

MODERN INFIDELS VS. INGERSOLL.

Father T. H. Malone, the eloquent Catholic priest, delivered his famous lecture on Modern Infidels vs. Ingersoll before a large, intelligent and appreciative audience at the Grand Opera house Sunday night for the benefit of St. Ann's orphanage. All the religious denominations in the city were represented and not a few persons who are unidentified with any faith were observed to be most attentive listeners. The lecture was entirely void of any semblance of abuse or objectionable personality and was a powerful plea for the Christian life. On the stage with the speaker were President George Q. Cannon, Hon. John T. Caine and Judge McNally.

The speaker was introduced by President George Q. Cannon, who in a few brief and appropriate remarks stated that he was greatly pleased to see so large and intelligent an audience present. The theme to be discussed was one of profound interest to every person who believed in God and Christ. The fame of Father Malone was such that he needed no extended introduction or eulogy. We had all heard more or less of the "mistakes of Moses" and were now to witness the pointing out of and listen to some of the mistakes of Ingersoll. Here Father Malone stepped to the front and was received, like President Cannon before him, with a round of applause.

The lecturer said that Christianity needed no apologies. Its glorious work for mankind in all ages since its introduction upon earth was self-evident and convincing. Its grand achievements could not be belittled by any or all of the sophistry of modern or ancient infidelity. The latter had raised its head again and again from the beginning in opposition to Christianity. Christianity was the only religion that has successfully combatted the demon Atheism. Christianity bids defiance to atheists and atheism, to infidels and infidelity and offers hope, solace and encouragement to the downtrodden and oppressed. It permeates the lives of persons and shapes their destiny. It banishes the woes of mankind and gives joy and satisfaction in lieu thereof. It is the light penetrating the darkness. It illuminates the paths and makes their journey easier to travel, their burdens lighter to bear. What dew is to the withering and drooping flower religion is to the misery and wretchedness of man. It professes peace to all mankind and points out the way to present comfort and future happiness. It breeds nothing but purest delight. Its magic influence calms the ruffled sea of life, removes the sting of death, and gives an assurance of a passport from mortality to immortality.

There have been, reiterated the speaker, infidels in all ages. But all had been answered and their vagaries refuted by Christian contemporaries. There was only one great infidel in this country and his name was Robert G. Ingersoll. He was proficient in his use and application of the English language; he was an orator of transcendent ability; in nearly all things sympathetic and altogether popularly equipped for the espousing of any cause of important or other moment. He lacked, however, the industry,

originality and profound erudition of such noted infidels as Huxley, Darwin, Spencer, Fiske and La Coute, and out of the mouths of these men he proposed to refute and confound the general colonel. Ingersoll was an infidel of the old school—or of the eighteenth century. His opinions had come from the infidelic encyclopedia of 1751. The infidels of that period reasoned that everything old was wrong and that everything new must be right. They took the position and declared in season and out that Christianity and its doctrines were ingenious devices of priests for the enouraging and subjugation of mankind. Fiske had conceded and plainly stated that some of the railings against the Christian religion was the very anarchy of thought and action. All well informed infidels have unhesitatingly said that the eighteenth century atheistical arguments have all been thoroughly answered. The only noteworthy exception is found in the case of the infidel Ingersoll who is hooting the same old notes that were hooted out more than a hundred years ago.

Father Malone here quoted extracts from the meetings of Col. Ingersoll in which he railed in characteristic style against the Christian religion and asked what could be the mental construction of men whose minds were thus lost to the truth. These assaults were simply the mystifying and meaningless phraseology of Mr. Ingersoll. Huxley even in his opposition was mainly enough to admit Christianity was interwoven into everything that was good and elevating in human affairs; that it was the Magna Charta of the poor and oppressed; that the Bible was the most democratic book in the world; that the human race is not now nor will it ever be in a position to dispense with it.

Ingersoll declares that wherever the Bible has been believed woman has been enslaved. The very opposite of this, contended Father Malone, was the truth. Before Christ woman was the toy, pastime and pleasure of man but with the advent of Christianity came her emancipation. As Richelieu drew a charmed circle around his king so has the church drawn a circle about woman and her virtue, and to the man that dares violate it, be he king upon the throne or peasant in the field, at him does and will the church continue to hurl its anathemas. All that is best in the modern world, say some of Ingersoll's brother infidels, is the outgrowth of old Israel.

"Colonel Ingersoll," said Father Malone, "is continually prating about 'modern science and modern thought.' A very superficial glance over the many lectures written and delivered by this so-called champion of modern science will disclose the fact that he knows absolutely nothing of modern science, nor does he even know aught of the literature of modern infidelity. This may seem startling to many; it is nevertheless true."

"Mr. Ingersoll, of course, has a theory of the origin of the universe. Those who are at all familiar with Robert's lectures know that any theory of his must of necessity be scientific. It must have the endorsement of the whole scientific hierarchy before it could be permitted to float in the airy chamber of Bob's most stupendous in-

tellect. What is the modern conception of the universe he seeks? You see by this that anything that comes under the head of 'modern' passes muster with the colonel, 'that the universe always has been and ever will be.' Now this is most certainly not the true theory. Is it, then, the modern theory? Ingersoll means by 'modern theory' that theory which infidels teach. Herbert Spencer is surely a modern infidel. Does he teach this theory?"

The speaker quoted from Mr. Spencer's well known work on the first principles of philosophy. Mr. Spencer takes exactly the opposite position from Colonel Ingersoll and maintains that the theory of the origin of the universe held by Colonel Ingersoll and his followers is absolutely unthinkable. He also quoted from John Stuart Mill's "System of Logic," showing that many of Ingersoll's metaphysical propositions were rejected by this great infidel. Father Malone then read extensively from the lectures of Colonel Ingersoll, showing that gentleman's well known opinions concerning Christianity. In reply he said:

"Christian historians have answered a d re-answered these ignorant and malicious assertions again and again, until the repetition has become truly painful. For a time it was thought that the last had been heard of them, but here comes Robert G. Ingersoll and, in total ignorance of what has been done by Christian scholars, brings forth from the limbo of exploded absurdities the vaporings of Voltaire and Paine. It is truly a humiliating spectacle. You know Ingersoll poses as a champion of modern thought and modern science. And yet I defy him to point to the works of a single philosophic historian, Christian or infidel, who makes such charges against the church of G d.

"Ingersoll may chose either horn of the dilemma he desires. He is either a falsifier or an impostor. He measures the universe by his own reason. John Stuart Mills, the brightest star of the infidel constellation, takes plainly the position that man's capacity or incapacity to comprehend a truth prover or disproves nothing. This omission is Ingersoll's greatest sin; everything that fails to equal with his comprehension is cast aside. He claims to be a brave man, but no man is brave who will assault and defame defenseless women as Ingersoll has done everywhere between the two oceans of this continent. On and off the platform—everywhere he has declared that the Roman Catholic convents are hot beds of iniquity and sin. He wanted a commission appointed to inspect at least twice a year the interior of these convents and consult with the inmates thereof and see if they could not be induced to come out. The attacks made upon the religious orders of women whose lives are devoted to the welfare of suffering humanity, are the outgrowth of ignorance or malice. The present wave of religious bigotry, much of which finds expression in the un-Christian and malicious utterances against the sisterhood of the country, has had no more potent factor in its development and spread than Robert G. Ingersoll. In season and out of