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INGERSOLLISM

IN ITS TRUE COLORS ;

OR,

A FAMILIAR CONVERSATION

BETWEEN

**A YOUNG GRADUATE AND HIS
AGED UNCLE.**

SHOWING

THE TRUE INWARDNESS OF INGERSOLL'S
TEACHINGS AND THEIR PERNICIOUS
EFFECTS ON AMERICAN SOCIETY.

BY

REV. M. RUBI, C. M.

BUFFALO, N. Y.:

BUFFALO CATHOLIC PUBLICATION CO.

1886.

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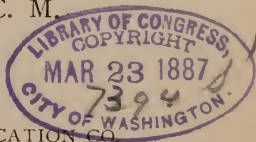
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PREFACE.

THE title and substance of the following pages are so clearly indicative of our purpose, as to preclude the necessity of any lengthy preface or introduction. However, to give our little work a more finished appearance, and increase its interest for our readers, we deem it useful to make a few remarks explanatory of the form under which we present our pamphlet to the public.

The present publication is the result of an idea conceived while engaged in bringing to completion a work soon to be published under the title of "Ingersollism *versus* Common Sense." One day, while employed in arranging the manuscripts of the work just mentioned, we re-

ceived an unexpected visit from a young man, whom we had not seen since the days of his boyhood. After the usual interchange of kindly greetings and friendly inquiries, we glided into serious conversation, during the course of which we incidentally drew our young friend's attention to the labor to which, for some time past, we had been devoting our leisure moments. Surprised and shocked were we on soon learning, from his own lips, that the boy, whom we knew as a fervent Christian, had, as a man, developed into a confirmed atheist.

Our lately-arrived friend ridiculed the idea of our hoping to discover any antagonism between Ingersollism and Common Sense. He idolized Ingersoll, and regarded the

notorious atheist as the very personification of human reason.

Sorely grieved, we reflected that the young man before us might be but one of many, who like him had been blinded and led from the way of truth by the empty, foolish, high-sounding utterances of Col. Robert Ingersoll. At once, for the sake of our friend and the community at large, we determined to prepare for the press a few pages showing in a clear, simple, concise manner, the absurdity of the fundamental principle of Ingersollism, and the pernicious influence of Atheism on Society. How we have succeeded in our design, the following pages will show.

In the work above mentioned, we cast our matter in the form of a dia-

logue held between an uncle and a nephew; for the sake of convenience and simplicity, we have preserved the same form in the present pamphlet. This explanation will, we trust, be a sufficient apology for what some might consider the abrupt, and, perhaps, unartistic manner, in which we have introduced our subject and characters.

If our humble effort should be the means of recalling even one of America's free sons to the standard of the God who watches over the destinies of our nation, or of saving the lowliest of our citizens from the dark abyss of Atheism, we would consider ourselves amply compensated for our labor, and feel grateful to the infinite, merciful Being, whose honor we defend.

INGERSOLLISM

IN ITS TRUE COLORS;

A SMALL PAMPHLET, SHOWING,—

1. How Ingersoll's theory, regarding an eternal universe, lowers man to the level of the beast;

2. How, according to that theory, a man might awake some morning to find his nose situated between his shoulders;

3. How Ingersoll's system renders all science, all art, all trade impossible;

4. How Ingersollism does away with the authority of books, and makes this world a paradise for thieves;

5. How an atheist confounded his comrades with a dice-story;

6. What an infidel philosopher thinks of Ingersoll and his followers;

7. How, according to Ingersoll's notorious idea, men, monkeys and ganders are eternal;

8. How from Atheism flows the absurdity of an eternal succession;

9. How a simple child brought a smart atheist to grief;

10. How Ingersoll contradicts the fact of continued production;

11. How Ingersollism is opposed to the most sacred institutions in our land;

12. How it is a greater enemy to our nation than was the late civil war;

13. How it aims at the utter destruction of our republic;

14. Why it ought to be condemned by every true son of America;

15. Why Ingersoll assumes the role of a professional blasphemer;

16. Why people attend Ingersoll's lectures.

CHAS.—Uncle, I would like to know what you think about Ingersoll's theory regarding the non-existence of a Creator. In a book, which I am now reading, I find this much-talked-of infidel giving expression to sentiments that appear to me somewhat startling. "The Universe, according to my idea," he says, "is, always was, and forever will be. It is the one eternal being—the only thing that ever did, does, or can exist."

UNCLE.—In the first place, Charles, I would remark, that if this idea of Ingersoll's be true, he himself is not a being, a thing,—but simply an infinitesimal particle or fragment of “the only thing.” Now, as one portion of the same material does not differ from another, except in quantity, Ingersoll must admit that, quantity excepted, there is no difference between himself and any one of the specimens of the Darwinian tribe, that afford amusement to the visitors of our zoological gardens;—for the monkey, like Ingersoll, is a fragment, a particle of “the only thing.”

It appears to me that, in his present position, the Colonel cannot avoid this unpleasant conclusion. Indeed, I cannot understand how

Ingersoll or any man of sound mind can be so foolish as to declare that such an idea has taken root in his mind.

CHAS.—And yet, Ingersoll has made this idea the theme of lectures. He has presented it to the public under various forms, and seems to make it the basis of all his intellectual labors, and the boast of his life. In fact, it characterizes all his writings and sayings.

UNCLE.—Then surely Ingersoll must labor under some strong hallucination; for, I repeat it, no fair, sound mind can, for an instant, entertain such a flagrant absurdity. If Ingersoll's idea were true, no science would be possible; art, trade, commerce could exist only in name; all things would be lost in the

mazes of uncertainty. There is no imaginable absurdity which would not be authorized and sanctioned by this pet notion of our modern infidel. From Ingersoll's reverie legitimately and naturally follows the possibility of his awakening some morning to find his noble head ornamented with a pair of long ears, or covered with a rich crop of African wool;—nay, it is possible that even his whole person may undergo such a metamorphosis, as to attract the attention of the managers of our dime museums. The absurdities contained in the Colonel's idea are so glaring and disgusting, that, drawn out at length, they would expose him to the ridicule of the world.

CHAS.—Your assertions, uncle, are indeed startling, and if satisfac-

torily demonstrated, would fill any one with unutterable contempt for the abettors of a system warranting such nonsensical conclusions.

UNCLE.—All that I have advanced follows as a necessary consequence from Ingersoll's premises. Let any man, even superficially acquainted with the sciences, endeavor to reconcile the principles of Natural Philosophy with Ingersoll's dream of the eternity of this material universe, "the only thing," and he will find it impossible not to admit the absurdities, at which I have hinted. So palpably nonsensical is this idea of Ingersoll's, that if presented to the public in its naked reality, and developed to its logical results, it would excite the derisive laughter of the most insignificant village-

school in the land, and would be received even by the ignorant as the conception of a man, whose sanity, to say the least, is not beyond question. No vast erudition or profound study is required to show how contrary to manifest truth and common sense is Ingersoll's idea. A simple glance at a few of the fundamental principles of Natural Philosophy will suffice to discover the folly and weakness of the position taken by our boastful atheist.

CHAS.—Although you speak with such confidence and certainty, yet I must confess that I do not clearly apprehend all that you insinuate.

UNCLE.—Well, then, I will briefly explain myself in such a manner that not only you, but even the most ordinary intelligences, may be

able to clearly perceive the shallowness and marked inconsistency of Ingersoll's reasonings.

Now, in the first place, that motion requires a mover, and that the universe moves are facts placed by science beyond the possibility of controversy.

From these two universally admitted truths, it necessarily follows either that the universe receives its motion from some external power, or that it moves itself, that is to say, is essentially active—there is no other alternative. If the first supposition is true, if the universe has a mover, then evidently it is not “the only thing that ever did, does, or can exist;” then Ingersoll's idea falls to the ground,—his bubble bursts. Now, of necessity, our would-be

atheistical philosopher is forced to rest the truthfulness of his idea on the hypothesis that matter moves of itself, by its own intrinsic power; and by pursuing this course he rushes blindly into a labyrinth of absurdities and contradictions from which no effort of his wily, inventive genius can extricate him.

If Ingersoll really feels convinced that his speculations regarding a self-moving universe are true, he should manifest his new system to the world; he should have it introduced into our schools; it should be taught and learned. However, I fear that long before the faintest ray of success would gladden our atheist's mind, he would be crushed beneath the burthen of proof devolving on him. To begin with, he must satis-

factorily demonstrate, that hitherto all men of science have been in error; that all their knowledge, all their theories, all their calculations, all their suppositions have had no other foundation than a mere phantom. All schools must be persuaded of the truth of Ingersoll's system, and all books remodeled according to his idea. If our learned friend succeeds in accomplishing all this, certainly, he will deserve to be considered the greatest man of the age.

Ingersoll's theory denies to matter the property of inertia, and thus strikes a blow at the foundation of all mechanical science.

If this dream of our loquacious atheist has any real foundation, if the universe moves by its intrinsic

power, then, contrary to experience and all science, matter is not possessed of inertia, that property by virtue of which a body cannot put itself in motion, when at rest, or come to rest when in motion; and as a consequence, we are forced to the absurd conclusion that every particle of matter in existence is essentially active, and has the power of self-movement. I doubt very much, Charles, if such extravagant notions would be received even by the inmates of an insane asylum; and I know that it is useless for Ingersoll to look elsewhere for disciples.

If our profoundly wise philosopher should tell his cook that the cakes and pies, which last week she placed in the pantry, were possessed of self-acting power, and that of

themselves they have disappeared, would she not conclude that her master's mind is, at least, temporarily unsettled? What would a boy think of Ingersoll if he should tell him that his hat, which cannot be found, has, without the application of any external power, moved from the position in which he lately placed it? What audience could refrain from laughter on hearing our advanced scientific atheist declare that, after death, their corpses would be able to walk unassisted to the grave.?

Such absurdities legitimately and necessarily flow from Ingersoll's pet idea. There is no argument by which he can give his position even an air of plausibility. Every man knows that inertia and self-move-

ment necessarily exclude each other; likewise, no one can be so foolish as to deny that matter moves, and that inertia is a property of matter.

From these unquestionable truths, it follows that matter must receive its motion from some external force. To maintain that matter has the power of self-movement, is equivalent to saying that a man's purse or watch can by its own power leave his pocket, and find its way into the pocket of his neighbor.

A fine theory this, to defend the actions of thieves, burglars, and murderers!

If, as Mr. Ingersoll pretends, the universe moves by virtue of its intrinsic power, it follows that his eyes, his ears, matter like the universe, must be possessed of self-mov-

ing force; and hence some day it may happen that these eyes, these ears of Ingersoll, will take a notion to depart from their present position, and locate themselves in his heels.

CHAS.—Though bodies, on account of the property of inertia, cannot move by their own power, yet could they not communicate motion to one another?

UNCLE.—Your question, Charles, is amusing and laughable; for, if what you suppose were true, we might some day be treated to the novel sight of a cart-load of corpses being drawn to the grave by a dead mule driven by a dead monkey.

Have you forgotten that a thing cannot give that which it has not?

CHAS.—But, uncle, you suppose that the universe was created, and

that it has received its present movement from its Creator. Mr. Ingersoll, on the contrary, says that the universe is eternal, that its motion is eternal, and hence that it has no mover outside of itself.

UNCLE.—This is but one of many similar disgusting absurdities to which Ingersoll has given expression. To defend this assertion he must prove what is absolutely impossible,—that matter can possess two contrary properties. By saying that the motion of the universe is eternal, Ingersoll's idea is not placed in any more favorable light,—the case remains substantially the same.

Whether the universe moves from eternity or not, it moves either by its own power, or by the application of some external force. If, as

Ingersoll wishes, pretends the universe is possessed of self-moving power, then it is essentially active and can never beat rest. Behold, now, Charles, the absurdities flowing from such a supposition. All knowledge becomes impossible; the beautiful, harmonious order, which on all sides meets our gaze, disappears; confusion and disorder reign everywhere; the world falls into absolute chaos.

If matter were essentially active, the mountains and hills, the valleys and woods would be continually changing their positions; books and documents would be of no authority or value; the alphabet would be useless; and all written language would be but a confusing conglomeration of unintelligible hieroglyphics.

Just imagine the confusion that

would follow if books were written with letters possessing the activity of sparrows, or of young wild colts, or even of Ingersollian youths! Imagine what would happen with an alphabet made up of kittens, or wolves arranged with lambs!!

In the hypothesis that matter has the power of self-movement, trees and plants could never take root; and all things on the face of the earth would be constantly agitated and tossed like the billows of a stormy ocean. If matter should have the power of putting itself in motion, some day Mr. Ingersoll might find his nose situated between his shoulders, or his tongue protruding through his ear.

Behold the wisdom of the great Ingersoll's idea!

CHAS.—It appears to me, uncle, that in your reasonings, you entirely overlook those universal, unchangeable laws of nature, by which even the minutest parts of the universe are beautifully ordered and regulated. A knowledge of these laws enables the astronomer to predict and determine with mathematical exactness all the various combined and complicated motions of the heavenly bodies. In the laws of gravitation, attraction, and repulsion, behold the forces, which keep every particle of matter in its own sphere, and produce the admirable order existing in the world.

UNCLE.—These very laws are founded on the inertia of matter, and serve to place more clearly before our eyes the absurdity of In-

gersoll's idea. If matter were essentially active, it could not be acted upon, and its movements could not be regulated or systematized.

Let the boldest, most advanced atheist calmly, seriously, and impartially consider nature in all her operations, and he cannot but admit that all things loudly proclaim the existence of an all-wise, omnipotent Being that rules the universe.

I will now relate to you an incident which occurred some time ago, and which clearly manifests what a transparent fraud atheism is, and how insincere are its defenders.

One evening a number of leading men of the Ingersoll type were assembled to discuss subjects congenial to their impious, blasphemous minds.

After a supper seasoned with sarcasm and ungodliness, one of the company proposed that they should select a counsel in the interests of God. They agreed to the proposal; and the lot fell on a philosopher notorious for his wit and impiety. The counsel took his seat and spoke as follows:—

“One day a man took six dice in a box before my eyes, and laid a wager that he would throw out six. At the first effort he turned out six. I said: *It is possible to do so once by chance.*

“He returned the dice to the box, and a second, a third, a fourth, and a fifth time, always threw six. *By George, I cried, the dice are loaded.* And so they were. Gentlemen, when I consider the regularly recurring

order of nature, those regularly revolving cycles of an endless variety of details, that singular direction for the preservation of a world such as we see, ever turning up in spite of a hundred million other chances of perturbation and destruction, I am forced to cry out: *Certainly, nature is loaded.*'

The boastful atheists were dumbfounded by this original and sublime sally of wit from one of their party.

Yes, Charles, any atheist, who reflects, cannot fail to see the nonsense contained in his system; he cannot escape the contradictions pressing him from all sides.

Already, perhaps, I have given more consideration to this silly idea of Ingersoll's than it merits; however, I cannot dismiss this question

without placing before you the sentiments and testimony of a famous infidel, regarding the eternity of matter. What I will now read for you, will clearly show in what estimation this pet theory of Ingersoll's is held even by infidels.

Here are the very words of the philosopher to whom I refer. "I see matter," he says, "sometimes in motion, sometimes at rest; whence I infer that neither motion nor rest is essential to matter. Movement being an action, it must be the effect of a cause, the absence of which is rest. When matter is not acted on-it does not move; and by the very fact of its being indifferent to motion or rest, it is evident that its natural state is rest."

Having demonstrated that passive

and communicated motions differ from voluntary and spontaneous motions, he thus proceeds: "To imagine that matter is capable of self-movement is to imagine an effect without a cause—a perfect absurdity. Is it not clear that if motion were essential to matter, it would be inseparable from it? In that hypothesis matter and every portion of matter would be constantly in motion; moreover, this motion could not be increased or diminished, and it would be impossible even to conceive matter at rest.

"The state of the question is not changed by saying that motion is not essential but simply necessary to matter. For the movement of matter comes either from itself, and then it is essential to it; or, it comes

from an external cause, and then it is necessary to it, only in as much as the cause of motion acts on it. The difficulty is not changed; it remains the same.* * * *

“General and abstract ideas are the sources whence have sprung men’s greatest errors. These sophistical metaphysicians have never discovered a single truth; on the contrary they have filled Philosophy with absurdities, which stripped of their specious, plausible coverings, bring the contempt of men on their authors.

“Tell me, my friend, if, when you hear of blind force spread throughout nature, your mind conceives any real idea.

“Men using such expressions as *universal force, necessary motion,*

and the like, imagine that they say great things; while in reality, they say nothing. The idea of motion is the idea of change from one place to another. All motion must be in some special direction; for, an individual cannot move in all directions at once. In what direction, then, does matter necessarily move? Has all the matter in a body a uniform movement; or has each atom its own particular movement? If the first be true, then the entire universe must form one solid, indivisible mass; if the second, then the universe is nothing more than a fluid spread on all sides, and void of all cohesive power, so that it is impossible for two atoms to unite.

“In what direction will this movement common to all matter be made?”

Will it be in a straight line, upwards, downwards, to the right, or to the left? If each atom has its particular direction, where will we find the causes of all these directions and differences? If each molecule of matter would simply revolve about its centre, nothing would ever move from the position in which it had been placed, and there would be no movement communicated; besides, in any case, this circular movement would necessarily be directed towards some definite point. To give to matter movement by abstraction is to utter meaningless words; and to give to matter a determined, definite movement is to suppose a cause directing this movement." * * * *

"Give to matter the power of self-movement, and at once the order of

the universe is completely destroyed. The immovable mountain will immediately enter into action, and freely walk through our open country; the walls, which defend our castles, will leave the places they have occupied for centuries; the gold which for years you have hoarded up, will quit the place of safety to which you have committed it; the stick, which I let fall, will arise and return to my hand. Give to matter the power of producing various effects from the same causes, and the waters of the rivers will no longer flow in their proper channels; the falling stone will impede its own descent; the planets will wander in confusion through space; and the astronomer will find all calculation impossible.* * * *

“This force, which brute matter cannot possess, try to attribute to the vegetable kingdom, and the result will be, that the oak will arise from the seed of the orange-tree; the leaves of the poplar will cover the peach; and the farmer will never be certain that his seed will produce what he expects.

“Make matter essentially active, and you plunge the world into absolute chaos. This matter, then, is essentially dead in its rest, essentially passive, inert, slave in its action.”

Thus, Charles, is the absurdity of Ingersoll's idea fully exposed by an infidel, who, though he wandered far from the path of truth, never fell into the glaring inconsistencies which have made Ingersoll an ob-

ject of ridicule to every man of sense.

If the atheist would for a moment reflect, he would see that, according to his theory, there are effects without causes, paintings without painters, houses without builders; he must believe that the first man made himself, or, like the mushroom, grew up under an oak; he must confess that he is a beast, and that a tail is the only difference between himself and his dog.

CHAS.—In as far as I can see, uncle, you require a mover for the universe, because you do not believe in the eternity of matter; but Ingersoll says matter is eternal, and it seems to me that he could defend his assertion by contending that, in this world, there is an eternal succession of things.

UNCLE.—Such a line of argument would only serve to prove either that Ingersoll is lamentably ignorant, or that truth is a thing for which he entertains a supreme disregard. His every effort to defend himself only carries him farther out on the wild sea of absurdities, on which he has been launched by his intellectual pride.

The man, who would seriously affirm that he saw a solid block of boiling water hard as a rock, would certainly be regarded either as a consummate fool or an inveterate liar. A greater absurdity than this is Ingersoll's assertion, that matter is eternal; that, in the universe, things have been eternally succeeding one another. If this dream of our atheist were true, there would

be, in the universe, an eternal goose, a goose that never began to exist, that always was and forever will be; there would be an eternal city, an eternal horse, an eternal house, an eternal street, an eternal Ingersoll with an eternal hat, an eternal coat, an eternal pair of boots!!!

CHAS.—Uncle, you make all things eternal while Ingersoll only means that, from eternity, things have been succeeding one another in perpetual rotation, as in an infinite series or circle.

UNCLE.—If the Colonel really means what you assert, it is evident that, lawyer though he be, he does not clearly apprehend the real meaning of the words, time and eternity. Time essentially implies succession; eternity essentially excludes all suc-

cession. Change of any kind is necessarily connected with time; while it can, in no way, be reconciled with the eternal. Thus, you see, Charles, Ingersoll's eternal succession is an absurdity;—it is equivalent to eternal time, an evident contradiction.

This eternal-succession defence does not divest our atheist's idea of any of its absurdity, nor does it render the inconsistency of his system less patent.

Succession is necessarily the result either of creation, or of production. If the succession arises from creation, then there must be a Creator, a Being of infinite power,—a God; if it be brought about by production, then things either produce themselves, that is, before they are

they give themselves existence, or they are produced one from another, trees from trees, vegetables from vegetables, animals from animals.

Now, of course, Ingersoll will not admit that there is a Creator; and, though his brain seems to have a wonderful capacity for the absurd and ridiculous, yet he will not be so daring or reckless as to assert that things produce themselves. Hence, of necessity, our atheistical philosopher is forced to rest his theory on the supposition that, from all eternity, things have been produced one from another.

No matter from what standpoint we view this never-ending succession theory, we meet with the same inevitable absurdities. For instance, see how these speculations of our

nineteenth century atheist conflict with the phenomenon of continued production going on in the vegetable and animal kingdoms.

That there is in the world this constant production, is a fact demonstrated by Science, Common Sense, and daily experience, and believed by all men.

Now, the terms *produced*, *production*, necessarily imply a *producer*; and in following back the line of production, we must of necessity come to an absolute, independent, unproduced Power, the origin and source of all production. Thus, in spite of his sneers and ridicule Ingersoll will be forced to admit that "All wonderful little things must have had a producer, a maker."

Likewise, if he take the time and

trouble to follow up the Ingersollian line, he will at length come to the first great Ingersoll—the Ingersoll “behind whom,” he says, “there is nothing;” and then he must admit either that this first Ingersoll made himself, gave himself existence, or that there is a God.

To show even more clearly the ridiculous position in which Ingersoll now places himself, I will read for you an incident bearing directly on the subject we are considering: Some years ago, a young man, a native of one of the French provinces, was sent to Paris to complete his studies. Like many others, he had the misfortune to meet with bad companions. His own passions, together with the impious language of his comrades, soon led

him to a forgetfulness of the pious lessons of his mother, and to a contempt for Religion. He came to the point of wishing, and at length of saying, like the senseless creatures of whom the prophet speaks: *There is no God; God is only a word.* Incredulity always begins by saying these things, as it were, in a passing way; it is a plant that takes root only in corruption. After many years' residence in the capital, the young man returned to the bosom of his family.

CHAS.—Excuse my interruption, uncle; but it strikes me that you are perhaps placing this young man's character before my eyes as a mirror in which to view myself. If so, you certainly exaggerate my faults, and rashly judge me. While at college,

I never mingled with evil companions. So constant and strict was the vigilance of our professors with regard to the morality of our institution, that I really believe it was a shrine of purity and sanctity; certainly immorality and irreligion were unknown within its precincts. It was only after I left college, that I imbibed these new ideas which you condemn.

Moreover, I never denied the existence of God; though, to tell the truth, I sometimes thought that, if Ingersoll's speculations were correct, men might enjoy greater freedom, and be less restrained by moral obligations.

UNCLE.—I had not the slightest intention, Charles, of insinuating any similarity between you and the in-

dividual here described. My only object is to show how foolish and untenable is Ingersoll's theory of eternal succession. I will now continue the narrative:

The young man was invited one day to a very respectable house. There was a large company assembled. Whilst every one talked about news, pleasure, or business, two little girls, each twelve or thirteen years of age, were reading together seated in a recess of a window. The young man, approaching, said:

"What romance, ladies, are you reading with so much attention?"

"We are not, sir, reading any romance," they replied.

"Not a romance! What book, then, pray?"

“We are reading the *History of the People of God.*”

“*The History of the People of God!* Do you, then, believe also that there is a God?”

Astonished at such a question, the young girls looked at each other, their faces covered with blushes.

“And you, sir,” said the elder, “do you not believe it?”

“I believed it once,” replied the young man, “but since going to reside in Paris, where I have studied philosophy, mathematics, medicine, and politics, I have been convinced that God is only a word.”

“As for me, sir,” answered the little girl, “I have never been in Paris; I have never studied philosophy, or mathematics, or those other fine things, which you know: I know

little more than my catechism. But since you are so learned, and say there is no God, will you tell me, what does an egg come from?"

The child pronounced these words in so clear a tone of voice as to be heard by a portion of the company.

A few persons drew nigh to know what was the matter; others followed; and finally the whole company assembled around the window to hear the dialogue.

"Yes, sir," continued the child, "since you say there is no God, be so good as to tell me, what does an egg come from?"

"An amusing question! an egg comes from a hen."

"And what does the hen come from?"

“The young lady knows as well as I; a hen comes from an egg.”

“Very well; but which of the two existed first, the egg or the hen?”

“I certainly do not know what you want to make of your eggs and your hens; but, in a word, that which existed first was the hen.”

“There was then a hen which did not come from an egg?”

“Ah! pardon me, Miss, I was not paying attention; it was the egg that existed first.”

“There was then an egg which did not come from a hen? Answer me, sir.”

“Ah! if—pardon me—I mean—because—you see—”

“What I see, sir, is, that you do not know whether the egg existed before the hen, or the hen before the egg.”

“Well! I say it was the hen.”

“Be it so. There was then a hen which did not come from an egg. Tell me, now, who created this first hen, from which all other hens and eggs have come!”

“With your hens and your eggs, you seem to take me for a girl from the poultry-yard.”

“Pardon me, sir, I merely ask you to tell me, whence came the mother of all hens.”

“But, to end the matter—”

“Since you do not know, permit me to tell you.

“He who created the first hen, or the first egg, whichever you please, is the same Being that created the world, and we call him God. You cannot, sir, without God, explain the existence of an egg or a hen, and

yet, without God, you pretend to explain the existence of the world!"

The young infidel asked no more questions; he stealthily seized his hat and disappeared: "*As much ashamed,*" remarked one of the company, "*as a fox that had been caught by a hen.*"

I now, Charles, present this same problem to the learned lawyer, Mr. Ingersoll, knowing that, with all his knowledge and wisdom, unless he admits the existence of God, he will be forced to the absurd conclusion that there was a hen that made herself, or an egg that sprung into existence by its own power.

CHAS.—But, perhaps, uncle, Ingersoll will attempt to save himself by contending that, in the universe, there is neither a first nor a last; it

is an immense, endless chain, without beginning or end.

UNCLE.—This is but another Ingersollian bubble, which bursts when exposed to the slightest breath of Common Sense. Every position taken by the Colonel involves him in greater difficulties, and renders his theory more ridiculous.

If this universe be an endless chain, then in this chain there is neither a first link nor a last link; and all the links are of necessity connected with one another;—otherwise the chain would not be endless.

Likewise, all the links are equally essential to the whole chain, and hence all must have sprung into existence simultaneously with the formation of the chain.

This chain, if endless, does not

admit of increase; for there is no place in which a new link can be inserted, no end to which an addition can be made; hence, an endless chain and continued production are absolute contradictions.

No one can make an endless chain until he possesses all the links necessary; and while the links are being connected, the chain is not endless;—it has two ends, even if one of them be cut off!! A chain becomes endless only by the union of the first and last links; and consequently anything capable of receiving an addition cannot be endless. An endless chain of men, then, means that all men are of the same age, all eternal. Ingersoll is a link in this endless chain, and therefore he is eternal; his great-grand children, if he

has any, are links in this chain, and consequently they likewise are eternal,—as old as their great-grand pap.

Again, Ingersoll's chain ceases to be endless, if any one link be taken from it; hence, according to this theory, nothing in the universe can die or be deprived of existence. Thus, you see, Charles, that when Ingersoll says, "This universe is the one eternal being, the only thing that ever did, does, or can exist," he substantially asserts that every man every child, every *goose*, every *mule*, every *donkey* in *creation* is *eternal*.

Perhaps Ingersoll would like to have this endless chain system introduced into our schools!

I think, Charles, that I have now said sufficient to show you that In-

gersoll's idea is pure, unmitigated nonsense. In fact, his every word, his every action, his whole life gives the lie to his idea, and reveals the absurdities contained in his system. If matter be self-acting, as Ingersoll supposes, then his eyes, his ears, his hands are useless to him. For, matter essentially active, cannot be possessed of the property of passivity, and hence it cannot be acted upon, nor can it receive any impression. Now, every time Ingersoll sees, hears, or receives anything, his eyes, his ears, his hands are acted upon, are passive; and hence he constantly lies to his idea, lies to himself, and lies to the world.

To say then, "The universe is eternal," is a greater absurdity than to say that the milk, which Mr. In-

gersoll drinks, comes not from a cow, but from a gander, a pump-handle, or a rain spout!

CHAS.—Enough, enough, uncle; really never before did I imagine that Atheism is such a monstrous absurdity. Do you think that the system whose principles warrant the nonsensical conclusions you have deduced, will ever be adopted in the schools of our Republic?

UNCLE.—Easier would it be for Ingersoll to turn the Mississippi from its channel than to pervert our nation's belief in an overruling Providence. Have you, Charles, already forgotten our conversations of last November? You must certainly remember that then I proved to your satisfaction, that the common sentiment of mankind is an infalli-

ble proof of the truth; that the belief of the human race cannot be mistaken; and that whoever opposes this belief cannot be in the right. Now, we know that, at all times and in all ages, mankind has constantly believed in the existence of a God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe; and do you think that the American people, a nation noted for its good, practical common sense, will be so foolish, so mad as to reject the sacred belief of ages to follow the silly vagaries of Col. Robert Ingersoll? The past is a sufficient guarantee that such a calamity will never befall our country.

From times reaching far back into the misty ages of remote antiquity, men like Ingersoll have been laboring with satanic fury to eradicate

from the face of the earth all traces of the living God, and to impose on society their false, destructive dreams. How futile have been their diabolical efforts history shows.

But a few months ago in the city of Philadelphia one of these agents of darkness, a woman—a disgrace to her sex—delivered a lecture, at the conclusion of which one of the audience said in a loud voice: “If I had never believed in the existence of God, now I would certainly be convinced of that truth.”

As the fierce, angry storm, shaking, bending, tossing, threatening the trees of the forest, proves a real benefit to them, forcing their roots deeper and deeper into firm soil, so do the most furious attacks of God’s

enemies serve His interests by causing belief in His existence to penetrate more deeply and more solidly into the hearts of our people. This belief is the soul, the life of our Constitution. Our Thanksgiving Day is a national monument eloquently attesting our country's belief in the existence of an Omnipotent Providence. Our coins impressed with the theistic motto, "In God we trust," are a lasting declaration of America's allegiance to the Ruler of the universe.

Fear not, Charles; our citizens' practical common sense, and their love of country, justice and morality will ever preserve our nation from being tainted with the foul teachings of Ingersollism. Never will the hideous viper, Atheism, be able to

fasten its poisonous fangs in the hearts and minds of the defenders of the "Star-spangled Banner."

CHAS.—Like yourself, uncle, I now am convinced that our people are proof against all Ingersoll's cunning, wicked efforts to withdraw them from the service of their God; and I feel satisfied that, in America's pure, sacred soil, the poisonous weed, Atheism, will never take root.

But, here, I must ask you to throw some light on what appears to me an inexplicable contradiction. In the estimation of his countrymen, Ingersoll is a man of learning and ability, a man capable of drawing a logical conclusion from given premises; hence, I do not understand how he can conceive and openly publish the extravagant, nonsensical theo-

ries, in which he seems to pride himself. Certainly he must be influenced by very powerful motives.

UNCLE.—To your youth and inexperience, Charles, must be attributed your inability to perceive the motives actuating Ingersoll's conduct. Had you a more thorough acquaintance of human nature, and had you mingled more freely with men of the world, you would readily discover the reasons that have prompted Ingersoll to boldly, loudly declare himself the enemy of the Omnipotent God. In parading his nonsensical speculations before the world, it may be, indeed, that Ingersoll has no malicious purpose in view, it may be that he does not intend to do society any real injury; but, like most mortals, Ingersoll is

proud and conceited; he is a slave crouching at the feet of the tyrannical mistress, Vanity. Ingersoll is not the first man that has made a laughing-stock of himself, by following the suggestions whispered in his ear by Vanity.

Our atheist wishes to be talked about, longs to gain notoriety; and for this end he sacrifices truth, sacrifices his soul, and betrays his God, his Creator, his Saviour. To be considered original, independent, singular, he raises his tiny voice against the belief of the world; to hold within his grasp the bubble of human applause, he ridicules the sacredness of religion, defies heaven.

Besides vanity there is another power, that urges Ingersoll on in the mad impious course he is pursuing.

He is a thorough utilitarian; he loves life and its luxuries, and directs all his energies to the obtaining of that without which, in his estimation, happiness is impossible—the glittering gold—hard cash. Money is his best friend, his idol: he loves it, he adores it. A dollar gained by blaspheming God, and duping shallow minds is, in his eyes, a dollar easily, shrewdly, and honorably earned.

Do not imagine, Charles, that men like Ingersoll believe in their hearts what they profess with their mouths. Some three thousand years ago, a writer acknowledged by Jews and Christians to have been inspired, declared that only the fool says in his heart, "There is no God." Atheists do not

deny the existence of God, because their reason forbids assent to this truth; no, their denial springs from another source. Man hates the duties, the sacrifices, the restraints, laid on him by God; he wishes to follow the bent of his evil inclinations; he detests whatever is hard to flesh and blood; to wage a constant warfare against his passions is a task too onerous for him; hence, to free himself from these burthensome yokes, to give full reins to his unruly passions, he denies that there is a Supreme Ruler, who has the right to impose moral obligations on him,—he denies that there is a God. Here lies the secret of atheism; and rest assured, Charles, that in the whole range of mathematics there is no truth which the

atheist would not doubt, dispute, deny, if it involved a practical moral, precept, duty, or obligation.

Remember, I do not speak to judge or condemn Ingersoll. From my heart I pity the man; and I hope that, before death summons him from this world, he will have opened his eyes to his sad state, rejected his errors, and embraced the truth.

I have shown you, Charles, that foolishness is the distinguishing characteristic of Ingersoll's pet idea, —and would that I could say that foolishness is the worst feature of this man's teachings;—but, unfortunately, the system he advocates is not only silly and absurd—it is also dangerous, pernicious, destructive of society, of morality, of all virtue. Ingersoll's theory, practically devel-

oped, does away with the criminality of murder, and sanctions every imaginable crime. In trying to destroy our nation's belief in a God, before whose tribunal every human being must answer for even his most secret actions, Ingersoll strikes a blow at the very foundation of society, frees man from all moral responsibility, and scatters broadcast the sparks of a conflagration, which, if unchecked, would eventually make a dreary waste of our now happy, smiling land.

Ingersoll boasts of his patriotism, of his disinterested love for his country; while, in reality, he is a greater enemy to this nation than were the authors of the Rebellion of 1861. The Southern Confederacy covered the face of our country with misery

and distress; dyed battle-fields with the blood of our best citizens, crushed noble, generous hearts; made happy homes desolate, and brought our nation to the very verge of bankruptcy;—but Ingersoll, unknowingly of course, threatens us with far greater calamities. The people of the South did not aim at the total destruction of the Republic; they simply wished to secede from those States, which, in their opinion, menaced the existence of institutions sanctioned by law and highly advantageous to their interests; while Ingersoll and his associates by their blasphemous teachings, justify every uprising against our Government, and render it lawful for any body of conspirators to seek the complete overthrow of our grand Union.

When Ingersoll says there is no God, he substantially declares that there is no authority above the magistrates of the land; and hence whoever escapes punishment from human tribunals, has nothing more to fear.

“No God” means that every crime against the State or individual ceases to be a crime if not discovered by the officers of the law. “No God” means that there is no divine law; that every evil action receives its malice or criminality from the fact of its being prohibited by human legislation; and that what our rulers cannot punish is beyond the reach of all punishment. According to Ingersoll’s theory, secret dynamiters, embezzlers, black-mailers, incendiaries, murderers, adulterers, parri-

cides, fratricides are all free from guilt, deserve no punishment, unless apprehended; for there is no power in heaven, on earth, or in hell by which justice can be meted out to them. The man, who, without danger of detection, can appropriate to himself the property of his neighbor is, Atheism says, a fool, if he does not take advantage of the proferred occasion. If, while carrying a sum of money to his house, Ingersoll is met in a solitary spot by a man, and is relieved of his treasure, he has no right to complain; that robber will never be suspected and has committed no crime.

There are thousands of men, whose dark, sinful deeds will never be known on this side of the grave; thousands, whose vicious lives are a

public scandal, but whom money, intrigues or friends shield from the arm of Justice; and yet these men have nothing to dread, nothing to bring the blush of shame to their cheeks; in fact, the more criminal they are, the more fully they satisfy their passions, the more strictly they follow their evil propensities, provided they steer safe of human tribunals, the more exalted will they be, the greater name will they gain for themselves.

If there be no God, our national government is founded on a lie, and our courts of justice are but mere farces. It is laid down in our statute books as a fundamental principle that the man who denies the existence of God, not only is unfit to hold any position of trust in our na-

tion, but is even debarred the right of appearing as a witness in any court in the land. What then would become of our government, of our public institutions, if we were a nation of atheists, if the men elected to our offices of authority were Ingersollians disqualified to take the oaths required by our constitution? How quickly would our courts of justice lose their power and sacredness, if juries and witnesses could not be bound under oath. Thus, you see, Charles, what a deadly enemy Atheism is to our beloved country, and how directly it is opposed to the best, the wisest, the most salutary institutions in the land.

Ignorance of the real meaning and logical consequences of words used,

may serve as an excuse for the utterances of an uneducated man; but such an apology can never be advanced by an expert, a Colonel, a member of the bar, a public lecturer. The simple assertion that he intended to do no harm, will not excuse the druggist, who knowingly administers a poisonous draught to a customer. Will the man, who carelessly discharges his revolver into a crowd be exonerated from blame by his declaring that he wished to injure no one, he merely desired to create a little excitement?

Will any one then be so senseless as to attempt to defend or excuse the bold, impudent Atheist, who knowingly and openly insults every man holding office under our government?

In the public discourses of Ingersoll, our honored President, our respected governors, our learned judges, in a word, all the officers of this free Republic, are ridiculed, treated as simpletons, because they believe in God. Every atheistical speech of Ingersoll's is an insult to the heroes, who swore fidelity to the "Stars and Stripes," and sacrificed their fortunes, their lives, their all in their country's cause. Ingersoll's blasphemous lectures are an insult to every grave holding the honored remains of the martyrs who fought and died in defence of the Union—for they all swore in God's presence, to be true to the land of their birth. Ingersoll meanly, cruelly insults every man, woman and child professing belief in an Om-

nipotent Providence. He says he is the friend of the people,—but a friend does not insult a friend; while Ingersoll deeply wounds our citizens in their tenderest feelings, sneers at their most sacred belief, ridicules their fondest hope, and laughs to scorn the petitions sent by their sad, grieved hearts to the throne of Divine Mercy.

CHAS.—You have proved to my satisfaction, uncle, that the American people will never embrace Ingersoll's foolish theories; yet you say this man's teachings are dangerous to society, destructive of all morality, and hostile to the best interests of our country. Now, does it not seem that here you contradict yourself? Certainly, I do not understand how a system rejected and

condemned by a nation, can be productive of harm to that nation.

UNCLE.—It is a sad, though often illustrated fact, Charles, that an evil system does not require the sanction or acceptance of a nation to produce the pernicious results intended by its founders and promoters. Error is bold, daring, reckless; it moves with rapidity, stealthily enters the domain of truth, and marks its every step with ruin and desolation.

Though we have never adopted any system for the propagation of sickness and bodily infirmities, and though our country is liberally supplied with learned doctors and potent remedies, yet what household in the land has not been brought to grief by that dread visitor—Disease?

Certainly, no one will dare say that our government sanctions any system for the introduction and dissemination of vice, and yet behold the shocking immorality, the bold, shameful wickedness disgracing every State in the Union. In spite of our laws, our courts, our prisons, our scaffolds, to deter men from crime, what a spectacle of sin and shame do our newspapers daily present us! Error, like a wild weed, often springs up among the choicest plants in the garden of truth, and, though neglected and despised, flourishes, poisons the surrounding atmosphere and with its withering breath kills the fairest flowers that blossom in the moral, intellectual paradise this world presents to man.

Although our people, as a nation,

will never embrace Ingersoll's absurd system, yet you must remember, Charles, that in this, as in other countries, there are men whose only occupation, it would seem, is to spread vice; men who eagerly grasp at any shadow that will justify their criminal lives or further their wicked ends. The truth of what I affirm has been clearly, strikingly illustrated by the shocking scenes of lawlessness, rioting, bloodshed, and anarchy, that have recently disgraced New York, St. Louis, Chicago, and other great important cities of our Union. Through the agency of a few mischief-plotters, sworn enemies of law and order, our land has been filled with confusion and disorder, happy homes have been rendered desolate, thousands of fami-

lies plunged into misery, our industries crippled, and our whole nation, financially, socially and morally, has received a wound which only years will heal.

The French Commune of 1870 is a striking example of the immense amount of evil that can be effected by a handful of shrewd, determined men of this class. These evil-doers, these workers of iniquity, gladly place themselves under the standard of a man like Ingersoll; for, in the principles advocated by such a leader, they see a plausible defence for their sinful lives,—in Atheism they find a cloak that will lend an air of respectability to their impious, dishonest, immoral actions.

Moreover, these depraved wretches wish to draw into their disgraceful

ranks the pure and the innocent; and for this purpose they spread on all sides the poisonous teachings of Ingersoll, and laud to the skies their idolized atheist. To save the young, the unsuspecting, the incorrupted from these human wolves, we must reveal the hidden deformity of atheistical doctrines presented to the public under specious coverings; we must make manifest the falsehood, the malice lurking in the plausible arguments of these deadly enemies of society. Yes, Charles, Ingersoll's system is a system of crime, of wickedness, of poison, of death. It leads the young man from the path of virtue, and plunges him into the dark abyss of sin and misery. Belief in God serves as a powerful restraint on the passions of men, preserves millions from

a life of shame and a death of ignominy and leads all to true virtue, to lasting happiness; while Ingersoll's doctrine of "no God" makes men slaves to their beastly inclinations, incites them to crime, and, at the end of their mortal career, opens to them the vision of a miserable eternity.

CHAS.—Considering, all that you have said, uncle, it seems astonishing that the people should manifest such an eagerness to attend Ingersoll's lectures. One would imagine that the public regarded the notorious atheist as an oracle.

UNCLE.—Well, Charles, you must remember that we Americans are a nation of sight-seers; our people have an almost insatiable craving for the curious, the strange, the abnormal, the monstrous.

There are thousands in the land whose sole occupation is to supply food to appease this morbid appetite of our nation. Our nightly-crowded theatres, our much-frequented menageries, our largely-patronized railroads bear witness to this fact. The masses follow Ingersoll in the same spirit in which they follow Barnum's clown, or Forepaugh's big elephant. As a rule, our people are not over particular in the choice of their amusements and recreations; they are constantly on the alert for anything, no matter how insignificant, that will afford them an hour's laughter or diversion.

To say, then, that our people attend Ingersoll's lectures in the hope of being instructed in the truth, or

of receiving any useful information is an insult to our nation. At heart, our citizens despise Ingersoll and contemn his teachings.

Mormonism, though a disgrace and abomination in our land, has its city, its temples, its meeting-houses; while the monster Atheism has not a single village or hamlet, in which it can freely, independently raise its head or wag its tail.

Atheism, Charles, is the absurdity of absurdities; it is the foulest blot, the darkest page in the history of man.

The atheist is a disgrace to human nature—he stands alone in his impiety, and is condemned by the voices of even irrational and inanimate nature. “There is a God,” says the illustrious Chateau-

briand,—“the herbs of the valley, the cedars of the mountains, bless him—the insect sports in his beams—the elephant salutes him with the rising orb of the day—the bird sings him in the foliage—the thunder proclaims him in the heavens—the ocean declares his immensity—man alone has said, ‘There is no God!’ ”

THE END.

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