

innocence could be "conveyed" to their executioners. Numberless illustrations of a like character readily spring up in the mind when contemplating this subject.

We quote again:

"The Christian is not a supernatural person, filled with supernatural truth. He is a natural person, and all that he knows of value can be naturally imparted. It is within his power to give all that he has to the Agnostic."

It is no more within the power of the Christian to impart to the Agnostic the knowledge of spiritual truths he may possess, unless the Agnostic be willing and able to receive it, than it is within the power of the Agnostic to deprive the Christian of that knowledge. The Agnostic has the power to prevent the Christian's knowledge from taking root in his mind, despite the Christian's efforts to plant it there. To this extent most men are able, by an exercise of the will, to measurably protect their minds against receiving knowledge which they do not desire.

The last sentence of the last quotation expresses an idea which is flagrantly incorrect. Were it indeed within the Christians "power to give all that he has to the Agnostic," how long would there be any Agnostics? How long before the stubborn negative which possesses their minds would be replaced by the affirmative hope, the confiding faith, and the personal knowledge of spiritual things, which the Christian possesses, and is so eager to impart to all men?

Ingersoll might answer that this hope, faith and knowledge are nothing, that it is impossible for one person to give a nothing to another, and that this is the reason why the Christian cannot give that which he claims to have to the Agnostic. This idea is plainly conveyed in the article under consideration, though it is not specifically stated. It follows then that the impulses which move the Christian world are nothings, and that the Agnostics are contending against nothings; yet these nothings are the most potent factors of human life and history.

The following sentences are also incorrect:

"There is also this fact that must not be overlooked: that is, that just in the proportion that the brain is developed it requires more evidence, and becomes less and less credulous. Ignorance and credulity go hand in hand."

The more the brain of a given man is developed, the more that

man will be prepared to believe. The development of his brain gives him increased power to comprehend truth, and the more truth he comprehends the more he will give credence to, accept, assimilate and utilize. He is compelled to believe that truth which he comprehends; hence to say that he believes less and less as his brain develops is to say that he comprehends less and less as that process progresses.

Again, a man having, by a development of the intellect, acquired one truth, is better prepared than before to believe in the existence of a second truth, and that it may be reached; and the oftener this experience is repeated the more credulous does he become respecting the existence and accessibility of new realms of truth. Intellectual development increases the power and propensity to believe, and Ingersoll's declaration to the contrary is a flat contradiction of the every day experience and observation of men, as well as natural law.

"Ignorance and credulity" do not "go hand in hand," but ignorance, suspicion and doubt are inseparable. The less a person knows the harder it is to teach him, or make him believe, a truth which is new to him; but the more a person knows the easier it is to induce him to accept new truths.

It will of course be understood that the knowledge which leads a person to readily accept new truths, to have that effect, must belong to the same department of intelligence as the new truths. Thus a person, ignorant of other sciences but learned in astronomy, would accept a new truth pertaining to that science, and would appreciate its value, far more readily than would a person learned in the branches but ignorant of astronomy. Some persons are more learned, that is have acquired more knowledge and intelligence respecting that department of science which embraces religion, than others, and are, for that reason, better prepared to accept and appreciate the truths of that science than are persons who have not acquired a knowledge of it.

Only a portion of the errors committed by Ingersoll in the article under consideration are here considered. It is a more reckless production, in regard to its erroneous statements, sophistical reasoning and unwarranted assumptions, than even he ordinarily puts forth. He has a brilliant, dazzling literary style, which passes for sound reasoning with some people, but

when his premises and conclusions are examined in the light of pure intelligence, it will be seen that they are honeycombed with error and false philosophy.

"MORMON" MISSIONARIES.

THE New York *Herald* makes some sensible comments, and some not quite up to that mark, on the agitation of certain feeble minds over reported conversions to "Mormonism" in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

These reports are gross exaggerations. Such communications are likely to be, while prominent papers are eager to receive sensational rumors and publish them as news. But whether they be within the bounds of truth or not, "Mormon" missionaries have a perfect right to proselyte in any State of the Union, so long as they do not violate the law, or advise or assist in its infraction. The Elders who labor in the South do neither. It is so admitted even by persons who favor violence against them. The *Herald* says in regard to the alleged successful labors of the "Mormon" missionaries:

"Well, can you do anything except shrug your shoulders? You may indorse the remark of Puck, 'What fools these mortals be!' but that is about all. If a free born American citizen thinks it necessary to his salvation to stand on his head three times a day, there is no law to prevent his doing so. The great constitution of the United States protects him, and if he is denied his rights it would be perfectly proper to call out our little bit of an army and summon our few iron-clads to see that he stands on his head without interference. There is no spot on the globe where one has such perfect freedom either to be a wise man or an idiot."

Referring to the polygamy question the *Herald* says:

"Even then, however, the law does not step in until the theory has been reduced to practice. If a man merely talks about the propriety of having eight or ten wives, and is ambitious to buy spring bonnets for a numerous family, we generally leave him undisturbed in the possession of his nonsense."

The New York *Herald* ought to know, by this time, that the "Mormon" Elders who are preaching the Gospel in the United States or elsewhere, do not preach or advocate polygamy, nor even refer to it unless desired to explain it. They are not sent for that purpose. Their mission does not relate to it. But under the Constitution and laws of this country they have the right to do so, and no one has the right to prevent them by violence. A man