went to the rear platform. The man at once begged pardon for his intrusion, said that necessity alone impelled him, that he was out of work and out of money, that he was a good mechanic and wanted to go to Denver, where he hoped to get employment. "Don't apologize or explain any further; I understand;" said the Colonel. "I have been

hard up myself. Are you hungry." "Very." "Come with me;" and calling to the cook he said: "Give this man all he wants to eat," and turning to his astonished guest, "When you're through eating here's a good smoke for you," handing him a perfecto. "And here's a little boost for you when you get to Denver," drawing from his pocket a ten dollar greenback. "Never mind,"—noticing a look of hesitation,—"it's all right, good luck, and don't go out on the platform again; sit on this camp-stool till you reach Denver." Returning, he quietly resumed his seat with the party. "Well," asked the capitalist, "how about your hobo guest; have you invited him to keep us company the rest of the way?" "Yes; to Denver." "I am surprised at you, Colonel; here you are, a distinguished lawyer,—a railroad lawyer, at that,—not only winking at, but actually aiding and abetting a gross violation of the law! You have a great big heart, I know, and a head to match, but I think this time you have let your heart run away with your head." "If all our heads and hearts were only half as big as your pocket-book, we might all be wealthier men," was the Colonel's quiet retort.

CONSCIENTIOUS.

He believed in rendering a just and ample reward for all labor performed. He could not bear to profit by the ill-paid toil or the dire necessities of others. He was not satisfied to pay only the cheap market price for goods required. He went back of the merchant to the worker, and inquired into the original cost of many things. In his purchases of garments for personal wear, I have known him to go to the maker direct, wherever he could, and pay an enhanced price—what he believed to be nearest an equivalent for the article bought. He said he did not want "something for nothing," he wanted to pay his way. He could not and would not accept a money favor, even from a friend, without making an adequate return. For years he was complimented by railroad officials with "free passes" over their lines. He never solicited one of them. They were freely offered. He did not, out of politeness, refuse them, but he did not use them. He could not travel as a "dead-head." He has shown me bunches of these passes, some of them beautifully executed, and in one instance handsomely engraved on a small sterling-silver plate. He

kept them as souvenirs, so he called them—reminders that at one time he was himself president of a railroad in Illinois. No remuneration in any shape would he ever accept from any corporation or interest, or from any individual, except in acknowledgment of service rendered.

MISTAKES AND SLANDERS.

It is not the purpose of this sketch to enter at large upon a definition or defense of Mr. Ingersoll's religious or non-religious views. He alone could rightly define and defend them. In the popular mind, however, there is such ignorance, misinformation and error, and such misrepresentation both of his person and his teachings, that true statements, taken from his own lips, and an intimate view of his character and actions gained by a long acquaintance and exceptional opportunities, qualify the writer to make a record entitled to more than passing attention. As for his views on nearly all questions of human interest, they are amply set forth in his writings and sayings, and happily extant and available in the authorized form before referred to. They speak for themselves, and in no feeble or faltering voice. He was ready to

stand by them, confident of the enlightened judgment of the fair and free.

His character, motives, and meanings have, however, been sadly mistaken, perverted and maligned. The slanders of ignorance and the lies of malice have too often aimed at him their poisoned shafts. To show how he received and repelled these attacks, and if possible to furnish an antidote for their virulence, is but an act of loyalty to truth, to justice, and to right, no less than to personal friendship and affection.

ABUSE *vs.* ARGUMENT.

Mr. Ingersoll knew well enough that a strong man using his strength to combat prevailing error—no matter on what subject—would make enemies. This he expected in his own case from the ignorant, prejudiced and unfair; but that professed champions of justice, love, and truth, divinely called to speak, should welcome every hateful rumor and give it credence and circulation from pulpit, press and platform, sometimes amazed and grieved him, but oftener excited his pity and compassion. "And yet, after all," he would say, "it is but natural that those who expect their God to damn me hereafter, should want to do a little of it here

themselves! Why do they not answer my arguments? Why do not my orthodox foes fight fairly?"

"I want to say, that if there is anything I like in the world it is fairness. And one reason I like it so well is that I have had so little of it. I can say, if I wish, extremely mean and hateful things. I have read a great many religious papers and discussions and think that I now know all the infamous words in our language. I know how to account for every noble action by a mean and wretched motive; and that, in my judgment, embraces nearly the entire science of modern theology."

"It does seem to me that if I were a Christian, and really thought my fellow-man was going down to the bottomless pit, that he was going to misery and agony forever—it does seem to me that I would try to save him. It does seem to me, that instead of having my mouth filled with epithets and invectives; instead of drawing the lips of malice back from the teeth of hatred, it seems to me that my eyes would be filled with tears. It seems to me that I would do what little I could to reclaim him. I would talk to him, and of him, in kindness. I would put the arms of affection about him. I would not speak

of him as though he were a wild beast. I would not speak to him as though he were a brute. I would think of him as a man, as a man liable to eternal torture among the damned, and my heart would be filled with sympathy, not hatred —my eyes with tears, not scorn."

"It is a mystery to me why the editors of religious papers are so malicious, why they endeavor to answer argument with calumny. Is it because they feel the scepter slowly slipping from their hands? Is it the result of impotent rage? Is it because there is being written upon every orthodox brain a certificate of intellectual inferiority?"

THE CLERGY.

It is only natural to expect that with this personal experience he could have no very high regard for the clergy. He could not see why a stripling just fledged from a theological nest should be called "Father" and "Reverend." He knew how ministers were made. It used to be, more than it is now, considered an honor to have at least one member of a family "called" to preach the gospel. Usually, he said, it was the one with a delicate constitution, the petted and spoiled child, of indolent habits, averse to

manly and athletic sports, who was picked out by the parents and friends as the candidate for "holy orders." He did not see why such a one should be "divinely chosen" and "set apart," while the latent lawyer, or doctor, or business man, or mechanic, should be left without a "call." To him, the choice was simply a very human one and often a great mistake. He thought a good workman at the bench better than a poor parson in the pulpit. "Schoolhouses," he said, "are the real temples, and teachers are the true priests."

He knew only few, very few, clergymen whom he could call his friends, and instanced Henry Ward Beecher, Dr. Henry M. Field, and the Rev. Alexander Clark as among the number. They were fair-minded and kindly-spoken, and respected his personality even if they could not accept his teachings.

As above stated, he knew how most of those in the ministerial "profession" came to be there —how they were "ordained" by the "laying on of hands," and "anointed" with "holy oil," the "divine petroleum," as he termed it, of ecclesiastical ceremony. One verified instance came to his knowledge, that he thought might well enough illustrate the motive of many who ac-

cept the call to preach. It was that of a young man in an Eastern university, whose reputation for honor and decency was so tainted that he was "black-balled" when seeking entrance into the Greek fraternity of his fellow-students. In a class meeting before graduation the boys were invited to tell what calling they intended to pursue in life. This young man said: "Boys, I'm going to be a minister!" They hooted him. "All right; you wait and see. Short cut! First you get a call to some little country church. Then, if you have the gift of gab, you are called to the city, get a big church, marry the richest girl in the congregation, and you're fixed for life!" He actually made good this forecast, in every particular.

HIS EARLY LIFE MALIGNED.

Mr. Ingersoll's orthodox enemies spread the report that his early life was dissolute and depraved. It was untrue. He was genial, jolly, good-natured and companionable—liked by all who knew him. Those competent to judge, who knew him well from boyhood to manhood,—mayors, city and county officials, friends, neighbors and prominent citizens—over their own signatures attested by their sworn affida-

vits, united in indignant denial of the cheap calumny.

Another report industriously circulated and designed to belittle his honor as a soldier and his courage as a man and officer, was that he tamely surrendered his regiment of cavalry to the confederate General Forrest, and was taken prisoner in a cowardly attempt to escape. It is maliciously false. His force was surrounded by greatly superior numbers, and after a gallant but futile resistance, like the wise and humane officer he was, he decided to yield rather than cause useless bloodshed. For this act he was to be commended, not condemned. It is enough to say that in all after years the surviving veterans of his command loved, honored and almost idolized him.

Continuing the campaign of miserable lies, a newspaper paragraph widely circulated, stated that Mr. Ingersoll's daughters were "maudlin drunkards!" A clergyman from his pulpit repeated the infamous story. When asked to retract, he took refuge, like a moral coward, behind the newspaper scrap and made no manly apology. He should have been indicted! Right on the heels of this unholy slander, and quite naturally following it, came the statement in a

religious journal that Mr. Ingersoll's daughters had repudiated their father's views on religion, and joined a Presbyterian church! The truth is that with the exception that as a compliment to Mr. Beecher, whom their father esteemed, they once went to hear him preach, they never entered the door of an orthodox church, and said that they never wished to.

HIS "ONLY SON."

Mr. Ingersoll seldom took the trouble to answer these stories. Once in a while at the urging of friends, he would reply to an accusation, especially if there was an element of humor in the situation. A prominent religious weekly published the following news for the enlightenment of its readers: "We are told, on good authority, that Colonel Ingersoll's only son was so addicted to cheap novel reading that his mind became affected thereby; that he was quietly removed to a private asylum, where he shortly afterward died." To an inquirer who sent him the clipping he wrote: "1. My only son was not a great novel reader; 2. He did not go insane; 3. He was not sent to an asylum; 4. He did not die; and 5. I never had a son!"

"The truth is," he said, "that arguments can-

not be answered by personal abuse; there is no logic in slander, and falsehood, in the long run, defeats itself."

"There was a time when a falsehood, fulminated from the pulpit, smote like a sword; but the supply having greatly exceeded the demand, clerical misrepresentation has at last become almost an innocent amusement. Remembering that only a few years ago men, women, and even children, were imprisoned, tortured and burned, for having expressed in an exceedingly mild and gentle way, the ideas entertained by me, I congratulate myself that calumny is now the pulpit's last resort."

THE "OBSCENE LITERATURE" CHARGE.

A more serious and vital attack on his moral character came from an influential clergyman in Brooklyn, who from his pulpit made the assertion that Colonel Ingersoll was in favor of the circulation of "obscene literature, that corrupted the morals and debauched the minds of the youth of the land." He cited in evidence the untrue report that the Colonel once signed a petition to Congress favoring such circulation. It was not so. The preacher did not give the facts. He was not honest. If he did not know

the circumstances of the case, and the intention of the signers, he still was culpable, for the facts were all of record and of easy access; but the preacher intended to leave, and did leave, the impression that Mr. Ingersoll advocated the circulation through the mails of impure and licentious literature. Of course, the very thought of such advocacy was foreign and abhorrent to him.

Briefly stated, all there was to the hateful charge is this: When certain self-appointed censors—religious fanatics—presumed to decide that liberal or infidel literature was "obscene," and on that pretext endeavored to have it excluded, together with his own writings, from the United States mails, the Colonel denounced such an attempt as an infringement on religious liberty. He fought for the inviolability and freedom of the mails from pharisaical intrusion, and challenged the moral or legal right of Christian inquisitors to commit the Government to an Act declaring Infidel, or Agnostic, or Atheistic literature "obscene." If any further word were needed to show Mr. Ingersoll's attitude on this question, listen to this emphatic, even passionate declaration:

"I despise, I execrate, I denounce, with every

drop of my blood, any man or woman who would engage, either directly or indirectly, in the dissemination of anything that is not absolutely pure; any man or woman who would stain with lust the sweet and innocent heart of youth. Such a one I despise with all my heart. One of my objections to the Old Testament is that it is not a fit book to be read by either old or young. It contains passages that no minister in the United States would read to his congregation for any reward whatever. There are chapters that no gentleman would read in the presence of a lady. There are chapters that no father would read to his child. There are narratives utterly unfit to be told; and the time will come when mankind will wonder that such a book was ever called inspired."

"I was and am in favor of the destruction of every immoral book in the world. I was and am in favor, not only of the law against the circulation of such filth, but want it executed to the letter in every State of this Union."

HIS FORBEARANCE AND SYMPATHY.

Let us now see how this patient and forgiving man received and endured these things. He was generally silent, even under great pro-

vocation. His friends were often indignant and urged reply and retaliation. He would not gratify them. Only in the slanderous attack upon his moral character involved in the "obscene literature" charge, did he consent to take legal action, which resulted in a "plea of avoidance" by the clerical defendant; and he pursued the case only far enough to reveal the facts and establish his unclouded reputation. All slander and abuse he endured with a calm philosophy. He always held himself open to conviction, and there never was a man readier to acknowledge an error, admit a truth, or right a wrong. I have known him to do it many times, and to do it gladly, gracefully, beautifully.

He had pity and forbearance for the weak and erring. He was tender, compassionate, merciful. He pleaded for the criminal, for reform in the method of treating him, and urged before State and National conventions the duty of society toward him. He did not think that all criminals were always and only irretrievably bad. A convict whom he had caused to be released from the Joliet penitentiary was certainly not incorrigible. The Colonel gave him a suit of clothes and some money. In a few months a

fine-looking man, with the bearing of a gentleman, came to the Colonel to thank him again and again, and to return the money which he said he had only borrowed.

In Mr. Ingersoll's view, the object of all punishment should be reformation, not retaliation—rescue, not revenge. Only such punishment should be inflicted as the safety of society demanded. He was bitterly opposed to the whipping-post,—believed that it degraded the whipper as well as the whipped, and disgraced the State that resorted to it. As for capital punishment, he regarded it as legal murder, pure and simple, and believed that it made more criminals than it ever dropped from the scaffold, or seated in the electric chair.

INTELLECTUAL HOSPITALITY.

Mr. Ingersoll emphasized the necessity of free thought. Every man should do his own thinking, and he should not be hindered or hampered in the exercise of it. Not only had he the right, but it was his duty as well as privilege, to form honest opinions and give honest expression to them. He claimed this right for himself and accorded it to all others. He persistently upheld the right of private judgment as against

all powers, systems, creeds and opinions. Only by its fearless exercise, he held, could the best and highest in man be developed. Claiming no infallibility for himself, he was tolerant of the views and opinions of others. He invited criticism and argument, loved debate, but was not disputatious or offensive—not excited or heated in voice or manner, but "slow-pulsed and calm," and deferential toward those who differed with him. It was, indeed, a treat to argue with him. He not only respected but he admired the one who honestly opposed him if he could give "a reason for the faith that was in him."

HIS AGNOSTICISM.

As before remarked, it is not the purpose of the writer to enter into a discussion of Mr. Ingersoll's position on religious and theological questions, but simply, and in merest outline, to attempt worthily to state it. He was an Agnostic, and wanted to be recognized as such. "I do not know," was his reply to many of the great problems of life and destiny. "I wish I did know, but will never pretend, or say, that I do, when I know that I do not. I have the same sources of information that others have,—all they have—and I know that others do not

know." "The clergy know that I know that they know they do not know."

This was not said in a facetious or boastful way, but as expressing his sincere and earnest conviction.

"I do not deny. I do not know—but I do not "believe." I believe that the natural is supreme—that from the infinite chain no link can be lost or broken—that there is no supernatural power that can answer prayer—no power that worship can persuade or change—no power that cares for man.

"I believe that with infinite arms Nature embraces them all—that there is no interference, no chance; that behind every event are the necessary and countless causes, and that beyond every event will be and must be the necessary and countless effects.

"Man must protect himself. He cannot depend upon the supernatural, upon an imaginary Father in the skies. He must protect himself by finding the facts in Nature, by developing his brain, to the end that he may overcome the obstructions and take advantage of the forces of Nature.

LIBERTY WITH RESPONSIBILITY.

"Thought and speech must be free. The man or men who would put a chain upon the brain or a padlock on the tongue are heirs of the Inquisition, the enemies of society, the foes of human progress." This liberty of thought and speech did not with him mean license. He was always careful to make this distinction and to emphasize it. "Liberty with Responsibility" was his doctrine. Men must bear the consequences. They do bear them. We reap what we sow. Act and consequence are inseparable, and no power, human or divine, can step between to change this law." "My liberty ends where yours begins," was his constant definition of the limit of freedom.

ON A FUTURE LIFE.

As to a future conscious existence of the individual ego after death he said: "I do not know." "I never have denied the immortality of the soul. I have simply been honest. I have said: 'I do not know.' "

"One thing I do know, and that is, that neither hope, nor fear, nor belief, nor denial, can

change the fact. It is as it is, and it will be as it must be.

"We wait and hope."

"There is in death, as I believe, nothing worse than sleep."

To those who asked, "Why, if there be no conscious future state, should the hope be so universally implanted in the human breast?" he replied: "Love was the first to dream of immortality,—not Religion, not Revelation. We love, therefore we wish to live."

"The hope of immortality is the great oak 'round which have climbed the poisonous vines of superstition. The vines have not supported the oak, the oak has supported the vines. As long as men live and love and die, this hope will blossom in the human heart."

He has repeatedly declared: "I would not destroy the faintest ray of human hope, but I deny that we get our idea of immortality from the Bible. It existed long before the time of Moses. We find it symbolized through all Egypt, through all India. Wherever man has lived he has made another world in which to meet the lost of this.

"The history of this belief we find in tombs and temples wrought and carved by those who

wept and hoped. Above their dead they laid the symbols of another life.

"We do not know. We do not prophesy a life of pain. We leave the dead with Nature, the mother of us all. Under the bow of hope, under the seven-hued arch, let the dead sleep."

His attitude on this question he has put in these rhythmical lines,—one of his many prose-poems:

"We do not know, we cannot say, whether death is a wall or a door; the beginning or end of a day; the spreading of pinions to soar, or the folding forever of wings; the rise or the set of a sun, or an endless life that brings rapture and love to every one."

ON THE EXISTENCE OF A GOD.

On the existence of a God he was again an Agnostic. In one short sentence, every word a monosyllable, he has stated a whole philosophy of the subject: "We go as far as we can, and the rest of the way we say—God." Could it be, has it ever been, put in clearer, shorter, simpler form? When we have reached the limit of human knowledge, of human thought, "the rest of the way," the Infinite Beyond, the Unknown and Unknowable, the Eternal Mystery, we *call*—

"God." On this vague and shadowy conception as a foundation, on this human Guess, have been built all the creeds and systems, doctrines and dogmas, of all religions that have bound and blinded, bewildered and cursed the race. For himself, when he reached the limit of the known he stopped, and waited for further light, refusing to follow "blind guides leading the blind" into the labyrinths of fear and superstition, of faith and despair.

Of one thing he was sure: there could not be a God such as the Bible describes and the orthodox worship. There could not be a God of the Jews any more than of the Gentiles,—of the Egyptians, the Hindus, the Assyrians, or any other of the races of men. Vishnu and Brahma, Isis and Osiris, Jupiter and Juno,—all the Gods of Grecian and Roman mythology were alike the creatures of human hopes and fears, ambitions and assumptions, and all equally divine and worthless. He was careful, however, in deference to those who mistook and misstated his ideas of God, to make this declaration: "Let me say once for all, that when I speak of God, I mean the being described by Moses, the Jehovah of the Jews. There may be for aught I know, somewhere in the unknown shoreless

vast, some being whose dreams are constellations and within whose thought the infinite exists. About this being, if such an one exists, I have nothing to say, for I know nothing."

There may be a God, he further held, but if so, he cannot be, he is not, the infinite fiend that ignorant, barbarous and savage men have created and worshipped,—a God who made the world, pronounced it "good," and then permitted it to become bad, so bad that he had to destroy it and begin over again, repeopling it, however, with beings whom he knew would be just as wicked. He could not conceive of a good or just God who would order his children to slay one another; who waged wars of conquest and extermination; tolerated slavery and polygamy; commanded religious persecution; laughed at the calamity of his enemies and mocked at their fears; a God who slaughtered old men and women, young men and maidens, innocent babes at their mothers' breasts, and tortured even dumb cattle for the sins of their owners; who in his wrath sent fire and sword, pestilence and famine, lightnings and tempests, earthquakes and volcanoes, snakes and vermin, upon his chosen people and his enemies, to make them fear and love him! Such a conception of deity was

to him simply monstrous. To his mind it was but the deification of all the weaknesses and passions of men—their anger, jealousy, cruelty, hatred and revenge,—a being invested with infinite power and wisdom to carry out his will; and to crown all, and more infamous than all, a God who at the last would punish any of his erring creatures with consuming fire and be himself "the keeper of an eternal penitentiary!" He labored all his life and with all his powers to free mankind from the thraldom of such a conception of a Supreme Being. He used to say: "From the aspersions of the pulpit, from the slanders of the church, I seek to rescue the reputation of the Deity." "It has been said, 'An honest man is the noblest work of God.' I say, "An honest God is the noblest work of Man!"

RELIGIONS DECAY AND DIE.

Mr. Ingersoll believed, from the history of all ages past, that religions, like individuals and nations, have their periods of youth and maturity, decay and death; and he recalls for us this history in the eloquent passage from his lecture on "The Gods:"

"In that vast cemetery called the past, are most of the religions of men, and there, too, are

nearly all their gods. The sacred temples of India were ruins long ago. Over column and cornice, over the painted and pictured walls, cling and creep the trailing vines. Brahma, the golden, with four heads and four arms; Vishnu, the somber, the punisher of the wicked, with his three eyes, his crescent, and his necklace of skulls; Siva, the destroyer, red with seas of blood; Kali, the goddess; Draupadi, the white-armed, and Chrishna, the Christ, all passed away and left the thrones of heaven desolate. Along the banks of the sacred Nile, Isis no longer wandering weeps, searching for the dead Osiris. The shadow of Typhon's scowl falls no more upon the waves. The sun rises as of yore, and his golden beams still smite the lips of Memnon, but Memnon is as voiceless as the Sphinx. The sacred fanes are lost in desert sands; the dusty mummies are still waiting for the resurrection promised by their priests, and the old beliefs, wrought in curiously sculptured stone, sleep in the mystery of a language lost and dead. Odin, the author of life and soul, Vili and Ve, and the mighty giant Ymir, strode long ago from the icy halls of the North; and Thor, with iron glove and glittering hammer, dashes mountains to the earth no more. Broken are the circles and

cromlechs of the ancient Druids; fallen upon the summits of the hills, and covered with the centuries' moss, are the sacred cairns. The divine fires of Persia and of the Aztecs have died out in the ashes of the past, and there is none to rekindle, and none to feed the holy flames. The harp of Orpheus is still; the drained cup of Bacchus has been thrown aside; Venus lies dead in stone, and her white bosom heaves no more with love. The streams still murmur, but no naiads bathe; the trees still wave, but in the forest aisles no dryads dance. The gods have flown from high Olympus. Not even the beautiful women can lure them back, and Danæ lies unnoticed, naked to the stars. Hushed forever are the thunders of Sinai; lost are the voices of the prophets, and the land once flowing with milk and honey, is but a desert waste. One by one, the myths have faded from the clouds; one by one, the phantom host has disappeared, and one by one, facts, truths and realities have taken their places. The supernatural has almost gone, but the natural remains. The gods have fled, but man is here.

AS TO THE BIBLE.

It is hardly necessary to add, that with the

views already expressed, Mr. Ingersoll could not believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God." He regarded it as simply a human book —a very human book,—a history more or less fragmentary of the Jewish nation and people. As such it was the product of the times when its different parts were written. It reflects, naturally, the faults and follies, the weaknesses and errors, the customs and habits and opinions of its writers and of the people for whom they wrote. It contains, along with its traditions and religious teachings, many wise and moral maxims and exhortations appealing to the higher and nobler in man. With all its admitted beauties and excellencies, however, there is so much that is trivial and false and contradictory and impossible, that its claim to divine inspiration seems to many to be an absurdity. To Mr. Ingersoll's mind all the earmarks show its human origin. Its history and chronology, its astronomy and geology, its science and philosophy, its biology, anthropology, theology and demonology—all its "ologies"—are ignorant, crude and impossible. Its myths and miracles, childish traditions and superstitions, its immoral and anti-natural precepts and examples, show absolutely its purely human origin. He thought

and said that, in his judgment, Adam was not a perfect gentleman, according to the nineteenth century standard; and that Moses and Aaron; Joshua and Jephtha; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; David and Saul and Solomon; Jonah, Samson, Jeremiah and Elisha, with other "worthies" of the Old Testament, were "a sorry lot," most of whom, if living to-day, would probably be in the penitentiary.

Besides, he said, there are many bibles and bibles, as there are many religions,—sacred scriptures of other races and peoples—some of them of a civilization superior to and an antiquity greater than the Jewish; to say nothing of the many differing manuscripts and translations,—"books" lost that have not been found, "books" left in that should have been left out, and that were admitted or excluded into or from the "sacred canon" by the "votes" of human councils, often by narrow majorities and after heated and angry discussions—together with the many interpolations, anachronisms and contradictions that mark these sacred books,—all these testify to their very natural earthly origin.

MY BIBLE.

"For thousands of years men have been writing the real Bible, and it is being written from day to day, and it will never be finished while man has life. All the facts that we know, all the truly recorded events, all the discoveries and inventions, all the wonderful machines whose wheels and levers seem to think, all the poems, crystals from the brain, flowers from the heart, all the songs of love and joy, of smiles and tears, the great dramas of Imagination's world, the wondrous paintings, miracles of form and color, of light and shade, the marvellous marbles that seem to live and breathe, the secrets told by rock and star, by dust and flower, by rain and snow, by frost and flame, by winding stream and desert sand, by mountain range and billowed sea.

"All the wisdom that lengthens and ennobles life—all that avoids or cures disease, or conquers pain—all just and perfect laws and rules that guide and shape our lives, all thoughts that feed the flames of love, the music that transfigures, enraptures and enthralls, the victories of heart and brain, the miracles that hands have wrought, the deft and cunning hands of those who worked for wife and child, the histories of noble deeds, of brave and useful men, of faith-

ful loving wives, of quenchless mother-love, of conflicts for the right, of sufferings for the truth, of all the best that all the men and women of the world have said, and thought and done through all the years,—these treasures of the heart and brain—these are the Sacred Scriptures of the human race."

VIII.

ON ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

We come now to a statement, feebly inadequate, of Mr. Ingersoll's position on this question. It was to him the culminating point of all his objectives. It mattered little to him, comparatively, what people believed on abstruse and disputed questions of theology, science, or philosophy. But on the vital question of the destiny of the human soul he stood firm as a rock. Here he would admit no compromise, make no concession. In this, he was no longer an Agnostic,—he *knew*. Everlasting punishment of the "unrepenting sinner," of the "wicked," of anybody, was to his mind and heart an unspeakable horror—a frightful insanity. This doctrine it was that first opened his eyes to the falseness of Christian theology, and separated him forever from all confidence in, and sympathy with its teachings, and made him one of its most implacable foes. This dogma he despised and execrated. He denounced it as a "doctrine, the infamy of which no language is sufficient to express."

He said that, "While the Old Testament

threatens men, women and children with disease, famine, war, pestilence and death, there are no threatenings of punishment beyond this life. The doctrine of eternal punishment is a dogma of the New Testament. This doctrine, the most cruel, the most infamous, is taught, if taught at all, in the Bible—in the New Testament. One cannot imagine what the human heart has suffered by reason of the frightful doctrine of eternal damnation. It is a doctrine so abhorrent to every drop of my blood, so infinitely cruel, that it is impossible for me to respect either the head or heart of any human being who teaches or fears it. This doctrine necessarily subverts all ideas of justice. To inflict infinite punishment for finite crimes, or rather for crimes committed by finite beings, is a proposition so monstrous that I am astonished it ever found lodgment in the brain of man. Whoever says that we can be happy in heaven while those we loved on earth are suffering infinite torments in eternal fire, defames and calumniates the human heart."

And who can doubt that among the foremost factors in chasing this black shadow from the earth has been the gentle, loving, brave and fearless Ingersoll.

TRUE CONSOLATION.

His teachings were a consolation to many a sorrowing heart. Many a heavy burden has by them been lifted from timid and troubled souls. In San Francisco, his cousin Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, the philanthropist, brought to his attention the case of a devoutly pious friend, a widow, whose only boy had been suddenly taken from her side. He was a good and loving son, the idol of her heart, the pride and prop of her life, but he was not a Christian, and she feared for his eternal fate,—felt that heaven would be no heaven to her without her boy. Her grief was inconsolable. The "consolations" of the gospel failed to satisfy her heart, or dispel her fears. The visits of her pastor brought no comfort, left behind no peace. Christian friends came in vain to her relief. Appealed to by his cousin, Colonel Ingersoll wrote a letter to this sorrowing heart. He urged her not to fear, saying:

"Mrs. Cooper has told me the sad story of your almost infinite sorrow. I am not foolish enough to suppose that I can say or do anything to lessen your great grief, your anguish for his loss; but may be I can say something to drive

from your poor heart the fiend of fear—fear for him.

"If there is a God, let us believe that he is good, and if he is good, the good have nothing to fear. I have been told that your son was kind and generous; that he was filled with charity and sympathy. Now, we know that in this world like begets like, kindness produces kindness, and all goodness bears the fruit of joy. Belief is nothing—deeds are everything; and if your son was kind he will naturally find kindness wherever he may be. You would not inflict endless pain upon your worst enemy. Is God less merciful than you? You could not bear to see a viper suffer forever. Is it possible that God will doom a kind and generous boy to everlasting pain? Nothing can be more monstrously absurd and cruel.

"The truth is, that no human being knows anything of what is beyond the grave. If nothing is known, then it is not honest for anyone to pretend that he does know. If nothing is known, then we can hope only for the good. If there be a God your boy is no more in his power now than he was before his death—no more than you are at the present moment. Why should we fear God more after death than be-

fore? Does the feeling of God toward his children change the moment they die? While we are alive they say God loves us; when will he cease to love us? True love never changes. I beg of you to throw away all fear. Take counsel of your own heart. If God exists, your heart is the best revelation of him, and your heart could never send your boy to endless pain. After all, no one knows. The ministers know nothing. All the churches in the world know no more on this subject than the ants on the ant-hills. Creeds are good for nothing except to break the hearts of the loving. Have courage. Under the seven-hued arch of hope let your boy sleep. I do not pretend to know, but I do know that others do not know. Listen to your heart, believe what it says, and wait with patience and without fear for what the future has for all. If we can get no comfort from what people know, let us avoid being driven to despair by what they do not know.

"I wish I could say something that would put a star in your night of grief—a little flower in your lonely path—and if an unbeliever has such a wish, surely an infinitely good being never made a soul to be the food of pain through countless years."

To this letter came the prompt reply:

"Dear Colonel Ingersoll: I found your letter inclosed with one from Mrs. Cooper at my door on the way to this hotel to see a friend. I broke the seal here, and through blinding tears —letting it fall from my hands between each sentence to sob my heart out—read it. The first peace I have known, real peace, since the terrible blow, has come to me now. While I will not doubt the existence of a God, I feel that I can rest my grief-stricken heart on his goodness and mercy; and you have helped me to do this. Why, you have helped me to believe in an all-merciful and loving creator, who has gathered (I will try to believe) my poor little boy—my kind, large-hearted child—into his tender and sheltering arms. There is a genuine ring in your words that lifts me up.

"Your belief, so clear and logical, so filled with common sense, corresponds, so far back as I can remember, with my own matter-of-fact ideas; and I was the child of good and praying parents, and my great wondering eyes, questioning silently when they talked to me, my strange ways, while I tried to be good, caused them often great anxiety and many a pang—God forgive me.

"I am writing, while people are talking about me, just a line to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the comfort you have given me to-day. You great, good man; I see the traces of your tears all over your letter, and I could clasp your hand and bless you for this comfort you have given my poor heart."

ON SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.

Colonel Ingersoll did not believe in a special Providence caring for each human soul, answering prayer and extending his almighty arm in rescue of the innocent and helpless and in reward of the faithful and righteous; nor did he believe that this Providence ever heard or answered the most horrible prayer ever offered by human lips or written by human hand—David's 109th imprecatory Psalm.

A minister called on him once to say: "Colonel, I understand you do not believe in a special providence." "I do not." "Well, I want to prove it to you beyond all question, in my own case. Some years ago I engaged passage on a steamer, to go abroad. Before she sailed, I had a fear, a presentiment, or feeling—call it what you will—that something would happen to that steamer. I got so worked up over it, that I took

it to the Lord in earnest prayer. As the result, I gave up my stateroom. Colonel, that steamer never reached port. She went down, and every one of the four hundred souls on board sank to a watery grave. Will you tell me that that was not a divine interposition in my behalf, in answer to my prayer? Is it not proof positive that God cared for me in a special, personal way?" "But, my dear sir," was the Colonel's reply, "what do you suppose the families and friends of the four hundred drowned thought of your special providence? Do you think that God cared only for your one little soul and forgot to warn all the rest? It won't do. Besides, do you feel comfortable at the thought that having such a warning from the Lord you did not, day and night, beseech the captain of that ship to postpone his sailing, at least till you could get word from heaven that it was safe to go?" The minister did not reply. "Now, let me tell you my case," continued the Colonel. "Providence cared for me a little while ago in a striking way, though you may not believe it. A thunder-bolt struck the Young Men's Christian Association's building which adjoined my own office in Washington, and I escaped! If that shaft was aimed

at me, I certainly think your providence was a very poor marksman!"

ON MIRACLES.

When the subject of miracles was broached, he could hardly repress a smile,—the belief in them seemed to him so hopelessly unworthy of an intelligent, thinking mind. He could find no warrant in Nature, or experience, for such a belief. He held that the belief had its foundation in the ignorance, credulity and fear of the superstitious savage. That these lowest elements in man should be played upon by designing priests to extort reverence for their persons and their office and obedience to their authority, —to say nothing of the revenue extracted from the poor and toiling millions,—seemed to him a monstrous crime. He could not argue the question seriously, it was to him altogether outside the pale of rational thought. Belief in miracles has always been the mother of superstition, and he held the church responsible for upholding and perpetuating it.

"Believers in miracles," he said, "should not endeavor to explain them. There is but one way to explain anything, and that is to account for it by natural agencies. The moment

you explain a miracle, it disappears. You should depend not upon explanation, but upon assertion. You should not be driven from the field because the miracle is shown to be unreasonable. You should reply that all miracles are unreasonable. Neither should you be in the least disheartened if it be shown to be impossible. The possible is not miraculous. You should take the ground that if miracles were reasonable, and possible, there would be no reward paid for believing them. The Christian has the goodness to believe, while the sinner asks for evidence. It is enough for God to work miracles, without being called upon to substantiate them for the benefit of unbelievers."

The efforts of otherwise intelligent men, the so-called or miscalled Christian scientists, to reconcile the miracles of the Old and New Testaments with the facts and laws of Nature were to Mr. Ingersoll simply amusing. "We must remember," he said, "that the priests of one religion never credit the miracles of another religion. Is this because priests instinctively know priests? Now, when a Christian tells a Buddhist some of the miracles of the Old and New Testaments, the Buddhist smiles. When the Buddhist tells a Christian the miracles per-

formed by the Buddha, the Christian laughs."

Continuing, he said in substance: the truth is, that in common belief we call that "miraculous" which is simply mysterious or wonderful. We speak of the "miracle" of sand and star, of life and growth, of decay and death, but they are only the immutable and uniform operations of the laws of Nature. To suspend these laws, even for a moment, would result in confusion, wreck and universal doom. According to the account, General Joshua commanded that "the sun and moon stop in the heavens in order that General Joshua might have more time to murder; the shadow on a dial goes back ten degrees to convince a petty king of a barbarous people that he is not going to die of a boil." We now know that if these "miracles" had been wrought, the world would have been instantly plunged into the night of chaos and ruin. Nature's laws are uniform and inexorably persistent in their operation. They obey no master, suffer no interference. Like causes always and everywhere produce like effects, and no mandate from earth or sky, no "miracle," however attested, can change this law.

Miracles are simply the product of the unenlightened human imagination, stimulated and

perverted by the mistaken zeal of sincerity, or by the designing craft of religious hypocrisy or fanaticism. No miracles are wrought to-day.

On the Sunday question he was equally emphatic. He did not believe that that day, or any day, could be "holy" or "sacred" in the theological sense. That day was holy to him in which some kind thought was expressed, or loving deed done for others. "How," he asked, "can a space of time be holy? You might as well talk of a pious multiplication table, a moral triangle, or a virtuous vacuum." He regarded the day as a good civil institution, as a day of rest from unnecessary toil, and if sacred for anything, to be devoted to individual, family and social joys.

His views on slavery and polygamy; on inspiration, the trinity, the divinity of Christ,—whom he regarded as a good, kind and gentle man, a reformer and an infidel in his day; on the incarnation; on the fall of man, the atonement, the resurrection of the body and other doctrines of orthodox Christianity, are too generally known to need rehearsal here. He rejected them all, and in his works has given manifold reasons therefor.

ON NATURE AND MAN.

He believed that Nature, or the Universe, is all there is; that it is the only God. In this he was pantheistic, yet not professedly a Pantheist. nor was he a Deist. He said:

"Let us be honest with ourselves. In the presence of countless mysteries; standing beneath the boundless heaven sown thick with constellations; knowing that each grain of sand, each leaf, each blade of grass, asks of every mind the answerless question; knowing that the simplest thing defies solution; feeling that we deal with the superficial and the relative, and that we are forever eluded by the real, the absolute,—let us admit the limitations of our minds, and let us have the courage and the candor to say: We do not know."

"The Agnostic is an Atheist. The Atheist is an Agnostic. The Agnostic says: "I do not know, but I do not believe there is any God." The Atheist says the same. The orthodox Christian says he knows there is a God; but we know that he does not know. He simply believes. He cannot know. The Atheist cannot know that God does not exist."

As we have seen, he was an Agnostic,—he did

not know, nor pretend,nor profess to know. He did not personify Nature as God. Nature to him had no moral qualities or attributes,—neither loved nor hated; held no sceptre like a king dispensing favors and rewards, no power like a judge inflicting penalties and pains. He believed that man himself is king and judge, victor and victim, his own master, his own slave, that he reaps what he sows, gathers his own harvest.

He held that Nature or the elements, the Universe or God cannot be the person, with "body, parts and passions," that man in his ignorance and faith has created. Man in his vain search for the Infinite has simply personified the forces of Nature and given to them qualities and attributes in accord with his own highest and lowest conceptions. Nature, according to Mr. Ingersoll, has no mental, moral, or physical embodiment of a human type—is not an exaggerated and sublimated man, to be feared and worshipped. It has no appetites, no wants, and cannot therefore be entreated by prayer, flattered by praise, melted by tears, or bribed by offerings and sacrifices. He believed that nothing we know can be higher or lower than the natural—can be either supernatural or infra-

natural,—that there are no gods, no angels, no devils, no heavens, no hells. "The Universe is all there is, or was, or will be. It is both subject and object; contemplator and contemplated; creator and created; destroyer and destroyed; preserver and preserved, and hath within itself all causes, modes, motions, and effects."

He taught that man only could be the providence of man; that if man is to be helped, man must be the helper; that he will look in vain to the mountains or the clouds,—that he himself must be and make his own heaven, as he sadly enough makes his own hell. Summing up his philosophy of human life he said: "Happiness is the only good. The place to be happy is here. The time to be happy is now. The way to be happy is to make others so."

"ICONOCLASM."

Many, by way of reproach, called him a "rude Iconoclast," shattering the images worshipped by devout souls and setting up no others in their places. They cried, "You take away our 'idols,' as you call them, and give us nothing in return." To these he would say:

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

"And yet we are told by the Church that we have accomplished nothing; that we are simply destroyers; that we tear down without building again.

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

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

tering with stars, the grand word—Freedom?

"Is it a small thing to quench the flames of hell with the holy tears of pity—to unbind the martyr from the stake—break all the chains—put out the fires of civil war—stay the sword of the fanatic, and tear the bloody hands of the Church from the white throat of Science?

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

Do not be frightened, he urged; "Fear is the dungeon of the soul." "Do not be afraid to doubt; your doubts are the smartest things about you."

"The destroyer of weeds and thistles is a benefactor, whether he soweth grain or not. I cannot, for my life, see why one should be charged with tearing down and not rebuilding, simply because he exposes a sham, or detects a lie. I do not feel under any obligation to build something in the place of a detected falsehood. All I think I am under obligation to put in the place of a detected lie, is the detection."

"I have not torn the good down. I have only endeavored to trample out the ignorant, cruel

fires of hell. I do not tear away the passage: 'God will be merciful to the merciful.' I do not destroy the promise: 'If you will forgive others, God will forgive you.'

"There is no darkness but ignorance, no light but intelligence," he asserted over and over again. "On the ruins of ignorance the splendid temple of intelligence must be reared. In the place of darkness the light must be made to shine."

"Some may ask, 'Are you trying to take our religion away?'

"To such I answer, No. Superstition is not religion.

"To love justice, to long for the right, to love mercy, to pity the suffering, to assist the weak, to forget wrongs and remember benefits—to love the truth, to be sincere, to utter honest words, to love liberty, to wage relentless war against slavery in all its forms, to love wife and child and friend, to make a happy home, to love the beautiful in art, in nature, to cultivate the mind, to be familiar with the mighty thoughts that genius has expressed, the noble deeds of all the world, to cultivate courage and cheerfulness, to make others happy, to fill life with the splendor of generous acts, the warmth of loving

words, to discard error, to destroy prejudice, to receive new truths with gladness, to cultivate hope, to see the calm beyond the storm, the dawn beyond the night, to do the best that can be done and then to be resigned—this is the religion of reason, the creed of science. This satisfies the brain and heart."

IX.

HIS VIEW OF CHRIST.

What did Mr. Ingersoll think of Christ? That he was simply a man,—not "God incarnate," as theologians express it. He was not, could not have been, miraculously conceived. He was the son, the first-born, of Jewish parents, naturally begotten, He learned and followed his father's trade and lived in the home with the rest of the family. We know nothing of his boyhood aside from apocryphal tales told of wonders he wrought for the amusement and amazement of his playmates, and the gospel story of confounding the doctors in the temple by his precocious wisdom. His mother, as a woman, and the wife of Joseph, must have believed in her heart that Christ was the child of their union, and not the offspring of Jehovah. Once when they feared their boy was lost, she said on finding him, "Thy father and I"—thy parents—"have sought thee, sorrowing."

The writer of Matthew's gospel believed, with other Jews, that the Christ of prophesy and of their hopes was to be an earthly king, who should "sit on the throne of his father David."

He therefore traces the ancestry of Joseph, "as was supposed," not of Mary, to show that the blood of David was in Joseph's veins. Christ was a human being—could have been none other. The claim of divinity was not made for him by the early Church until years after his death, for the epistles and gospels were not known or accepted as authority until at least a century-and-a-half later.

In his review of the four gospels, Mr. Ingersoll shows that there was not agreement. This want of harmony was apparent, more perhaps in the omission of important events and doctrines than in the interpolations and errors of translation. He points out especially that the most vital message of all, the Atonement, is not definitely set forth by either of the three evangelists. Only John tells us that we must "believe" and be "born again" in order to be saved. The other three had not heard of it, or did not regard salvation by faith as an essential teaching of their Master, else they would, all of them, have said so. Instead, they exalted and emphasized the moral precepts, the practice of goodness, mercy, purity of heart, forgiveness, charity—the doctrines preached by Christ in his "Sermon on the Mount." This sermon was to

be for his hearers their guide and chart through life and the key to open for them the portals of heaven.

Of course he discarded all miracles, myths, legends and false records of the words said to have been spoken and deeds said to have been done by Christ. He regarded these as the source and cause of the beliefs of his misguided and deluded, even though sincere and devout, followers. He could understand and account for their credulity, and their reverential homage, and did not wonder at it. Did not they see this kinsman of theirs, their neighbor and countryman, "going about doing good?" Was he not healing their sick, causing their lame to leap, their sightless eyes to see, their silent lips to utter speech, their closed ears to hear melodious sounds, and marvel of marvels! their dead to be raised from "cold obstruction" to warm and throbbing life? And all for them! Could they be other than grateful for his kindness, his sympathy and compassion? They looked upon him as a wise and powerful friend, who took their part against rich and heartless oppressors, and were overwhelmed with pity and anguish at his cruel and pathetic death. And for their sakes! No wonder that they worshipped him!

The early Church, growing in numbers and power, taking advantage of this loving adoration, added the forces of mystery and command to complete its mastery of souls. Thus did Christianity as a system begin, and thus for centuries did it continue to be, like all other religions since the world has been. We have found many Christs in many races, many lands. We have seen many systems of religion appear and disappear—arrive, flourish, decay and die. These all had their miraculous births, superstitious beliefs, sacred books, cunning priests, formal ceremonies, and often cruel and inhuman rites—with millions of devoted followers to attest to their divine mission and authority.

Mr. Ingersoll believed, in all sincerity, that Christ was a good man, not an imposter, not a hypocrite, but one of the best of men that ever "touched this bank and shoal of Time." He was kind, tender and compassionate. He loved little children and gathered them in his arms. In his ministry he was intensely earnest, self-denying and indefatigable. He preached and labored for no salary,—gave his gospel freely, "without money and without price," and was so poor that "he had not where to lay his head," and lived on the hospitality and alms of his

followers. Very like, Mr. Ingersoll thought, the itinerant preachers of the early Methodist Church who were more or less warmly welcomed in the homes of their flocks. This reminded him of the pious woman who entertained several ministers of her denomination attending quarterly conference. On the first morning of their stay she asked her husband for an extra supply of money to do the marketing, saying,—"You know them religiouses eats orful!" Apropos of this question of Christian hospitality, so often abused, a minister once visited a "brother" living in another city. He prolonged his stay beyond a reasonable time. Hints that his early departure would not greatly grieve the family, were not taken. At last, provoked, the goodman of the house invoked the help of the Lord. At family worship one morning he prayed: "When our brother leaves us today, go with him, bless him in basket and in store,"—and so on. The prayer was quickly answered, and preacher and carpet-bag disappeared before the hour for luncheon had arrived. Another case was that of a Christian worker who late at night, and without notice, brought himself and his two boys to a "brother's" home, saying frankly that it was too expensive for him to stop

at the hotel! Mr. Ingersoll did not mean to condemn or disparage the hospitality of the early Christian disciples, but he thought the modern practice of "pious billeting," as he termed it, somewhat overdone.

In the story of Mary and Martha—probably apocryphal—Mr. Ingersoll thought that Christ as a guest was hardly fair to Martha—not as appreciative as he might have been of her "careful" concern for his bodily comfort. His extravagant praise for Mary should have been equally shared by both sisters. He seemed to have been more pleased with the loving attentions of Mary, who sat at his feet anointing them with oil, bathing them with tears, and wiping them with her flowing tresses, than he was with the "poorer part" that Martha "chose" in entertaining him. Martha stood in the kitchen, as we might say in modern parlance, cooking, baking and then serving the food, and really loving him, while Mary stayed in the parlor kneeling and adoring. As one has put it: "Mary wept, Martha swept." Mr. Ingersoll's choice was for Martha as the better hostess.

Christ was serene, serious, sad and solemn, as befitted his great mission. "Jesus wept." He could not be jovial, gay, or flippant, light-

hearted or humorous. We do not know that he ever enjoyed a joke, or indulged in a hearty laugh. He attended a wedding feast, and may have been merry over the wine he made out of water, but we do not know. We do know that he was terribly severe in his denunciations of wrong and of wrong-doers, and sometimes displayed impatience and temper when displeased, and administered unmerited and unjust rebuke. On one occasion, being hungry, he approached a fig tree expecting fruit, although "the time of figs was not yet," and finding "nothing but leaves" he "cursed" the innocent tree, saying, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever," and instantly the poor thing "withered away." Mr. Ingersoll could not reconcile this transaction with goodness or greatness, and thought that a "miracle of blessing" rather than of cursing should then and there have been performed. He thought and hoped that the story, like others, was an interpolation.

The simple truth, as believed by Mr. Ingersoll, is that Christ was an oriental Prophet, a religious Reformer, an Evangelist, a Protestant against the evils and abuses, the false teachings and formal rites of the Jewish synagogue and altar. He was an Infidel and Heretic in the

eyes of the orthodox of his day, and was put to a cruel and shameful death on the cross because he dared to oppose and expose the errors of the church of his fathers. In this he was fearless, courageous, heroic, and truly one of the greatest of the "glorious army of Martyrs."

He must have been attractive and magnetic in his person, speech and manner, and capable of strong and enduring attachments—in short, an altogether loving and lovable man. These fine traits in him Mr. Ingersoll fully understood and appreciated. He had no aversion, no hatred, only praise, for the Peasant of Palestine. He was not an enemy, but a friend of the human Christ, notwithstanding the calumny and slander of orthodox priests and teachers. He said:

"And let me say here, once for all, that for the man Christ I have infinite respect. Let me say, once for all, that the place where man has died for man is holy ground. And let me say, once for all, that to that great and serene man I gladly pay the tribute of my admiration and my tears. He was an infidel in his time. He was regarded as a blasphemer, and his life was destroyed by hypocrites, who have in all ages, done what they could to trample freedom and manhood out of the human mind. Had I lived

at that time I would have been his friend, and should he come again he will not find a better friend than I will be.

"That is for the man. For the theological creation I have a different feeling. If he was, in fact, God, he knew there was no such thing as death. He knew that what we called death was but the eternal opening of the golden gates of everlasting joy; and it took no heroism to face a death that was eternal life.

"But when a man, when a poor boy sixteen years of age, goes upon the field of battle to keep his flag in heaven, not knowing but death ends all; not knowing but that when the shadows creep over him, the darkness will be eternal, there is heroism. For the man who, in the darkness, said: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—for that man I have nothing but respect, admiration, and love. Back of the theological shreds, rags, and patches, hiding the real Christ, I see a genuine man."

While thus recognizing and applauding the high moral character of Christ, and his many virtues, Colonel Ingersoll could not see from the record that he was "intellectually at the summit" of the race. He certainly had but a narrow field of observation and a limited experience.

He lived but a few years, and in a very small and poor country, and his "world" was confined to Palestine and the lands bordering on the Mediterranean sea. He had not heard of America, and knew nothing of the great islands and continents peopled with millions of his fellow creatures, that lay beyond the scope of his narrow vision. He had no true conception of the size and shape of the earth, knew little of geography, geology, ethnology, or cosmogony, and still less of astronomy. He was ignorant of the motions of the planets, of the suns, moons and stars, wheeling in their orbits through the infinite spaces. He perhaps had heard of "The Wise Men" and the "Star" that heralded his birth, but made no mention of it. Matthew is the only evangelist who records it. He was not a great philosopher. Most of his philosophy was provincial, puerile, crude and impossible. He did not value worldly wisdom—his "Kingdom was not of this world." He was not an inventor, voyager, or discoverer of new facts and forces in nature. He practised none of the fine arts,—was not a painter, sculptor or musician, although he was poetic, dramatic and highly imaginative,—traits common to the Oriental temperament. He was not a historian—wrote noth-

ing—left not a line or word, not even a signature of his name. He said nothing about education, the rights of man, popular sovereignty or statesmanship. He did not encourage industry, thrift and economy, or the habit of saving for the future, telling his followers to "take no thought for the morrow," that it was useless to lay up treasures on earth for the end of all things was at hand. He was the enemy of the rich and prosperous, for in his allegory he consigned Dives to Hades, "not because he was bad, but because he was rich," and comforted Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, "not because he was good, but because he was poor." He did not grow eloquent over the sacredness of home, or the blessedness of maternity. He never married. The Church that followed him and bore his name regarded and still regards "the priest as better than a father, the nun holier than a mother."

His was supremely a heavenly mission. He subordinated the material to the spiritual, the joy of living here to the promise of greater joy hereafter. He believed the end was near, and said, "This generation shall not pass away," that those who heard him "should not taste of death," till all that he had prophesied had been fulfilled. The things he did not say, but might have said,

if he had been the Divine Teacher knowing all things, past, present and future, seemed more important to Mr. Ingersoll than the things he did say.

"If Christ was in fact God, he knew all the future. Before him like a panorama moved the history yet to be. He knew how his words would be interpreted. He knew what crimes, what horrors, what infamies, would be committed in his name. He knew that the hungry flames of persecution would climb around the limbs of countless martyrs. He knew that thousands and thousands of brave men and women would languish in dungeons in darkness, filled with pain. He knew that the church would invent and use instruments of torture; that his followers would appeal to whip and fagot, to chain and rack. He saw what creeds would spring like poisonous fungi from every text. He saw the ignorant sects waging war against each other. He saw thousands of men, under the orders of priests, building prisons for their fellow-men. He saw thousands of scaffolds dripping with the best and bravest blood. He saw his followers using the instruments of pain. He heard the groans—saw the faces white with agony. He heard the shrieks and sobs and cries

of all the moaning, martyred multitudes. He knew that commentaries would be written on his words with swords, to be read by the light of fagots. He knew that the Inquisition would be born of the teachings attributed to him.

"He saw the interpolations and falsehoods that hypocrisy would write and tell. He saw all wars that would be waged, and knew that above these fields of death, these dungeons, these rackings, these burnings, these executions, for a thousand years would float the dripping banner of the cross.

"He knew that hypocrisy would be robed and crowned—that cruelty and credulity would rule the world; knew that liberty would perish from the earth; knew that popes and kings in his name would enslave the souls and bodies of men; knew that they would persecute and destroy the discoverers, thinkers and inventors; knew that his church would extinguish reason's holy light and leave the world without a star.

"He saw his disciples extinguishing the eyes of men, flaying them alive, cutting out their tongues, searching for all the nerves of pain.

"He knew that in his name his followers would trade in human flesh; that cradles would be robbed and women's breasts unbabed for gold.

"And yet he died with voiceless lips.

"Why did he fail to speak? Why did he not tell his disciples, and through them the world: 'You shall not burn, imprison and torture in my name. You shall not persecute your fellow-men.'

"Why did he not plainly say: 'I am the Son of God,' or, 'I am God?' Why did he not explain the Trinity? Why did he not tell the mode of baptism that was pleasing to him? Why did he not write a creed? Why did he not break the chains of slaves? Why did he not say that the Old Testament was or was not the inspired word of God? Why did he not write the New Testament himself? Why did he leave his words to ignorance, hypocrisy and chance? Why did he not say something positive, definite and satisfactory about another world? Why did he not turn the tear-stained hope of heaven into the glad knowledge of another life? Why did he not tell us something of the rights of man, of the liberty of hand and brain?

"Why did he go dumbly to his death, leaving the world to misery and to doubt?

"I will tell you why. He was a man, and did not know."

ADMISSIONS AND EXCEPTIONS.

Notwithstanding Mr. Ingersoll's pronounced views of the character and teachings of the man Christ, and his emphatic denials and denunciations of orthodox theology, he repeatedly expressed, both in his public utterances and private conversations, these thoughts:

"I admit that there are many good and beautiful passages in the Old and New Testaments; that from the lips of Christ dropped many pearls of kindness,—of love. Every verse that is true and tender I treasure in my heart. Every thought behind which is the tear of pity I appreciate and love. But I cannot accept it all. Many utterances attributed to Christ shock my brain and heart. They are absurd and cruel.

"Take from the New Testament the infinite savagery, the shoreless malevolence of eternal pain, the absurdity of salvation by faith, the ignorant belief in the existence of devils, the immorality and cruelty of the Atonement, the doctrine of non-resistance that denies to virtue the right of self-defense, and how glorious it would be to know that the remainder is true! Compared with this knowledge, how everything else

in nature would shrink and shrivel! What ecstacy it would be to know that God exists, that he is our father and that he loves and cares for the children of men! To know that all the paths that human beings travel, turn and wind as they may, lead to the gates of stainless peace? How the heart would thrill and throb to know that Christ was the conqueror of Death; that at his grave the all-devouring monster was baffled and beaten forever; that from that moment the tomb became the door that opens on eternal life! To know this would change all sorrow into gladness. Poverty, failure, disaster, defeat, power, place and wealth would become meaningless sounds. To take your babe upon your knee and say: 'Mine and mine forever!' What joy! To clasp the woman you love in your arms and to know that she is yours and forever—yours though suns darken and constellations vanish! This is enough: To know that the loved and dead are not lost; that they still live and love and wait for you. To know that Christ dispelled the darkness of death and filled the grave with eternal light. To know this would be all that the heart could bear. Beyond this joy cannot go. Beyond this there is no place for hope."

In the foregoing statement of Mr. Ingersoll's

view of Christ and his teachings, the writer has given only a few extracts and attempted only the merest outline, the most meager and superficial survey, of the subject. He feels that he has only touched the hem of a wonderfully woven intellectual garment, reached but the boundary line and not explored the interior, the heights and widths and depths of Mr. Ingersoll's universal genius. Who would penetrate further must be referred to his published works in their complete "Dresden" offering.

While never professing or pretending to be a "poet" in the accepted meaning of the term, Mr. Ingersoll was yet highly poetic in temperament, thought and expression. What he modestly called, or his admirers called, "Prose Poems," abundantly show this. All his writings and sayings display it. Sometimes he would invoke the muse and jot down on bits of paper his vivid imagery in metrical numbers. Many of these scraps, most of them very beautiful, were found in his literary remains. He thought it worth while, in summing up his views, to put them in verse, and so he gave us this comprehensive rhythmical summary, called his creed, or his

X.

DECLARATION OF THE FREE.

"We have no falsehoods to defend—
We want the facts;
Our force, our thought, we do not spend
In vain attacks.
And we will never meanly try
To save some fair and pleasing lie.

"The simple truth is what we ask,
Not the ideal;
We've set ourselves the noble task
To find the real.
If all there is is naught but dross,
We want to know and bear our loss.

"We will not willingly be fooled,
By fables nursed;
Our hearts, by earnest thought, are schooled
To bear the worst;
And we can stand erect and dare
All things, all facts that really are.

"We have no God to serve or fear,
No hell to shun,
No devil with malicious leer.
When life is done

An endless sleep may close our eyes,
A sleep with neither dreams nor sighs.

"We have no master on the land—
No king in air—
Without a miracle we stand,
Without a prayer,
Without a fear of coming night;
We seek the truth, we love the light.

"We do not bow before a guess,
A vague unknown;
A senseless force we do not bless
In solemn tone.
When evil comes we do not curse,
Or thank because it is no worse.

"When cyclones rend—when lightning blights,
'Tis naught but fate;
There is no God of wrath who smites
In heartless hate.
Behind the things that injure man
There is no purpose, thought, or plan.

"We waste no time in useless dread,
In trembling fear;
The present lives, the past is dead,
And we are here,
All welcome guests at life's great feast—
We need no help from ghost or priest.

"Our life is joyous, jocund, free—
Not one a slave
Who bends in fear the trembling knee,
And seeks to save
A coward soul from future pain;
Not one will cringe or crawl for gain.

"The jeweled cup of love we drain,
And friendship's wine
Now swiftly flows in every vein
With warmth divine.
And so we love and hope and dream
That in death's sky there is a gleam.

"We walk according to our light;
Pursue the path
That leads to honor's stainless height,
Careless of wrath
Or curse of God, or priestly spite,
Longing to know and do the right.

"We love our fellow man, our kind,
Wife, child, and friend.
To phantoms we are deaf and blind,
But we extend
The helping hand to the distressed;
By lifting others we are blessed.

"Love's sacred flame, within the heart's
And friendship's glow;

While all the miracles of art
Their wealth bestow
Upon the thrilled and joyous brain,
And present raptures banish pain.

"We love no phantoms of the skies,
But living flesh,
With passion's soft and soulful eyes,
Lips warm and fresh,
And cheeks with health's red flag unfurled,
The breathing angels of this world.

"The hands that help are better far
Than lips that pray.
Love is the ever gleaming star
That leads the way,
That shines, not on vague worlds of bliss,
But on a paradise in this.

"We do not pray, or weep, or wail;
We have no dread,
No fear to pass beyond the veil
That hides the dead.
And yet we question, dream, and guess,
But knowledge we do not possess.

"We ask, yet nothing seems to know;
We cry in vain.
There is no 'master of the show'
Who will explain,

Or from the future tear the mask;
And yet we dream, and still we ask:

"Is there beyond the silent night
An endless day?
Is death a door that leads to light?
We cannot say.
The tongueless secret locked in fate
We do not know.—We hope and wait."

XI.

HIS PERSONALITY.

Mr. Ingersoll was physically a handsome man. His form was large and well proportioned, his carriage erect and firm. His manners were unaffected, easy and natural, gracious and engaging. Whether in motion or at rest he had the air and poise that denote the man of mark. He was stout and muscular—weighing sometimes as much as two hundred and thirty pounds, which he thought was perhaps a little excessive for his height of five feet ten and a half inches. His shoulders were broad and strong, well suited to support the splendid head they carried. His every feature was most facile in expression,—all his thoughts and feelings seemed reflected there. So open, frank and unconcealing was his countenance, he could not without an effort hide from view a single passion or emotion, and even his thoughts sometimes revealed themselves to close observers. When lighted with the smile that played so often round his mobile mouth, his presence was illuminated as with sunshine. There never was a more glowing personality. His entrance into any

social circle was like a sun-burst,—he radiated life and light and joy. In truth, none could long be with him, and come to know him well, but felt that here he saw a "combination and a form, indeed, where every god did seem to set his seal to give the world assurance of a man."

UNSUSPICIOUS.

He was not suspicious. He used to say that Suspicion was the blackest imp in the pit. He was simple, direct, guileless and unsuspecting as a child, and was often imposed upon on this unarmored side of his nature. Designing men too often found in him an easy prey,—not always or so much, perhaps, because he did not sometimes detect their duplicity as that he did not wish harshly to judge and tax a man with falseness to his face. He preferred himself to suffer rather than to cause suffering to others. He preferred to pity more than punish. He could not cherish anger, gave no harbor to revenge. He was considerate, forgiving, compassionate.

Even when he knew that favors scattered by him would never be returned, he kept on showering them; that pledges made would not be redeemed, that monies loaned would never be re-

paid, he kept on giving. He could not bear to deny a request. He would say: "Poor fellow, he needed it; it is so good to get a boost when one is trying to climb. I would rather lose what I give than lose the desire to give. I would sooner give than beg, loan than borrow, be cheated than cheat, be wronged than wrong another."

His time, his services and his means were given to others in a lavish way. Money was to him but leaves to be scattered. He rebuked his wealthy friends for hoarding and said: "The rich should be extravagant, for that gives work; the poor economical, for thus they may one day become rich."

He denounced the miserly spirit, the passion for mere possession, indulged by too many of the rich, and said: "What would you think of a man who had a thousand neckties, lying awake nights contriving how he might add one more tie to his collection?" In his family his purse belonged to all. He kept no secret drawers, no locks or keys, no bolts or bars, on his possessions. For them to want a thing was to have it, to express a wish to fulfill it, so that many a costly longing was concealed from him lest he should discover and indulge it.

SOMETIMES SAD.

Although his outward mien was, as the rule, cheerful and happy, he yet at times, and many times, was serious and even sad. He bore the burdens of others. His sympathies were so deep and wide and strong, that while he "laughed with those who laughed" he "wept with those who wept," and often have I seen him touched to tears at the tales of woe freely poured into his listening ears. The sights and sounds of suffering profoundly moved him. He could not go down into the homes of the sorrowful, the wretched and distressed,—it overcame him, unnerved him—but he sent relief by other hands, and was in his quiet, unobtrusive way a large and frequent almoner of the poor. His tender sympathies embraced not only human kind but all the world of sentient life. He was an early and devoted friend of Henry Bergh, and by voice and pen did valiant service in the crusade against cruelty to animals. He waged war against vivisection, believing that the useful ends of science could be well enough attained without the need of touching all the nerves of pain. The discoverers of anæsthetics he enrolled among his aureoled saints.

AN IDEAL DOMESTIC MAN.

He had hosts of friends and choice acquaintances, but few intimates to whom he opened out his heart. He commanded admiration and esteem, but did not encourage undue familiarity. His manner was always cordial but never effusive or obtrusive. He was a social but not a society man, so-called; not a frequent visitor,—preferred his own home—to be the host rather than the guest. His friends called on him oftener than he on them, but they always found a welcome warm and hearty when they came. In fact, his own home circle, with its chosen few, made for him the centre and circumference of his social world. He was an ideal domestic and family man, loving his hearthstone and dwelling beside it happy and satisfied.

This favored fireside, with its glowing comforts and true refinements, its adornments of art and nature, its growing plants and flowers, its books and pictures, paintings and statues, its precious mementoes from friends and admirers in all lands, its music and its songs, its conversations and readings, its games and pastimes, its mirth and laughter, its all pervading air and light of love and joy,—this fireside, was

as near paradise as man and woman and child can make on earth. Can we wonder that they who made it loved to linger by it? The husband and father never left it for a business or lecture tour without reluctance, nor returned to it without delight. When away on such a tour, never a day passed but he sent his love message home by wire and got back the quick response, "all well, love from all."

In every place he visited his admirers entreated him to become their guest, but out of consideration for them he declined, and stopped at the hotel instead. He did not wish to accept a hospitality he could not, under the circumstances inseparable from lecturing, return. When away from home and in the busy world Mr. Ingersoll was not a distant, solitary and unsocial being whom strangers, even, hesitated to approach. It was just the other way. He could scarcely walk the streets without accepting greetings from every side. He was one of the most approachable of men, the humblest as well as the greatest finding equal access to his attention.

A GENEROUS LIVER.

He loved a genial companion and could not bear to be alone; some one always walked or rode with him. I never knew him to eat a solitary lunch or meal. At mid-day in his office, when the hour arrived, he did not leave without inviting his secretary, or one of his clerks or students or a friend—sometimes several—to go with him and share his steak or chops, his terrapin or game. He was a generous liver, fond of all good things, and did not hesitate to join his friends in a social glass. He made no apology for this and wished none made for him. On this question he was moderate and temperate. He believed that in the abuse and not the rightful use of stimulants lay the harm. Liberty in this as in other things he held high and paramount. Without liberty to use there could be no abuse, no responsibility. Excess should be restrained, liberty never. No one has more faithfully or eloquently portrayed the frightful dangers of the cup, nor any one more glowingly pictured its fascinations.

As for himself, he governed well his appetite, and could and did refrain from any and every indulgence when his physician advised, or he

himself believed, his health required it. Even his loved cigar he laid aside, or its use restricted, when he thought he would be the better for it. In the effort to reduce his flesh he denied himself for weeks and months all luxuries of the table—confined his diet to the narrowest regimen, and declined all sweets and fat-producing foods with resolute firmness and apparently the greatest ease.

A STEADFAST FRIEND.

He was a staunch and loyal friend. Those honored with his confidence and favored with his esteem found him true to the highest ideals, the best traditions, of friendship. To them he was as true as steel, as steady as a fixed star. He wanted in his friend the qualities of naturalness, frankness and openness of speech and manner. To such he was a rare companion, a whole-hearted, generous, noble comrade. He hated deceit, indirection, sham and false pretension. He did not like solemnity and so-called dignity—thought them mostly masks for vanity or hypocrisy. He knew he was superior to most men, but made no boast of it. He had great consideration, unbounded charity, for the faults

and frailties of his fellow-men, and pitied oftener than blamed.

As before stated, his philosophy of human conduct was expressed in his simple dictum, "he does as he must." All man needs is light; his darkness is but ignorance; when his horizon broadens his view will be clearer.

He wondered at the cheerful assent accorded by the religious world to the musty maxims, dusty dogmas, decrees and traditions of the superstitious past; at the "dominion of the cemetery" over the progressive and more enlightened present; at the "thoughtless yes" so readily yielded to the creeds of the churches, and at the sycophantic deference shown towards the persons and office of the priesthood, and the servile obedience to its commands. He marvelled at the credulity of men, the ease with which their minds were swayed, their judgment warped, their selfhood bartered, their freedom surrendered, and he labored to restore to them their birthright.

A MODEST MAN.

Colonel Ingersoll was an unaffectedly modest man. He disliked notoriety, and avoided, so far as he could, every manifestation of it. Many

requests came to him from publishers of encyclopedias and compilers of biographical volumes, for a sketch of his life. He invariably declined to furnish it, saying: "A life should not be written until it has been lived." He discouraged the calling of children after him, although hundreds bear his name to-day. Albums without number were sent to him for his autograph, and a "sentiment," and literally thousands of requests were made for his signature. Many of these he granted out of an obliging spirit, but the practice did not please him overmuch or meet his full approval.

As all the world knows, he spoke his mind freely, fully, without fear, without reserve. What he thought and felt he said, and his meaning was always plain; but he was not arrogant or dogmatic, only positive, in his speech. The language of deference and inquiry was as often on his lips as that of mere assertion. "Don't *you think?" or "Isn't it so?" were frequent* phrases in his daily conversation and remark. He was, in truth, the mouthpiece and advocate, the prophet and reformer, of his day and generation.

HIS RESPECT FOR WOMAN.

Mr. Ingersoll had a knightly reverence and respect for womanhood. In the presence of women, and in all his relations with them, he was always the courteous, affable, gallant gentleman. They, in turn, admired and esteemed him greatly,—looked upon him as an ideal man. It may be worthy of note in this connection to say, that in all the hundreds of letters he received from women, everywhere,—and it was my privilege to read them all—I never saw one, not one, that contained a suggestive or compromising word of a doubtful or double meaning—an honor to their womanhood and a compliment to his manhood. He rejoiced to note the ever-widening avenues for the employment of women and the better appreciation of their talents and capabilities, and believed that they were entitled to receive and should receive equal pay with men for equal work. He keenly enjoyed the society of the refined and cultivated among them, and freely admitted and said that woman, the world over, in all that made for the uplifting of the race, was man's superior. He regarded her, to use his own words, as "the true aristocrat of the world."

HIS LOVE FOR CHILDREN.

It is hardly necessary to say, that with such a nature as his, Mr. Ingersoll was fond of children. He loved to have them near him, enjoyed their innocent prattle, their merry laugh, and they instinctively turned to him, opening up the treasures of their guileless hearts as to a great and sympathizing friend. More than once have I seen the tired mother on a train relieved of her fretful babe, and when other passengers looked, if they did not say, "stop the brat!" he, the gentle man, took the child in his arms and with the equal of a mother's art soothed it to peaceful sleep. He pleaded for justice, patience, liberty and love for childhood. He could not see how a father, not to think a moment of a mother, could strike a blow with hand or rod or whip to smart the flesh of a helpless, tender child. To him, such an act, whether done through impatience, ungoverned passion, or from a mistaken "sense of duty," was a mean and cowardly deed. He believed that oftener the parent than the child deserved the whip and rod.

THE LAUGH OF A CHILD.

He was indeed a worthy champion of child-

ren's rights. To him their merry laughter was music. Was ever a finer thing on the laugh of a child put in words, than this by Robert G. Ingersoll?—

"The laugh of a child will make the holiest day more sacred still. Strike with hand of fire, O weird musician, thy harp strung with Apollo's golden hair; fill the vast cathedral aisles with symphonies sweet and dim, deft toucher of the organ keys; blow, bugler, blow, until the silver notes do touch and kiss the moonlit waves, and charm the lovers wandering 'mid the vine-clad hills. But know, your sweetest strains are discords all, compared with childhood's happy laugh—the laugh that fills the eyes with light and every heart with joy. O rippling river of laughter! thou art the blessed boundary line between the beasts and men; and every wayward wave of thine doth drown some fretful fiend of care. O Laughter! rose-lipped daughter of Joy, there are dimples enough in thy cheeks to catch and hold and glorify all the tears of grief."

DEVOTION TO HIS FAMILY.

Mr. Ingersoll's devotion to his family, so tender, loving and gallant, was beautiful to see. There surely never lived a more affectionate

brother, a truer, nobler husband, a dearer, fonder father, or a more precious grandfather. He was always the lover, adoring and adored. He deified wife and children. The noble mother was a goddess, their children cherubs, their home a heaven. A holier, sweeter, happier home was never built and kept beneath the stars than Robert Green Ingersoll's. The open secret of it all was Liberty and Love. There were no commands, no threats, no penalties, no punishments. Errors were corrected with caresses, carelessness rebuked with kisses, faults remedied with favors, and accompanying these were reasonable requests, right precepts, wise counsels, and rising over all a shining, glorious example.

A friend once said to the younger daughter, Mrs. Maud Ingersoll Probasco: "Your father was a great man." Out of the impulsive eagerness of her heart she exclaimed: "My father was not a man, he was a god!" and this exalted feeling was shared by all the members of his family.

"RECANTING."

A false rumor widely spread toward the close of his life, and repeated with added particulars since his death, is that he "recanted" as he drew near the end of his career and embraced Chris-

tianity. It is not so. He did not weaken or waver for an instant. It was just the opposite. He said that the longer he lived the more convinced and confirmed he was in the truth of his teachings and the stronger became his convictions regarding religion. He has so expressed himself to me and to others many times. He died as he had lived, a confident and ardent Agnostic. Since his death, the attempt has been made in many quarters to show that he—as fabled of his illustrious predecessors Paine and Voltaire—died cursing and blaspheming. History has been distorted and perverted by priestly prejudice and malice, and by orthodox meanness and mendacity, in their cases, and the probability is that in the case of Mr. Ingersoll, unless the real facts are known, and even after they are known, error will continue to deny and despise the truth, "world without end."

POST-MORTEM TALES.

As a matter of fact, the crusade of falsehood and calumny has already begun. One report now in circulation is, that Colonel Ingersoll called for a "religious confessor," and that a Roman Catholic priest was present at his death-

bed, and on his "repentance" gave him "absolution." Unqualifiedly false!

As another illustration of the reliance to be placed on these post-mortem tales about great men and their dying testimonies, let me here cite a personal experience. A gentleman whom I recently met in Southern California, told me in all earnestness the true story, as he called it, of Mr. Ingersoll's last moments. He said that these moments were filled with fear and remorse; that over and over again he expressed regret that he had spent so much of his life in opposing Christianity, and that he called on God for pardon and mercy. I asked for his authority. He said that both himself and wife were acquainted with the nurse, a lady who attended the Colonel during the last days of his illness, and that they had the account directly from her. Such testimony, he said, could not be gainsaid or denied. He was astonished when he found who I was and what I knew, and was silent if not convinced.

The simple truth is, that no physician, no priest, no minister, no nurse was present either before or at his death,—none could be called, nor could any have been of the slightest use,—his illness was so short and the end so unex-

pected, so startlingly sudden. Not even the beloved members of his family could be with him, so quickly and without warning did the end come. Only his adored and adoring wife heard his last playful word and saw his last loving look.

Let me here tell briefly the real facts as they were told to me by Mrs. Ingersoll,—facts which the family subsequently made the subject of an affidavit duly executed and filed for preservation and reference:

It was learned after his death, that he knew, or suspected he had not long to live, and that his thread of life would be suddenly snapped, the golden bowl be broken. It was said by one of the servants of his family that he heard the doctor—months before the fatal day—ask the Colonel if he realized that he might die at any moment, and he replied: "perfectly."

XII.

HIS LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

The night before his death had been a restless one. He suffered considerably from indigestion, but recovered sufficiently to be able to join his family at breakfast in the morning. After breakfast he sat in his easy chair on the broad piazza enjoying the soft summer air and viewing the landscape with the Hudson River placidly flowing at his feet. He sat thus for more than an hour, gazing, reading and quietly conversing with those of his family who were about him. No portent of the swiftly advancing shadow appeared in either his look or manner. Beginning to feel a little drowsy, he rose from his chair at half-past ten o'clock, saying that he felt like taking a nap up-stairs, but that he would be down before luncheon and challenge his son-in-law, Mr. Brown, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Farrell, to a game of pool in the billiard room. He retired to his own chamber, his wife accompaying him. He slept naturally and peacefully for nearly an hour; Mrs. Ingersoll watching by his side while he slept. About a quarter before noon he awoke and left his bed

to dress, and needing no assistance sat in his chair to put on his shoes. Mrs. Farrell, his sister-in-law, and Miss Sharkey, a life-long and devoted member of his household, entered the room. Mrs. Ingersoll said: "Do not dress, papa, to go down to luncheon; I will eat here with you." "Oh, no," he replied, "I don't want to put you to that trouble." "How foolish, Robert," said Mrs. Farrell, smiling; "you know it's never a trouble to us; you know you have often eaten up-stairs with Eva." The Colonel did not speak, but looked his grateful reply. Mrs. Farrell and Miss Sharkey then left the room. Mrs. Ingersoll, returning to her husband, said: "Papa, you are not feeling well; let me see your tongue." He put it out with a smile, saying, "You are always wanting to see my tongue!" "Why, papa, it is coated; I must give you some medicine." He looked at her with a loving gaze, slowly closed his eyes, dropped his head upon his breast, and without a struggle, without a tremor, or the slightest sign of suffering, like one falling peacefully to sleep, passed away.

This was on the 21st day of July, 1899. Had he lived but three weeks longer, he would have completed his sixty-sixth year. The im-

mediate cause of his death was angina pectoris, a foe that for more than two years had threatened his life. He sedulously kept the knowledge of his real condition from his family and friends lest he should unduly alarm them, and went bravely on, thinking, writing, speaking and doing to the very end.

The manner of his going was well. It was a fitting close to such a life, a peaceful ending of his day of toil. It was as he wished. He always said he would prefer a sudden quenching of the spark. If he had chosen the manner of its going out, he would not have had it otherwise. In their beautiful mansion on the Hudson, overlooking from its height a panorama of exquisite loveliness; in the peaceful quiet of his own chamber; sitting in his accustomed easy chair; his last word a smiling benediction; his last look a love-flash in the answering eyes of her whom he worshipped above all gods—above all other beings—he passed into "the tongueless silence of his dreamless sleep."

HIS BODY CREMATED.

His body was cremated. The quick, refining fires rendered back at once the uncorrupted and incorruptible residue. This, too, was as

he wished, although he made no positive request, leaving the matter entirely with his family. And now his inurned ashes form the holy altar of their home temple. Around this they gather and worship. Here they offer the oblation of undying adoration. Here they hold the holiest of communions, the purest of soul interchanges, the vocal dust responding to their listening love in sweetest antiphones. All the wealth of all the worlds would not measure for them the worth of this casket that holds all that was earthly of the greatest, gentlest, dearest, best of souls that ever lived,—their husband, father, lover, Robert Green Ingersoll.

HIS MEMORY CROWNED.

His memory will be crowned with never-fading laurels. His fame will shine with ever-growing lustre as the years go on. To countless thousands he will be linked with all their highest and noblest ideals. When they dream of true greatness, his career will inspire them. When they covet the richest prizes of life,—truth, candor, kindness, "honor bright," his precepts will guide them. When they look for an example of manly virtue, knightly courage, mo-

ral exaltation, his presence will rise before them, the champion of freedom, the lover of his kind, the holder of a lighted torch.

BOUNDLESS.

Standing by the sea, hoping to fill the vision with the boundless view, one strains the eager gaze around, before, beyond, but fails to grasp the complete whole. Only the curving lines of near or farther shore, bits of the smooth or shelving beach, here and there a jutting rock, a million crested waves and myriads of merry rippling crestlets meet the sight, while the infinite expanse lies far and far without, beyond the reach of finite eye. So partly only can the farthest reaching human ken perceive and know the boundless Ingersoll.

TOWERING.

At sunrise, on a lofty peak, I have seen a mighty mountain cast its shadowed profile on the western plain far out to the horizon's bound, whence, having no farther earthward scope for its projecting form, it has mounted to the sky and lifted its majestic outline to the zenith,—a pyramid rising from earth to heaven. So it has seemed to me Mr. Ingersoll's genius, shone

upon by the rising sun of Truth, has filled the intellectual plain and mounted to the highest human heights. From such a summit he has looked upon the world beneath,—seen all life, known all men, scanned all facts, weighed all faiths, all fancies, all philosophies, and sent his message down of Love and Hope and Truth,—of perfect Love that casts out Fear, of Hope that maketh not ashamed, and Truth that when perceived shall make man free.

PEERLESS.

When the record is made up, and truthful history shall assign to each his niche of honor in the Hall of Fame, it will be found that Robert G. Ingersoll fills a place high up among the mightiest of the race. It will surely write him first of orators,—the Demosthenes of his day; prince of righteous satire,—the American Voltaire; Emancipator of the minds of men,—the Intellectual Lincoln of his time; himself "The Plumed Knight" flinging down the gauntlet of enlightened Truth to ignorant Error; piercing with shining lance the armor of Superstition; unmasking with trenchant blade the face of Falsehood, and with heavy battle axe shattering dun-

geon doors and opening wide at last the way to "Liberty for Man, Woman and Child."

TRULY RELIGIOUS.

In a beautiful tribute by one of his grandchildren, Eva Ingersoll-Brown—that "daughter's babe upon his knees,"—we may read a faithful record, a true echo of his own voice. In a preface to "The Ingersoll Birthday Book," published by *The Truth Seeker Company*, this "babe," while yet a maiden, wrote:

"Ingersoll was, I believe, the most profoundly ethical, the most deeply spiritual, the most truly religious of men. His was the only real religion,—the religion of goodness, of justice and of mercy,—the religion of Humanity and His whole life was one heroic consecration to the furtherance of his religion. I beg leave to repeat this all-important fact: Ingersoll was a religious man—religious in the highest and holiest, the only true sense of the term,—religious in his irrepressible and matchless zeal for truth,—religious in his love for and trust in humanity,—religious in his fine, intrepid fealty to facts, to justice and to rectitude,—religious in his temperament of storm and fire,—religious in his splendid scorn of wrong, in his superb capacity for wrath

and for rebellion,—and religious in his peerless power for tenderness, for pity, and for love; religious even in his fearless enmity to creed and cant, to every form of futile dogma, ignorant theology and childish faith—to base hypocrisy that masquerades as virtue and as truth."

Quoting his own words, which we have already given, but which cannot be too often repeated or emphasized, she gives us this summary of what he believed true religion to be:

"To love justice, to long for the right, to love mercy, to pity the suffering, to assist the weak, to forget wrongs and remember benefits—to love the truth, to be sincere, to utter honest words, to love liberty, to wage relentless war against slavery in all its forms, to love wife and child and friend, to make a happy home, to love the beautiful in art, in nature, to cultivate the mind, to be familiar with the mighty thoughts that genius has expressed, the noble deeds of all the world, to cultivate courage and cheerfulness, to make others happy, to fill life with the splendor of generous deeds, the warmth of loving words, to discard error, to destroy prejudice, to receive new truths in gladness, to cultivate hope, to see the calm beyond the storm, the dawn beyond the night, to do the best that can be done and then

to be resigned—this is the religion of reason, the creed of science. This satisfies the brain and heart."

Following this she writes:

"A more inspiring, noble and complete declaration of faith was never born of human heart and brain. And, above all, be it said, to the eternal glory of this transcendent man, that he lived in absolute accord with these high ideals. His life was one unbroken melody of thought and deed, of heart and hand, of will and act,—one sublime symphony of conscience and of conduct, of precept and practice—one lofty consecration to the service of his fellow-men."

L'ENVOI.

And now, "thou great and complete man," farewell! Wher'e'er thou art, in all the "shoreless vast," it must be well with thee, for thou thyself did'st well, and now hast got thy meed. Believe and know, O lofty soul! that loyal friends remaining here still cherish thee and all thy words and deeds, and fondly hope that when it comes their turn to go, thou wilt with open arms receive and clasp them to thy waiting heart; that they and thou, with all true souls

that loved thee here together joined, may'st be and go for aye through all the worlds! This Hope sustains and blesses them,—completes, fulfills thy Joy. Again, farewell! Farewell!

Reverently I twine this Wreath of
Recollection 'round the Sacred Urn
That holds
HIS PRICELESS DUST.