

vealed religion is more of a freethinker than true believers are. On the same principle the term "Rationalist" is no more exclusively appropriate than the other, but neither of them conveys anything censurable or opprobrious.

We would just as readily call Mr. Ellis a "Rationalist" as a "Freethinker," if that would suit him better. At the same time we think that "Mormons" who understood the genius and scope of their religion, are rationalists in the fullest sense of the term as well as free thinkers to the utmost possible limits.

We do not regard the terms "freethinker" and "infidel" as synonymous. The former is much preferred by people who, because of their lack of belief in commonly accepted ideas, are commonly classed as infidels. We are all "infidels" in regard to some things. We should all be freethinkers in reference to all things. There are limits to thought and there are some things we know, which anchor our belief and thought and therefore absolute freethinking may be said to be impossible. But it is in the ordinary sense of the term we wish to be understood.

Persons who take the ground that everything not "in the Church" must be wrong, or who are opposed to anything that might turn a dollar from them are not in accord with the Church themselves. "Mormonism," pure and simple, recognizes truth, right and goodness wherever it may, be and is utterly unselfish in spirit and principle. It is also the very essence of freedom. It teaches its adherents to recognize the right of every person to his free belief or unbelief, and also his free action to the line of interference with the rightful action of others.

We do not condemn any one either because he does not believe or because he disbelieves what we hold to be true. We recognize the good motives and the courageous actions of Mr. Ellis in his battle against what he believes to be wrong. And we only regret that he is not as able to receive that which we believe to be divine, as he is to resist and fight against that which he regards as inhuman and evil. At the same time we are convinced that every man will be rewarded "according to his works," and that many who have been dubbed infidel and regarded as enemies to Christianity, will shine far brighter in the mansions of the Father than some of their censors who have professed great faith and boasted of spiritual power, but to whom a righteous Judge will say: "Depart from me, I never knew you, ye perverters of the truth and workers of iniquity."

CONCERNING THE CIVIL SERVICE.

A FIERCE and never tiring defender of the spoils system in the civil service, notably the New York Sun, asks why should congressmen have no voice in the appointment from their respective States, and by way of emphasizing its opinion on the subject cites the case of Abraham Lincoln applying to General Schenck for official influence in procuring a position in the land office department. The fact that the said "influence" when exerted by so eminent a person as Mr. Schenck was not successful, causes the Sun to inquire why "Congressmen like Gen. Schenck should be forbidden to exert their influence in favor of applicants like Abraham Lincoln."

Probably the answer which sensible civil service reformers would make to this query is that whenever congressman becomes a General Schenck and every applicant an Abraham Lincoln, there will be no need of civil service reform, and no purpose in discussing such a question pro or con. In the meantime the question is equally irrelevant, for both Mr. Schenck and Mr. Lincoln are dead, and there is not at this date any public evidences of their having left any disciples who could becomingly fill their places in this civil service controversy.

What such reformers as Mr. George William Curtis are contending for, and we believe he can speak authoritatively for them all, is permanent and sure arrangements by which such men as Mr. Lincoln may fill any office in the country, and not be under the necessity of selling themselves out for congressional influence in order to be safely landed in the positions sought by them.

It is observed that, as in the case quoted by the Sun, in the conflict for office under the "influence" arrangement, the Lincolns as a rule receive only congressional condolence for their pains, while some other man with neither qualification nor honesty, whose congressional backer is in touch with the Administration gains the office.

This government clerkship and general appointment business has been greatly enlarged since the editor of the Sun first began to defend his spoils doctrine. At that time the labor of distributing their influence was not so great a tax upon congressmen, and they could work it with respectable success along with their regular official duties.

But now things are different. It has been publicly demonstrated that congressmen who conscientiously fulfil the expectations of their office-seeking con-

stituency, have not enough time left to even read the bills which they vote upon. Besides this the Government has had to furnish them each a special clerk at its expense, whose time is likewise in great part devoted to incidental duties growing out of these "influence" matters.

The President himself is equally burdened with his influence work. If he attends to it with respectable punctuality, the first two years of his administration is claimed exclusively by the office applicants and their several congressional advocates. Then begins the preparatory work for the next four years among the politicians, and between the office seekers and the office-workers, about all the people get from the Administration, run upon Mr. Dana's plan; is his annual message, which is liable to be written by his private secretary, and we might add to this also as a thing worth considering, the interesting newspaper literature inspired by objectionable appointments.

It is to relieve the President and congressmen from this arduous and expensive duty, and give them an opportunity to attend to their legitimate business, that the civil service reformers are advocating a discontinuance of the ancient and venerable spoils system. It is a work of philanthropy as well as national economy.

MR. BLAIR OF MASSACHUSETTS.

At least one American politician of this period has found himself more famous than was profitable to his aspirations. The ordeal which Mr. Henry W. Blair is undergoing through his appointment to be minister to China is a striking illustration of how extremely difficult and hazardous a thing it is to be a statesman.

During Mr. Blair's career in the senate he was the champion of some very important measures. Some became law only after arduous and repeated struggles and some, conspicuously the famous educational bill, were under the friction of debate so long as to be fairly worn to a shadow before the final issue could be reached. Public measures that pull so hard on the tether of argument are sure at some stage of their progress to inspire very strong language on the side of their earnest advocates.

So it has happened that on a great many occasions Mr. Blair has given utterance to language during the heat of debate which, though probably not noticed at the time even by his opponents, has now risen from its grave to mock him and spoil his career.

For instance, during the debate on